



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 MAJESTY KING CHARLES III
Colonel of the Regiment: BRIGADIER A S RICHMOND OBE
Commanding Officer: LIEUTENANT COLONEL C S KIERSTEAD

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HMS MONMOUTH

Affiliated Regiments
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THE 11TH CAVALRY (FRONTIER FORCE) PAKISTAN ARMY
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PANZERGRENADIERBATAILLON 35 (AUSTRIAN ARMY)
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Paired Army Reserve Regiment
THE ROYAL YEOMANRY

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

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



Editor: Maj R O'Shea

Contents

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Swanton Morley 2022

Colonel of the Regiment's Foreword	3	Regimental Engagement Team	59	RPoC HQ West Midlands 2022	92
Commanding Officer's Foreword.....	4	The Gambia STTT	60	RMAS.....	92
Colonel Commandant's Foreword.....	6	Rugby.....	62	Leathersellers	93
State of the Nation	7	Alpine Skiing	64	Message from the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment Sri Lanka Armoured Corps	94
Honours and Awards 2022.....	10	Basketball.....	66	Clwyd and Gwynedd ACF	
Regimental Awards	10	Squash.....	66	Report 2022.....	95
Long Service and Good Conduct	10	Cowes Week	67	E Squadron	96
Diary of Events 2022.....	11	Fieldsports.....	67	Regimental Comrades Association	97
A Squadron.....	12	Golf.....	68	German Branch	97
Regimental Christmas Day 2021.....	20	Regimental Football	69	Herefordshire and Forest of Dean Branch.....	98
B Squadron.....	21	Athletics	70	The Sandbaggers.....	98
C Squadron.....	26	A Sqn Adventurous Training	71	Wessex Branch.....	98
HQ Squadron	31	Ex Bavarian Eagle.....	72	London and Home Counties Branch..	99
QM Main Dept.....	35	Op Ballam	74	The Duke of York's Royal Military School.....	99
MT Troop	36	Op NEWCOMBE 3	76	Regimental Home Headquarters	100
Training Wing.....	37	Op Newcombe – Royal Irish.....	78	Officers Regimental Dinner.....	100
Welfare Office	38	Op Unity.....	80	Cardiff Reunion Dinner	101
LAD.....	40	NATO Landcom	81	Field of Remembrance	
SPS Detachment.....	42	Ex Cambrian Patrol.....	81	Westminster Abbey	101
Padre.....	43	St David's Day 'a dewi sant'	82	Combined Cavalry Memorial Parade and Service.....	102
Catering Department	43	ATC Pirbright.....	84	The QDG Regimental Trust.....	102
Gymnasium.....	44	HQ ARRC.....	84	The QDG Heritage Trust:	
Officer's Mess.....	46	3rd (UK) Division.....	85	C Squadron in Beirut	103
Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess..	48	Republic Of Korea, US Army	86	C Squadron Orbat	116
Regimental Mascot.....	50	11 SFAB.....	86	Firing Line	117
Corporal's Mess	51	Army Headquarter: The Land Operations Command and Directorate Futures.....	87	Obituaries.....	119
Regimental Christmas Day 2022.....	52	Africa for Parkinson's.....	88	Valetes.....	122
Exercise IRON INCA.....	54	British Forces South Atlantic Islands ..	90	Marriages	124
Ex Wessex Storm 2022	56	Sustaining in the Defence School of Transport.....	91		
Jungle Warfare Instructors Course 2022	58	Waterloo Ride	91		

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Colonel of the Regiment's Foreword

The year 2022 will have a place in history as a year of profound change. It saw two momentous events – the return of state-on-state conflict to continental Europe and the death of our beloved Queen and consequent accession of our Colonel-in-Chief as our Sovereign. For our Regiment, it was a year that started with what had become typical for a Light Cavalry regiment, small scale expeditionary operations against non-state actors in Africa but ended with re-subordination from the light forces Division to a new Deep Recce Strike Brigade Combat Team and consequent return to a focus on combined arms manoeuvre as part of a high-end heavy warfighting Division. This places QDG firmly on the Army's main effort. For those of us who soldiered during the Cold War, it is a case of déjà vu – a return to facing a Russian threat to the East and a more traditional reconnaissance role fighting the Divisional deep battle. For a reconnaissance regiment forged in deterring Russian aggression on mainland Europe, it really does seem like it is back to the future for QDG.

As you read this year's journal, you might marvel at how so much activity and output can be delivered by such a small Regiment in such a short period of time. This level of productivity certainly puts the UK economy to shame but at its core it is symptomatic of a smaller army with big commitments, and we are now seeing how the consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine are adding additional pressure on our Army and bringing its capabilities into stark focus.

In this journal you will read of the Regiment's performance in Mali as the Long-Range Reconnaissance Group (LRRG) and I hope that it gives you the same feeling of immense pride that I have had. It is clear that QDG brought a step-change in the civilian-military integration of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) through its ability to get civilian officials to accompany patrols, most of which lasted several weeks. This enabled them



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to see the reality on the ground and deliver real UN outreach and stabilisation effect. Such operational success demonstrates why we have specialist ground mounted reconnaissance regiments in the Royal Armoured Corps, that it is not a role that any combat unit can do (and I remember having this argument with an infantry GOC) as it requires a particular mindset and skillset, which QDG Officers and Soldiers have in spades.

November's Operational Honours List included some recognition for C Squadron's earlier Mali tour with a Mention in Despatches awarded to Sgt Humphreys

for "demonstrating bravery in the face of the enemy on numerous occasions." I hope that more good news will follow in the Operational Honours, covering RHQ and A Squadron's tour, which should be out by the time this Journal hits your doormats.

As a Regimental community we are becoming more connected and beginning to realise the power of our own network. I see this amongst our serving people as those on postings away from the Regiment are drawn more into routine work, and play, through the F Squadron initiative. I see this amongst the RCA, whose military experience and civilian expertise are increasingly sought by those that are serving. I see increasing examples of people reaching out instinctively to others within the QDG community and we are working to improve our communication channels to ensure we can facilitate the network effect and assist the recruiting effort.

Recruiting will be a major focus for the year ahead.

Currently, we are doing exceptionally well, which is in part thanks to the Regiment's investment in its presence across the Recruiting and Training machine. Our Regimental Engagement Group, enhanced representation at Phase 1 and Phase 2 Training have helped to transform our inflow from our Recruiting Area. Consequently, as I write we are at 106% of the Future Soldier workforce requirement. However, the Army's determination to pull levers to meet its reduced liability threatens the retention of some of those so instrumental to our recent success. This, coupled with the disastrous current state of Army recruiting, means that this success will be short lived. We all can play a part in helping inspire youngsters to join the Army and it should be an easy sell to encourage them to join the very best Regiment.

In summary, I think your Regiment is in a pretty good place. It has a good role, is on the Army's main effort, is fully manned and has an exciting year ahead. Let's all play our part in keeping it First and Foremost!

Commanding Officer's Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to offer a brief introduction to this excellent Regimental Journal for 2022. And I would do my predecessors a disservice were I not to open with the time-honoured refrain: *it has been a busy year!* The pages and pictures herein tell the tales not only of a regiment recently returned from operations, but also of one already back in the saddle and at a canter, gazing to horizons new, to further challenge and sport. I should emphasise that while this volume may appear uncommonly well-endowed in terms of wordcount, it is in fact but a snapshot of this *busy year*; a fleeting taste of the time, effort, blood, sweat, and tears invested by the British Army's finest men and women into the fabric of our communal history. And I would wager that few years have been as frenetic and as varied as this last. The euphemistic and oft-whispered catchphrase '*good busy*' brings smiles of stoic forbearance from troopers and squadron leaders alike; both, I sense, appreciate that we emerge from these continual commitments as better soldiers and tighter teams. I am daily humbled by the devotion and professional steadfastness of our people and cannot thank them enough for their efforts. I would only add that '*busy*' as we may have been, this year has been a *tour de force* of what this regiment can accomplish.

As the Colonel of the Regiment intimates in his Forward to this edition, your regiment is in fine form, replete with soldiers, and is very much aligned to both the Army's main effort and key purpose. Our people are an embarrassment of riches; these pages testament their accomplishments.

We stand at 400 people; in that, we have 14 women, 37 commonwealth soldiers, 6 professional sportspeople, 41 officers, 13 Warrants, 211 NCOs, and countless Tprs. As a Light Cavalry regiment we are the smallest combat regiment in the British Army's Order of battle. But our size brings opportunity, as it enables us to be more *ready* than any other regiment in the division. A terrible and hackneyed phrase, but we are *excellent value for money*. In fact, our General Officer Commanding recently commented that the QDG were his *most usable and most used* regiment; quoted at a time when we had a squadron in Kuwait, the better part of two squadrons in Texas, a squadron in Norfolk, and the battlegroup headquarters deployed in



Our people are an embarrassment of riches; these pages testament their accomplishments.



Canada. Indeed, at one point we had 91% of the regiment deployed on operations or training, a statistic most regiments and battalions would, I think, be jealous of.

But what's been keeping us busy? At this point last year the Regiment was deep in the sands of Mali on Operation NEWCOMBE, where Col Hugo and the team were flat-out managing a decidedly successful tactical enterprise in W Africa; there is much devilish detail in the Squadron articles to follow. Upon returning from Mali in the summer of 2022, we found ourselves transitioning from the 1st Division (focused mainly on defence and international engagement) to the 3rd Division, the Army's Warfighting division. And we couldn't have joined the

warfighting division at a better time. The war in Ukraine has put more focus on the Army's warfighting capabilities than has arguably been the case for 30 years. The context this presented the Regiment with was one of real opportunity; to prove our worth as long range, wheeled reconnaissance specialists within a heavy armoured division.

Importantly, we've not only joined a different division, but are also now at the forefront of the Army's newest Brigade, the Deep Recce Strike Brigade, which brings three formation reconnaissance regiments (HCR, QDG and RL) together with the core elements of the former Artillery and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance brigades. This sees the QDG at the tip of the UK's armoured division, with its airpower and artillery at



our beckon call; an uncomfortable privilege, I think you'll agree, but one that enables us to repeatedly demonstrate the ever-credible hallmarks of our formation reconnaissance trade in front of our senior leaders and non-discretionary allies. Firmly first, and firmly foremost. I would add that I very much agree with the Colonel of the Regiment in his assertion that it is *back to the BAOR future* in some aspects of our role as Divisional Formation Reconnaissance, and I'd welcome the chance to discuss the day-to-day reality of service in the British Army of the Rhine with those who served during that period of the Regiment's history.

All in all, the sum of our efforts sees the QDG firmly seated in the Army's premier division as the reconnaissance battle-group of choice; ready, credible and batteworthy. Our next task is to ensure that the Deep Recce Strike concepts can be fought and sustained in reality, and that our utility as light formation reconnaissance receives the recognition and investment it deserves.

In the midst of all this resubordination and recalibration, in the early autumn we received the sad news of the passing of her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second. The laying in state and funeral saw B and C Squadrons deployed on non-ceremonial duties to central London, where they did a sterling job of helping the public pay their respects to

the late Queen (including, I should say, supporting a very stoic former Colonel of the Regiment during his 21 hour pilgrimage to Westminster Abbey). Let me join our Colonel Commandant in thanking all those involved.

All the while, the serving regiment has managed to meet and make-merry with a number of our affiliated regiments; the Governor General's Horse Guards in Ottawa have had the pleasure of a series of visits from the QDG this year; our Italian sister regiment the Savoie Cavally visited a soggy PNCO Cadre in Norfolk in November, and have invited us to their barracks in Groseto in Umbria next year for some highly anticipated low-level joint training (and truffle hunting); and our important affiliation with the Austrian Royal Household will be rekindled early in 2023 when the regimental headquarters staff will dine with the Ambassador here in London.

And finally, it would be remiss of me to not mention that we continue to excel as a regiment in sport and adven-

turous training. While this has not been a memorable year for our team sports, our individuals regularly shine at Army and national level. We have 4 regular members of the Army rugby squad, as well as 3 of its coaches. We have a national level female boxer, a national level female hockey player, and female members of both the Army squash and golf teams. When we do manage to amass the numbers for team competitions, we do well; 2nd in the Army major unit squash championships, 3rd in the RAC cross country, 5th in the Army unit athletics. Our winter sports teams continue to develop and gain experience, and this season will hopefully see the first skiing silverware in a long time return from Verbier to the Mess in Swanton Morley. And most importantly of all, none of this could be done without the hugely kind provisions of

the Regimental Trust, to whom we are all immensely grateful.

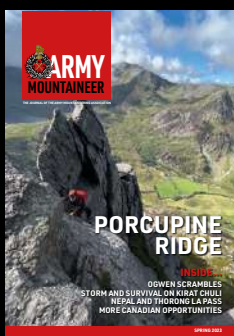
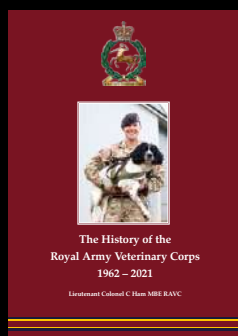
Pro Regia et Patria.



The laying in state and funeral saw B and C Squadrons deployed on non-ceremonial duties to central London, where they did a sterling job of helping the public pay their respects to the late Queen



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Colonel Commandant's Foreword

I must begin by paying tribute to Her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Much has already been said but it bears repeating that she set an extraordinary example of service over a remarkable seventy years. It was a privilege for all of us to have served under her as twentieth and twenty-first century Elizabethans and we can only strive to both remember and emulate her calm, stoical and dedicated example.

It was a great privilege to watch so many of our officers and soldiers from across the RAC play such an important and impressive part in the funeral service and procession. The special relationship Her late Majesty had with so many of our Regiments meant that as well as the Household Cavalry the following were all admirably represented: QDG, SCOTS DG, RDG, QRH, RL and RTR. I am grateful to all of you for the fine example you set.

As well as being so heavily committed to Op BRIDGE, the RAC has seen a huge amount and variety of deployments this year. All of which speak to our continued relevance, the desire across Defence to employ our unique skill set and the adaptability and resilience of our people. From continued deployments to Estonia, both at BG and sub unit level, to Mali, to Poland, to meeting the migrant crisis and the very real outputs in support of Ukraine's fight against Russia to name but a few, our people have continually risen to the challenge. We should take heart that there is little that RAC soldiers cannot do and when there is a job to be done we are ready, useable and highly effective. That we are so is down to the continued professionalism and dedication of our people and I thank you for it.

The outcomes of Future Soldier are not without their challenges, nor has the equipment programme delivered in the way we would have wished. Further, the cost of living crisis poses us all yet more challenges. However, I am heartened by the CGS's determination to create a more lethal, agile and survivable Army; for what is more lethal, agile and survivable than well led, well trained and highly motivated RAC units unleashed upon the



And secondly, I would like to thank you, the people who make up the RAC; you make it special



battlefield? Recent events in Ukraine have served to highlight the importance of maintaining significant mounted combat capability in order to successfully prosecute large scale ground manoeuvre warfare. This is true both in Defence – particularly providing the wherewithal to remain offensive – and, perhaps more visible at this stage of the conflict, in the taking of ground. This has not gone unnoticed and there is good reason to believe that our USP of delivering violence rapidly over significant distance with minimal orders and maximum firepower will reinforce – to others – our relevance on the field of battle.

Finally, I cannot end without thanking two people in particular. Firstly, my predecessor Lt General Sir Ed Smyth-Osbourne, for his exemplary stewardship of the Household Cavalry and RAC. We were lucky to have an officer of such wide-ranging and distinguished service as General Ed as our Colonel Commandant and I hope that I will be able to continue to champion our people and our capability as successfully as he did. And secondly, I would like to thank you, the people who make up the RAC; you make it special, you ultimately are the battle winning entity that will secure us victory I wish you all a very successful and safe 2023.



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State of the Nation – Senior Serving QDG

The refresh to the 2021 Integrated Review was published in early 2023 against a backdrop of a more volatile and contested world. Nowhere is this volatility more clearly demonstrated than in the acute threat posed by Russia. The on-going war in Ukraine is the most visible and is the largest military conflict in Europe since the end of the Second World War. The Chief of the General Staff (CGS) General Sir Patrick Sanders stated in his RUSI speech in June 2022 that he believes 'we are living through a period in history as profound as the one that our forebears did over 80 years ago. Now, as then, our choices will have a disproportionate effect on our future.'

Against this context, our people, as always, remain the Army's greatest asset. Their spirit and willpower in the face of adversity is critical to success. The war in Ukraine shows that the nature of conflict is unchanging. It is a reciprocal contest of wills against opponents that think, learn, react and adapt. The media provide daily examples that reaffirms that the core military capability is the capacity to fight. In doctrine the concept of fighting power describes the combination of conceptual (brain), moral (motivation/spirit) and physical (muscle). Ukraine's will to fight is hugely impressive and this human dimension is clear to all those involved in training Ukrainian soldiers.

Whilst training is part of the physical component it helps develop all three components of fighting power. Through the delivery of a raft of training programmes the United Kingdom is supporting the development of Ukraine's capacity to fight. Training support to Ukraine started in 2015 under the Operation ORBITAL banner in response to



the illegal seizure of Crimea and the invasion of the Donbas in 2014. In the 7 years before the full-scale illegal invasion by Russian, Operation ORBITAL had trained around 22,000 soldiers. Since then, the UK Governments support has only increased. Over the last year the United Kingdom has 'granted in kind' a significant quantity of equipment and munitions: including artillery, air defence, armoured vehicles and NLAW. More recently this gifting has included Challenger 2 main battle tanks and AS90 artillery systems representing a step change in support. On top of this there has been an enormous training effort, both specific to the platform and recruit and junior leadership training. In 2022 over 9,900 recruits and junior leaders were trained, with the target to train a further 20,000 in 2023 being well underway.

The training of Ukrainian recruits and junior leaders at scale in the United Kingdom is a significant undertaking. In 5 weeks, we are turning civilians into soldiers through the delivery of an immersive and increasingly sophisticated basic combat training package. The Ukrainian soldiers' thirst for knowledge to prepare them for war, that at times looks like that experienced by our forbearers in both World War 1 and 2, allows us to move quickly through training whilst ensuring they master the basics. Reports from the frontline suggest that the training being delivered by the United Kingdom and our Partner Nations is not only training large numbers but is also providing a qualitative edge.

An example of this qualitative edge comes from a Ukrainian Battalion Commander who went forward to visit his soldiers on the frontline when they came under attack. Allegedly most of the Company took cover less one section which took the fight to the enemy whilst under significant artillery bombardment. This inspired the rest of the Company, and they ultimately repelled the ground attack. When the Battalion Commander subsequently asked this section why they had done what they did, they said they had been trained in the United Kingdom and were just doing what they had been taught.

Not only are the Ukrainians ferociously brave they are quick to improvise and adapt to the changing character of the conflict. We have much to learn from them. An ability to learn and adapt in this ever more contested and volatile world will ensure we are prepared to fight a conflict in the 21st Century if called upon to do so.

JGES DSO, MBE









Honours and Awards 2022

Mention in Dispatches – Sgt Humphreys
 Joint Commanders' Commendation – Maj Williams
 Joint Commanders' Commendation – Capt Rowe
 Joint Commanders' Commendation – LCpl Wright
 Meritorious Service Medal – WO1 (RSM) Chant
 Commander Land Forces Commendation – Maj Matthews
 Vice Chief of Defence Staff Commendation – Maj Ruggles-Brise

Regimental Awards

Mann Trophy – LCpl Moore
 Leatherseller's Trophy – Cpl Donnachie
 Queen Elizabeth Trophy – Sgt Williams
 Gomer Lloyd Trophy – WO2 (SSM) Roberts

Long Service and Good Conduct

Sgt Dell
 Sgt Davies

Cpl Lunness
 Cpl Berryman

Cpl Akerman
 Cpl Rees



Diary of Events 2022

January

10-16 Ex EAGLES REFRESH
Throughout Op NEWCOMBE 3
Ex WHITE KNIGHT 37

February

7-11 Soldier Development week
13-onwards STTT Sierra Leone
Throughout Op NEWCOMBE 3

March

1 St David's Day
1-4 Golf Tour
14-18 C Sqn Skiing Expedition
21-25 Ex LIONS STRIKE
21-31 PNCO Cadre
28-31 Rock Climbing Expedition
Throughout Op NEWCOMBE 3

April

4-8 Sea Kayaking Expedition
11-22 Sailing Expedition
18-6 May Sniper selection and pre-course
Throughout Op NEWCOMBE 3

May

13 Officers' Dinner
15 Cavalry Memorial
16-27 Ex URBAN EAGLE
16-27 Ex BAVARIAN EAGLE
Throughout Op NEWCOMBE 3

June

1 TOA to 1 R IRISH
13-17 Platform Weapon Operator Course
18 Waterloo
28 Freedom of Dereham Parade

July

5 Cardiff Parade
7 Op NEWCOMBE 3 Medals Parade
8 Regimental Service in Llandaff Cathedral
12 Wrexham Parade
18-21 Royal Welsh Show
21 Lucknow Dinner Night
22-10 Aug Op UNITY, support to the Commonwealth Games
25 Lt Col CS Kierstead Assumes Command

August

31 Jul-6 Aug Cowes Week
12-14 Ex DRAGOON PADDLER
14-16 Ex DRAGOON CLIMBER

September

5-17 Ex TRIDENT EAGLE
7-30 Gambia STTT
17-28 Dutch Cavalry Ride
19-23 Ex FENLAND EAGLE
26-30 Ex EAGLES NEST

October

5-15 Ex BARBARY STAR
11-13 CAMBRAIN PATROL Competition
9-14 Ex PILGRIMS PROGRESS
10-28 Recce Cadre
18-4 Nov Ex CERBERUS
24-2 Nov Ex BRAVO FIND
29 Regimental Reunion

November

7-25 PNCO Cadre
11 Armistice Day
12 Lord Majors' Show
14-18 Savoia Regiment Visit
23-24 Regimental and Heritage Trustees Visit
28-2 Dec Mullen's Cup Patrol Competition

December

7 Regimental Christmas Day

A Squadron

Dawn in the desert is spectacular. The sun emerges from behind the almost featureless horizon, chasing away the inky night and its magnificent display of stars, planets, and satellites. With it the sun brings vivid bands of colour to the huge sky and soft light to the enormous, ancient landscape. Local herders can be seen in the distance, often tiny boys barely taller than their animal's rumps, chivvying their charges from night-time corrals towards the distant river and its life-giving water and fodder. Almost imperceptibly at first, the sun's light and heat will increase and then suddenly it will be up and begin its daily assault on the scrubby trees, rock and sand, beating down with merciless force. As insects and animals slink away to find shade and respite, an engine is started, laughter can be heard drifting across the desert leaguer, the smell of coffee hangs in the air. A Squadron's day is just beginning.

It is a timeless scene, and one experienced no doubt by many readers in far flung places - Aden, Oman, Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan or on a host of other deployments with the Regiment. When asking members of A Squadron which scene sticks with them most from their 6-month tour of Op NEWCOMBE, it is the incredible dawns that came up time and time again.

Speaking of dawns, as the year 2022 dawned we were still in the foothills of the tour, with much still to accomplish. For those readers that did not catch last year's journal - a quick recap. In late-November of 2021, A Squadron had joined Regimental Headquarters



laughter can be heard drifting across the desert leaguer, the smell of coffee hangs in the air. A Squadron's day is just beginning.



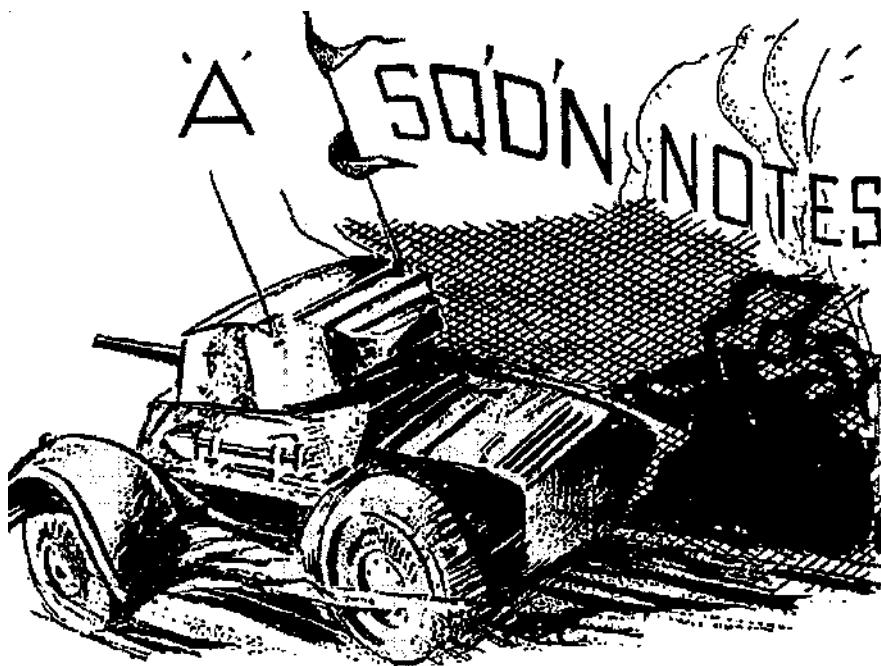
Region, SW of our base in Gao, crossing the famous River Niger in the process. The aim was to understand the area

and elements of Headquarters Squadron to form the heart of the Long-Range Reconnaissance Group (LRRG). The QDG were reinforced by A Company, 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment and a plethora of attached arms and enablers and the LRRG had deployed as the UK's contribution to Op MINUSMA, a United Nations (UN) peace-keeping mission in the troubled West African state of Mali.

Having settled into Camp Bagnold and enjoyed the oddity and jollity of a Christmas on tour, the New Year saw the Squadron knuckle down to business. The LRRG (A Squadron leading the way) kickstarted 2022 with Operation MEERKAT 2, a 21-day patrol into the Gourma

through local engagement (both urban and rural) and identify future UN civilian-led projects alongside the deterrence of Terrorist Armed Group (TAG) activity. All whilst proving the concept of operating at reach. Op MEERKAT 2 was the longest patrol any LRRG had undertaken to date. Alongside Local Leader Engagements and casual conversations or CASCONs in the current jargon, A Squadron conducted several actions which saw the detention of TAG members, confiscation of illegal weapons and equipment alongside identification of potential stability projects and female engagement opportunities. Our attached personnel shone with their additional tasks, Sergeant Dell (Royal Engineer Reconnaissance Sergeant) in particular, contributing as he did to the siting and design of a Forward Operating Base (FOB).

This patrol was a test for every individual and crew, with an average distance travelled of 1, 200 km and average temperature of 35 degrees. Its length and intensity proved the high standards and competency of A Squadron had achieved during its pre-deployment training and set the bar for the remainder of the tour.



4th Troop



Some helicopters were friendly

Following swiftly on from the success of Op MEERKAT 2, in February Op MANKALAN 1 saw the LRRG deploy south from Gao along the Eastern bank of the river Niger, its ultimate objective being the small riverport of Labazanga close to the Niger border. On route, clustered along the riverbank, were villages and small towns of interest; Tasiga, Fafa, Ansongo and Lelehoy that would be visited in turn. Due to the IED threat on main roads, A Squadron was once again key in providing the Task Group with an entirely cross-country route, no easy task given the size and weight of some of the LRRG's vehicles including fully laden fuel tankers, REME recovery vehicles and Mastiff Armoured vehicles. Added to this was the complication of the terrain which was a mixture of soft sand, wadis and sharp exposed rock and the presence of the enemy and his civilian scouts. Given these multiple difficulties A Squadron's junior Officers and SNCOs did an exemplary job navigating and securing a safe passage through the desert for the whole Task Group and really were the mission enabling asset.

Over the 17 days of the patrol, as the temperature continued to rise into the



A winning team

mid-40s centigrade, we participated fully in the main effort, which was enabling UN civil agency activity. Given their habitual reluctance to leave the relative safety of Gao, it was heartening to see that the LRRG's presence gave the UN the confidence to deploy via helicopter 17 individuals from 5 key organisations. A Squadron welcomed, transported, protected, and facilitated work by the UN Police (UNPOL), Community Liaison Officers and UN Governance Directors in

key conurbations, allowing the inspection of key infrastructure and gathering of vital information from local residents. It must never be forgotten after all that no peace is possible without a civilian solution, and the military must act as servants and facilitators of the civilian agencies. Op MANKALAN 1 also clearly demonstrated burgeoning UK and German interoperability with 6 German personnel being attached to the LRRG – a first in Mali.



Carter's roughnecks



Cpl Flower takes a short rest from smoking tabs

The successful employment of the Female Engagement Team (FET) by A Squadron, ably led by our own Lieutenant Zöe Spicer, enabled the LRRG to cement its use in Peacekeeping Operations in Mali, with much interest from the UN Military apparatus. Most other UN Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) do not have female soldiers and officers in their combat units, so A Squadron's ability to field an all-female team in a dangerous conflict zone was unique in Mali. With so much interaction with the local population the language barrier came very much to the fore on this Op. It would be wrong therefore to forget the contribution of our loyal interpreters who time and time again came to the rescue – we could not have operated without them.

Alongside interaction with civilians A Squadron were also to prove the utility of our core reconnaissance capabilities in a peacekeeping environment. Following the identification of TAG activity by our attached Royal Artillery Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) team, the Squadron set itself in a series of traditional observation posts in and around the river

A Squadron had set an early warning system in place in the form of the biggest blokes armed with their own concoction of hand wash and foot powder!

members were seen to flee, discarding their weapons and equipment, leaving the people of Horoura, even for a short while, in peace. On such a long patrol, with such sustained activity and in terrain such as it was the vehicle fleet



13D - Cpl Parsons, LCpl Hopkins, Tpr Baxter

Niger in the vicinity of the Horoura on the Niger's west bank. This was a task we all relished and, putting into good use Sergeant Turner's extendable JIM sight. This, together with a live observation post (OP) manned by 4th Troop under Lt Alex Allington and Sergeant Warner, was combined with the UAS detachment's video feed to track a group of TAGs which led to a fruitful seizure of TAG equipment the next day from rummage searches in the area. After observation and a show of force, the TAG

was under considerable strain. It never ceases to amaze me how hard our REME soldiers work on such operations. Often having been patrolling during daylight hours or working on vehicles all day in the Task Group leaguer, they would time and time again under the light of head torches perform feats of engineering brilliance on A Squadron's tired fleet – hats off to them all – their work does not go unnoticed. Finally, it shouldn't go unremarked that as the Squadron Leader was forced to return urgently to the UK for a brief period, the Squadron was commanded on this patrol by the Second-in-Command Captain James Brockless. He stepped up superbly providing the Commanding Officer with utter confidence that the Squadron was in good hands.

With the new month of March came the eagerly anticipated St David's day and St Patrick's day combined celebration. Two fiercely proud Celtic units celebrating their patron saints' days together..... What could possibly go wrong! The morning began in the early hours with the shrewd Irishmen deciding to try and launch a dawn strike operation on A Squadron's accommodation block, armed with a substance made from mixing flour, foot powder and water, a substance that still haunts SSM Hopkins and SQMS Ewbank to this day! Unbeknownst to the wannabe block saboteurs, A Squadron had set perimeter defences and an early warning system in place in the form of the biggest blokes armed with their own concoction of hand wash and foot powder! With the din of the block wars rumbling on A Squadron deployed its secret weapon; eager Troopers armed with spray paint and an A Squadron Flash template. Suffice to say the A Company CQMS was not best pleased when every single A Company vehicle proudly became honorary members of A



Capt Brockless can't believe how many emails he gets as Sqn Ldr



Fireworks at New Year

Squadron, albeit for a day!

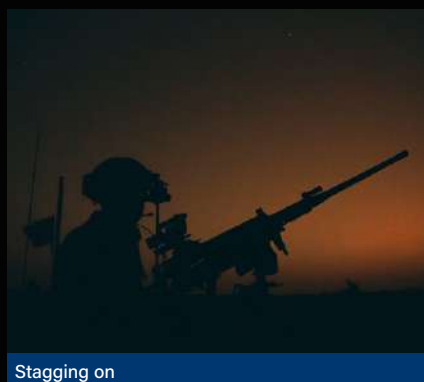
The afternoon saw Wales, Ireland, England and Fiji pitted against each other in the highly anticipated rugby 7s tournament arranged by 4th Troop Leader Lieutenant Alex Allington. After an afternoon of fierce competition, on a dusty, rocky and fairly treacherous pitch/tank park, Team Fiji were crowned the ultimate winners of the competition, with a strong Wales following hot on their heels in second place. Following a brief pause and some well-earned non-alcoholic beers (living on a German camp had some benefits!), A Coy introduced the LRRG to their famous chariot race, with each Sub-Unit submitting a Mad Max style chariot, (un)willing driver and 4 "war horses" to pull. The start line saw more frothing mouths and eager, keen legs than a Cheltenham Gold Cup. Again, this wasn't A Squadron's first rodeo, and sabotage is a key skill when fighting on unfamiliar ground; a few punctured tyres on the A Coy chariot and we were ready to go! What followed can only be described as a mix between a Formula 1 pile-up and medieval battle of epic proportions. Chariots were pitched into storm drains, wagons were set upon by waiting ruffians, a barrage of potatoes, foot powder, water bottles and vehicle chocks flew around the heads like the

arrows of old to slow the troops dragging the chariots around the course. It all made Ben-Hur's chariot race look like a Sunday drive in the country! Once the chariots and their brave and almost certainly concussed crews limped across the finish line it was decided that A Company were the victors. Post the race all enmity was dropped, and a friendly evening BBQ was enjoyed by all ranks.

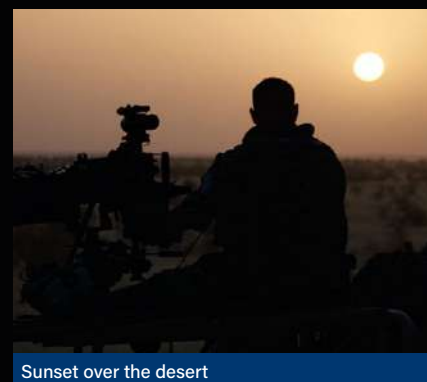
After a couple of weeks preparation, vehicle maintenance and planning A Squadron deployed once again on 21st March on the snappily named Op MANKALAN 2a. By now it was getting really hot, with midday and early afternoon temperatures hovering around the 50-degree Celsius mark and it never really dropping below 30 degrees even at night. We were operating back in the Gourma region on the western side of the river Niger. With previous knowledge of the ground and the Task Group getting very efficient at travelling long distances, A Squadron travelled over 100 hard off-road kilometres on the first day, with the main body of the Task Group only 15 km behind – remarkable progress given the going and size of vehicles. A Squadron's junior officers and soldiers once again proving themselves more than capable of complex desert navigation and route selection. Reacting to a recent and deadly Islamic State in the Greater Sahel (ISGS) attack on a Forces Armées Maliennes (FAMa) base in Tessit, A Squadron provided the security as A Coy spoke with the FAMa commander to establish what help might be provided. This, however, was the first prominent example of the higher political difficulties reaching the boots on the grounds, resulting in a not so friendly welcome. Further deterioration of this relationship was to continue throughout our tour of operation, exemplifying, on a small scale, the worsening political environment.

Following the reception in Tessit and having received rapidly revised orders from Task Group HQ, A Squadron re-orientated and moving South began to skirt the Soudheri forest, a known insurgent haven. Employed protecting the Task Group's exposed flank, A Squadron HQ formed up in the saddle of a high and prominent rocky outcrop with the forest to its North. The area selected provided a good overwatch position for the Squadron Leader to observe the Troops tasked with clearing through the dense undergrowth and trees of the forest as well as offering good fields of fire and potential HLS for casevac as required. Once the location was established, SHQ began to move into the routine of control. It was to prove to be the least routine day many had experienced on tour so far.

As the Troops swept through the treeline below chatting to the vast numbers of shepherds and their families, SHQ personnel settled into radio and ground stag. Within 30 minutes explosions ripped through the quiet peace of that 50-degree day. Initially thought to be mortar rounds landing amongst the SHQ desert box, the din was pierced by the familiar throb of rotor blades. Whilst most jumped for what cover they could find disbelieving gunners on top cover made their .50 calibre Heavy Machine



Stagging on



Sunset over the desert



Sgt Griffiths blending in



Cpl Rees following the adventures of Spot the Dog.

Guns ready as it became clear that the Squadron was under attack from the air, to be exact under attack from a MI-35 Gunship which was disgorging missiles from its weapons pods at an alarming rate. The disbelief back in the Ops Room in Gao when Captain Felix Holland sent the contact report - "Contact Helicopter" was audible in the Watchkeepers request for a confirmation, "Yes, I did say Contact Helicopter! - Wait, out".

One salvo of missiles had landed within 30m of the SHQ vehicles, but the MI-35 had also fired in the direct vicinity of the 3rd Troop vehicles manoeuvring in the dense forest. The SSM mounted up and moved to the treeline fully expecting to receive friendly and civilian casualties, thankfully there were neither. The missiles had sent the civilians running deeper into the woodland and Corporal Parsons vehicle was narrowly missed. Joining with the SSM, Corporal Parsons continued the sweep of the area to locate any civilians that may need assistance and to identify any blinds. Unsurprisingly not a single civilian was seen in the area for the next 24hrs. The area surrounding SHQ was littered with frag and pieces from the missile bodies, most of which had luckily landed in soft sand, reducing the blast radius and the effective range of their otherwise deadly fragmentation sleeves.

Almost as soon as it had arrived, the helicopter, now identified as an apparently friendly FAMA MI-35 disap-

peared to the North, in the direction of Gao. Once it was established that, miraculously, the Squadron's personnel were unharmed and the vehicles undamaged the Explosives and Ordnance Disposal team attached to the Task Group made their way rapidly to the scene to check for unexploded ordnance and collect evidence for future analysis and exploitation. Subsequent investigations into this incident, which under pressure from Task Group HQ, Op NEWCOMBE HQ and the British Military representative at the UN in New York included a full UN board of inquiry, found that gross pilot error was to blame. The FAMA pilot claimed to be on mission to destroy insurgents in the area and having crested the high feature had seen vehicles and fired without verifying their identity. Had he paused a moment he may have noticed the UN markings and large blue UN flags adorning our vehicles. It was a matter of luck that his missiles missed their mark and that we, thank God, emerged unscathed. The fragments of one of the missiles fired on that day, (kindly collected, mounted and presented by Captain John De Costa-Nathaniez) now proudly adorns the walls of A Squadron's Lines as a reminder that friendly fire isn't particularly friendly.

Following this close call with a FAMA helicopter, A Squadron, armed with key intelligence gathered on our previous operations concentrated on the TAG presence in the village of Horoura close to the Niger border. Having once again used our attached UAV to survey the area, A Squadron conducted a successful covered approach to the village, utilising skills perfected on previous operations. The TAG members were taken by surprise by our arrival in the vicinity, forcing them to scramble away, in the process abandoning motorbikes, weapons, ammunition and further paraphernalia. As the TAGs sought to hastily withdraw to their safe havens, both over the river Niger as well as over the border into Niger, 2nd Troop successfully interdicted a group heading towards the border, forcing them to disperse and abandon equipment. One terrorist crashed his bike in soft sand. As Sergeant Speed's crew moved forward to detain the rider there was an exchange of small arms fire. The A Squadron troops neutralised the situation and sought immediate medical aid for our fallen adversary who, despite heroic efforts to save his life by the Squadron Medic Sergeant Hall, died before reaching the advanced medical facilities available at the Task Group HQ.

Following this incident, A Squadron became the owners of 1 x AK-47, 1x PKM (machine gun) and a significant amount of ammunition. The Squadron, now in command of the Horoura area, conducted a systematic search iden-



Desert box



Well armed safari

tifying further weapons and ammunition caches and abandoned motorbikes. Such action and finds, whilst relatively modest, demonstrated that where and when necessary, the UN has the teeth to defend itself and heavily disrupt TAG activity. Op MANKALAN 2a had proved an exciting, exhausting and hugely successful patrol and one that clearly demonstrated why Op NEWCOMBE is the UN's most dangerous peacekeeping operation.

A welcome return to Camp Bagnold was followed by a period of recuperation and vehicle maintenance – the heat, terrain and tasks having taken their toll on both soldiers and equipment alike. Camp Bagnold then hosted a Strong-Man Competition, split into three weight categories, heavy, middle, and light. They say only mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun, but I know for a fact many Welsh, Irish, Fijians and Ghurkhas have been known to as well, and in my experience of Bagnold's strongest Man (and Woman) they are to be seen carrying, lifting and pulling items of unnecessary weight or bulk. The scorching sun and dust only added to the spectacle as some of our biggest and strongest pitted their wills and overly developed lats against one another. Once again, A Squadron led the way with 2 of our fine Sergeants winning the heavy (Sergeant Griffiths) and middle (Sergeant Speed) male weight categories. Lieutenant Al-Khamiri (3rd Strongest heavy man) receives an honourable mention for wowing the crowds and coming second to Sergeant Griffiths in two events that involved running and fast movement – neither of which are his forte. It was like watching a (smiling, moustachioed) bull elephant at the charge. The competition was a huge success and was followed by the now familiar and ever popular BBQ, charity auction and film night.

As April gave way to May, the end of the tour was well and truly in sight. But before thoughts could be turned entirely to home there was one more patrol in the offing, as well as the vital business of the handover-takeover (HOTO) with the incoming LRRG (Led by 1 Royal Irish BGHQ). The final patrol of the tour had

been extensively planned by Task Group HQ to be the most challenging, complex, and interesting for the LRRG so far. We would be deploying to an area of uncertain security, in the border zone between TAGs to the south, heavily armed tribal militias to the west and Tuareg separatists to the north. Joint patrols and fuel resupply were planned with our German allies and there was even the prospect of air re-supply of water and food from an Algerian C-130, another first in Mali. There was also another push to encourage the deployment of the UN's civilian agencies alongside the LRRG, an effort which was bearing fruit with UNPOL, and Governance directors once again set to join us. Trouble was brewing however in the form of a small COVID outbreak amongst the German troops on the other side of the camp complex. Then came the news that there were one or two LRRG cases, another blow. We remained very operationally focussed

and taking every extra precaution we could drive on with preparation for the Op. The LRRG did manage, despite these setbacks, to deploy out to the east of Gao for what were the first few days of a planned 25-day operation. Unfortunately, COVID cases began to emerge and took their toll on the Task Group and Squadron. The few days that we did have on the ground showed to me the resilience and flexibility of the Soldiers and Officers in 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. Due to illness, crews and Troops were being split up and rapidly reformed to maintain both security and conduct useful activity where we could. 1st Troop, bolstered by Major Steph Shallow, managed to take part in some useful engagement in nearby towns, meeting with Government-aligned militias as well as civilian residents including many women who were chattier than the men in most cases. Once again, the FET proved its worth, allowing us to connect with and learn from a half of the population often

unavailable to male only patrols. Seeing Malian ladies' faces light up when they realised there was long hair under the helmet was quite a sight.

With the Covid outbreak continuing to develop, the CO had to make the incredibly difficult decision to call off the patrol after only a few days on the ground. The Squadron were very disappointed, not only to have so much planning, preparation, and vehicle maintenance come to very little but also to be denied what

felt like an appropriately interesting, complex, and challenging end to this fascinating tour. That said we all entirely understood and supported the CO's decision which was the right one in the circumstances. On return to Bagnold, there followed a difficult period for the Squadron and Task Group as a whole. With the Covid outbreak now widespread, and many members of the Task Group in isolation, the regeneration of the vehicle fleet in time for

HOTO patrols and the next Task Group fell to a much-diminished workforce. Additionally, the strict, but necessary, virus limitation measures imposed on the camp put an end to Gym sessions, BBQs and film nights.

Thanks to the hard work of the LAD, with special mentions to Corporals Quant and Downey, on the vehicles, and the available troops on all of the stores and accommodation, special mention to Lance Corporal Cox for his work on amnesty boxes, the HOTO with the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Scots DG) progressed as smoothly as possible. The fleet was tired, but we had asked a great deal of it, over punishing ground and it showed. With much of the Sqn already departed to the UK, all that remained to be done was the handover patrol, which was our opportunity to pass on top tips, knowledge of the ground and driving conditions to our Light Cavalry colleagues. With that we wished them well and packed our kit for the final time.

“It was like watching a (smiling, moustachioed) bull elephant at the charge”



As the Task Group withdrew piecemeal from Mali and started their return home after a long tour, each flight stopped in Gibraltar for some well, earned decompression and relaxation. The Unit Welfare Officer Captain Gaz Pearce (HCR) and his team organised a fantastic decompression cycle for the troops spread out over a couple of days, focused mainly around Gibraltar Harbour and water sports. After six months in the desert a day on paddle boards, power boats and swimming in the bay followed by a BBQ with actual alcoholic beer was welcomed by all and set everyone up in a positive mindset to come home to our families.

July saw the Regiment deploy to our recruiting ground to conduct Ex HOMECOMING EAGLE. Parades were scheduled to take place in Cardiff, Swansea, Wrexham and Hereford, exercising the Regiment's freedom of the city in all of those key hometowns. There was then to be an additional parade in Cardiff to celebrate the Regiment's return and present operational medals to those who deployed on Op NEWCOMBE 3.

Following weeks of drill practice with the RSM, the Squadron was running like a well-oiled drill machine ready to show off its skills as not only experts in recce but also masters of drill. Unfortunately, however Lance Corporal Hopkins' body decided early on that it just wasn't made for drill and would make this clear by performing a series of movements not found in the RSMs drill manual and certainly not to the timings prescribed. Regardless of the odd inopportune drill mistake, the parades went off without a hitch the Squadron once again proving that they can turn their hands to any task put before them.

Whilst any parade is special, and the tour of our home turf was certainly special to all who wear the Hapsburg eagle, the Cardiff parade proved to be a highlight for the Regiment. The then Prince of Wales, our Colonel in Chief was in attendance, a very proud day for all involved and His Majesty's final military appointment as Prince of Wales. Corporal Rees and Sergeant Griffiths had the additional pleasure of being awarded their OP NEWCOMBE medals by His Majesty, a day they will most definitely remember. I would like to thank all the



Bonny the dog - walking morale



Motor Fire

families and friends of both my soldiers and those other QDGs on parade for taking the time to attend these events and for cheering on your soldiers.

With well-earned leave falling over August it was not until September that most of the Squadron returned to duty. There was change in the air, and a full regimental reorbat meant the break-up of many well-established Troops, crews and friendships and the effective end of the Op NEWCOMBE A Squadron. It was sad to see such an effective, resilient and successful team dispersed but as we all know it's easy come, easy go in the QDG and "we'll always have Bagnold".

It was all change in the Squadron Headquarters. Along with Captain Felix Holland's mid-tour appointment as Squadron Second-in-Command, following the departure of Captain James Brockless to 6XX HQ, Major Duncan Wiggins, who deployed for half of Op NEWCOMBE with Task Group HQ assumed command of A Squadron on the departure of Major James Curry. After a hugely busy and extremely successful time in command, carried off with characteristic vim, energy and enthusiasm James departs RD to a job at the Army Headquarters in Andover. The Squadron wish him, El and their family all the best in the new posting. SSM was handed over from the redoubtable Mr Hopkins to Mr Fisher, Mr Hopkins staying at RD for now and moving to cover the post of Motor Transport Officer as a Warrant Officer before he is commissioned in 2023 (hearty congratulations to him). The stores were handed over from SQMS Ewbank, who moves to the Quartermaster's department, to the newly promoted Sergeant Major Chater. Sergeant Wilkins left the Sqn on promotion to Sergeant Major to become C Sqn SQMS, Sergeant Warner moved and subsequently promoted to Sergeant Major to become Operations Warrant Officer in RHQ's much vaunted "Top Corridor".

Alongside the movements in Squadron HQ, there was a fair amount of movement amongst the Troops, including the loss of

Lieutenant Ed Carter to RHQ as Regimental Signals Officer and of Lieutenant Zaki Al-Khamiri to the Falkland Islands as Aide-De-Camp to Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands. Sergeant Speed departed to the Quartermaster's Department, and Sergeant Griffiths 188 moved across to C Squadron. We gained three new Officers, Lieutenant Felix Maddison who almost immediately deployed on the arduous Jungle Warfare Instructors Course in Brunei, and Second Lieutenants George Webster and Louise Gamman who departed on their Troop Leaders course, although not before George had led a scratch team to a Silver Medal on the gruelling Cambrian Patrol competition. We also gained three new Sergeants with Sergeant Pugh arriving from C Sqn, Sergeant Howells returned from ATR Winchester and Sergeant Mwamulima returning from a stint with the Royal Yeomanry. This new group of commanders will form the core of the Squadron that will deploy to Poland in October 2023, and we are extremely excited to begin building our team together.

For many however some post-tour adventurous training (AT) allowed a slower paced more relaxed return to life in barracks, with mountain biking or kayaking in Slovenia (Ex EAGLE'S PADDLE) or Offshore Sailing from the Royal Naval College Dartmouth (Ex TRIDENT EAGLE) as well as number of individual courses aimed at gaining AT qualifications.

Ex EAGLES PADDLE was a two-week expedition to Lake Bled in Slovenia that planned to give a dozen people the Inland Kayak Foundation course, as well as build up quality days for two dozen people on mountain bikes following the Regimental Trustees' generous investment in 5 high-end mountain bikes. Though the long drive to Slovenia was a slog for the instructors and expedition leader, Lieutenant Al-Khamiri, the stunning views of Lake Bled and the surrounding areas made it all worth it. After a few grazed knees, some capsizing



Major Curry briefs the troops

(mostly on purpose), and a lot of questionable karaoke performances, everyone came away from Slovenia with either a new qualification, or heightened confidence in tree-dodging when speeding down a hill.

The budding sailors of the Squadron participated in Ex TRIDENT EAGLE, a two-week Offshore Sailing expedition on the "balmy" South Coast of England, led by Lieutenant Zöe Spicer. Kindly utilising the RAC Yacht, White Knight VII, and borrowing skippers from B Sqn and RWxY, the crews fought thunderstorms, towering waves and ripped main sails to achieve their Competent Crew Qualification. Corporal Couch demonstrated his natural nautical ability by achieving his Day Skipper Practical Qualification. Fish were fed and comfort zones were pushed, but all-in-all, both skippers and crew would call it an enjoyable adventure.

With the majority of the new A Squadron back in camp in October we were ready to tackle the next mission. This came in the form of being formally tasked with deploying on Op INTERFLEX in the New Year. This would see most the Squadron's personnel deployed to a location in the Southwest to train Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) soldiers in a variety of battlefield skills including field craft, shooting and first aid. To prepare for this task, which was designed for an infantry company we were required to send many of our JNCOs on courses, often at very short notice and with little preparation time. I am pleased to say that these soldiers performed extremely well, despite the disruption and at times confusion, and I would like to thank all of them (and their families) for their patience and performance over this tricky period. Alongside generating the skills and qualifications required for Op INTERFLEX, we continued, with those junior officers and NCOs that were left to run a squadron training programme focussed on low level basic soldiering. This was designed put us in a good place for the beginning of pre-deployment training for Op CABRIT (Poland) in 2023.

Preparation for Op INTERFLEX continued through November, with many of our JNCOs away. Despite this the Squadron was still able to deploy on a low-level military skills exercise, Ex ABLE EAGLE which was educational, interesting and hopefully enjoyable for attendees. Concurrently C Squadron ran a Potential NCO cadre which was well attended by the Squadron's budding leaders and we had a pleasing high pass rate on this tough but vitally important course. Given the level of activity in the Regiment, particularly in support of C and HQ Squadron's upcoming deployment to the United States it was excellent to see the Training Wing organise and run a first-rate Mullens Cup inter-troop competition. The Squadron generated a scratch team skilfully led by Sergeant Howells with Corporal Platt as his 2IC. Setting off into the early morning darkness for the first event, a 12km loaded march the team looked relaxed, confident, and determined. I am happy to say that after a series of events aimed at a testing military skill, shooting and fitness Sergeant Howells and the A Squadron team were victorious – congratulations to all involved. In other good news, Corporal Jones 128 was awarded the golden binoculars as top student on his Crew Commanders course.

As we neared the end of term we received instructions to stand down from Op INTERFLEX, a hugely frustrating decision, firstly because of the worthwhile nature of such a task, directly supporting our allies in their time of need, and secondly because of the work, disruption and effort that had gone into getting the Squadron ready to deploy. The silver lining to this disappointment was that we had gained access to a series of courses and qualifications that we wouldn't



The SQMS points towards the last known locations of Sgt Warners pistol

normally attain, putting the Squadron in an excellent place, particularly when it comes to ranges. Regimental Christmas week topped off the year. There was much fun had, particularly on Christmas Day itself, as we gathered to sing carols, throw Brussels sprouts and look forward to the prospect of some Christmas Leave.

It's difficult to sum up a year such as 2022. Once again, A Squadron has proved itself on operations, in austere, testing, and at times dangerous conditions. In a fascinating and troubled country such as Mali, peace is somewhat off, but all members of the Squadron should feel proud of their contribution towards security there, even if localised and temporary, and should wear their UN medals with pride.

After the return from Mali as so often happens the Squadron has morphed, changed and been remodelled for the next task. The new team has taken all that the back end of the year has thrown at it in its stride, from adventures in kayaks and boats, exercises, frantic preparation and sudden disappointment over Op INTERFLEX and Mullens Cup. We've had some new members added to the Regimental family with Corporal Lunness, Lance Corporal King and Major Wiggins welcoming Logan, Hudson and Rex respectively and we've seen friends and

colleagues depart for pastures new and civilian – and we wish them all the very best of luck and success in all they do.

2023 will see A Squadron once again deployed abroad on Operations, to the Polish forests in the Winter, rather than African deserts in Summer, such is the variety of life in the Regiment and we all look forward to building a capable, effective and close-knit Squadron over the coming months.

DMW

It was sad to see such an effective, resilient and successful team dispersed but as we all know it's easy come, easy go in the QDG

Regimental Christmas Day 2021

Regimental Christmas day in 2021 was unlike any other QDG has experienced, whilst the ROG celebrations took the usual form the LRRG in Mali planned a day with a West African twist. Many readers of this article will look back with fond memories to their Regimental Christmas days, so we tried to ensure this years would live up to those high expectations.

Out in Mali we began the celebrations by opening some very well-timed packages and letters from the Regimental Comrades Association and the Colonel of the Regiment. The new baseball caps and small gifts were very welcome and went down tremendously well across the entire Task Group – a great touch. That evening, we assembled as a Task Group and attended a Christmas Eve Carol Service. Padres from across all the UN Units came together and delivered a great service for all forces in Camp Castor. After this, everybody went to bed... until, in the middle of the night a team of Irish Rangers took it upon themselves to spread talcum powder throughout GMSG accommodation block. They even knocked on the door of Capt Homer who was taken aback a pace or two with shock and surprise! However, the games were not complete and went on for some time, far longer than can (or should) be described in this article. At the same time of this incident taking place, some of our soldiers found some blue spray paint, a recce tree stencil and someone from the Royal Irish. Let's just say it was a good evening for QDG branding. Come 2359hrs, and much to the surprise of A Sqn and A Coy, hands were shook and conversations shared. The men and women of the Long Range Reconnaissance Group (LRRG) formed a truce and wished their foe a happy Christmas and went to bed. Mr Hopkins was more shocked than anyone that such a competitive couple of hours could dissipate so quickly!

First thing Christmas morning, the Gunfire was prepared and delivered by the Officers and Seniors at a very generous 0700hrs. The soldiers of the Task Group even had a breakfast roll along with a few parcels that were very kindly sent out from the families in the UK. After gunfire, a lighter breakfast was served and the Christmas service followed. This service gave everyone the ability to reflect on the previous year and time to think of their families back in the UK who we would not see for another five months, the road ahead was long, but days were being ticked off many a soldiers chuff chart!



**Let's just say
it was a good
evening for
QDG branding**



After the Christmas Day service the Task Group returned to the Cookhouse, the Seniors and Officers went about their work in making sure everything was prepared for the arrival of the soldiers. The two can rule was in play, the food was ready, and everyone was in place for the two sittings that would follow. Lunch was a roaring success and, minus a couple of rogue sprouts, every single plate was cleared. After lunch the Commanding Officer instigated a sing off which saw 200 soldiers raging verbal war against each other with the 12 days of Christmas, quite a site to behold (and hear)!

After a full stomach and a couple of films, we then sat down to some BBQ food and a quiz, the evening ran smoothly and was great. Personnel from all other nations were invited to join us and we all had a great evening, even the piano was dusted off for a short while.

The temperature on Christmas day was over 40 degrees, there was no snow and we all missed the usual regimental festivities, along with seeing our families over the Christmas period. With all this in mind, we look forward to making the most of next Christmas when we will all be back in the UK... Whingeing about how cold it is and sharing our best "this one time in Mali" dits.

A special mention must be made for the Regimental Comrades' Association and Mark Ashley-Miller who put together a plan to deliver hampers to the loved ones of all QDG deployed. From all members of the LRRG and I deployed at Christmas, it was nice to know that our families would receive a hamper at such a special time and we massively appreciated it - Diolch.

DC



Merry Christmas ya filthy animals!

B Squadron

B Sqn arrived back to Swanton Morley for 2022 ready for the challenges of the year ahead. With B Sqn having just taken the lead on winter sports, deploying an almost entirely novice team of ten soldiers on Ex White Knight, the RAC and AAC's annual alpine skiing training and racing camp in Verbier, Switzerland. Once back to Swanton Morley, the Squadron immediately began to prepare for its next taskings. The Squadron was initially divided, with two Troops, 2nd and 3rd, headed for sunny Salisbury Plain, and another two, 1st and 4th, headed for the warmth of West Africa. During this time the Ukraine crisis was heating up and Major O'Shea got pulled from the warm embrace of Regimental Duty and temporarily seconded to the Permanent Joint Head Quarters (PJHQ) in Northwood to help run the J3 Desk. This combined with the fact that the Squadron had belatedly been taken Ex RATTLESNAKE which had been due to take place in the USA meant that some fast planning had to take place in order to keep the soldiers enthused and trained.

Lt Dickie Fullaway took the lead in Sierra Leone, where he and his team delivered Peace Support Operations training to the Royal Sierra Leonian Armed Forces. This STTT marked the first of many in B Sqn's crosshairs and provided the Sqn with a valuable experience and understanding of how to deliver such training, as well as giving the troops confidence in their subject knowledge and lesson delivery skills in testing environments. B Sqn has since had a fruitful relationship with BPST(A) and has been able to send small teams across the continent to deliver a diverse mix of training programmes to host nations.



Whilst some were enjoying their trip abroad, two Troops were battling the elements whilst supporting the Light Dragoons in their Battle-group validation on Ex Wessex Storm. The Exercise was aptly named as the troops were battered by the 70mph winds of three back-to-back storms: Dudley, Eunice and Franklin. Whilst not the preferred setting for most, Ex Wessex Storm gave the Troops an excellent opportunity to both develop their mounted skills and to bond as a team. It also gave commanders an insight into how other Light Cav Regiments do business and lead to the adaptation of some Tp SOPs.

With the Spring came a plethora of

activities, including a continued MAB support role in which B Sqn provided Civ Pop and Enemy for a number of serials in a host of locations, from hotels in Birmingham to the tube at Wembley. This not only allowed the Troops to enjoy the experience of sim-munition, but also highlighted to them the complexity of counter-terrorism environments and gave an insight into what a career with UKSF could look like.

Later in the Spring, B Sqn had the privilege of conducting multi-activity AT in the beautiful setting of Bavaria, Germany. For many of the Sqn, this was their first experience of kayaking or mountain biking and this has inspired

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For many of the Sqn, this was their first experience of kayaking or mountain biking



A brisk morning for pipes and phys!

many to bid for their own AT courses in order to gain qualifications and progress towards being an instructor. AT provides an excellent platform for troops to test themselves in an enjoyable but risky environment and also encourages Troop bonding and cohesion. All who deployed made the most of their two weeks and this was certainly a highlight of B Sqn's year. The Army Lodges in Bavaria are a real jewel in the Defence Estate crown, providing a brilliant service and also a tremendous location from which AT can be conducted. We intend to go back there next year and build upon the experiences that we had, Bavaria in the late spring is pretty hard to beat...!

The Freedom of Dereham parade on the 28th of June 2022 marked the start of a month of parades across England and Wales for the entire Regiment. They allowed the Unit to connect with our wider Regimental family, in the recruiting grounds that the vast majority of our Soldiers call home. There they celebrated and reflected on what had been an extremely busy 18 months for the QDG. B Sqn filled the marching ranks of Waterloo Division spending three weeks moving from location to location around Wales and the Border Counties proudly parading in front of their friends, families and home communities. Being able to conduct tasks like this is a real privilege, and keeps the Army in the eyes of the Public. The receptions were all excellent and fun was had by everyone. As a Welsh regiment being based in East Anglia (classic Army...!) this was a real opportunity to connect with our historical roots, and a real highlight was the Cardiff Parade where King Charles (then Prince Charles) took the salute and was front and centre of a truly excellent Regimental photograph.

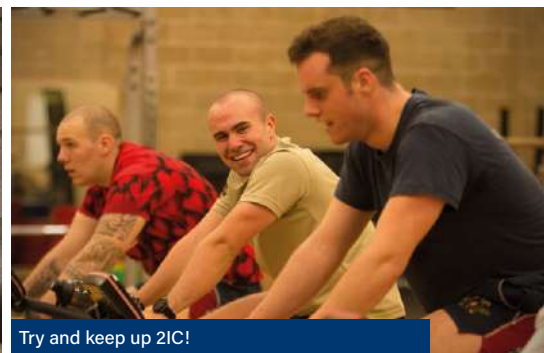
Throughout the end of July, B Sqn deployed on Op UNITY, the Military Assistance to Civil Authority (MACA) support to the Commonwealth Games. Soldiers were utilised in security roles at several locations across Birmingham. This provided an excellent opportunity for soldiers to interact with the public and to witness a wide variety of world class live sport. Highlights of the deployment included the marshalling of the rugby sevens at the Alexander Stadium and the women's cricket at Edgbaston. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity to have access to such open an event as the Commonwealth Games at such close quarters and was an excellent segway into summer leave for all of B Sqn. This was helped by the accommodation in Cannock Chase Forrest which provided a variety of challenging running routes and a wonderful backdrop to relax when not on task. This was a memorable time for B Sqn and one where we were able to grow as a collective, and crucially hone



Holkham Beach Phys



Corsham Mines entrance



Try and keep up 2IC!



Mr Navunisaravi leaving B Sqn



Sgt Casey being promoted



B Sqn / Waterloo Division on Parade



Get on your belt buckles!



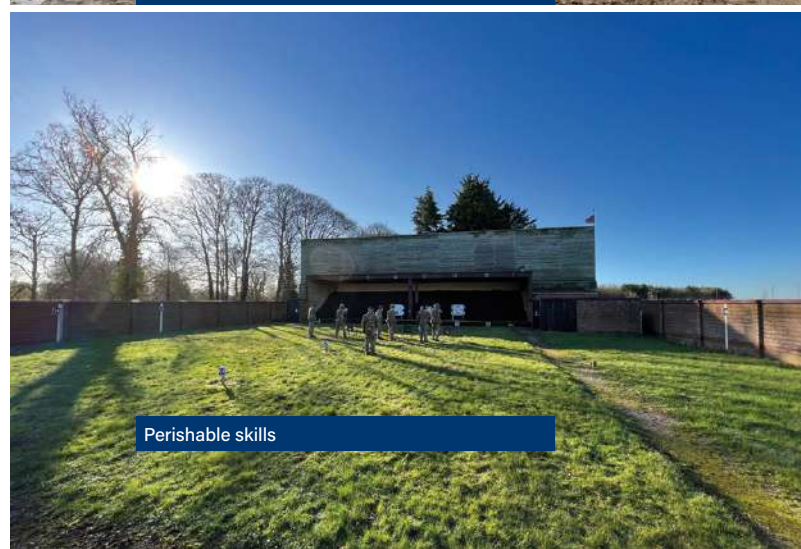
Maj O'Shea leaving PJHQ at 0300



The ace of spades! The ace of spades!



QDGs version of BUDS.



Perishable skills



The 2IC rarely spotted outside the office



Maj O'Shea hosting the Kuwaiti Delegation

volleyball skill to a standard that would have almost certainly guaranteed a podium place in the Games themselves.

During the first week August, 2Lts Toby Clark and Harry Swailes took a novice crew of QDG soldiers to Cowes week. There they competed in a week of competitive, and extremely prestigious, inshore yacht racing. The QDG were racing onboard White Knight VII, a J109 belonging to the Royal Armoured Corp. The best result of the week was 6th out of a fleet of 20 boats with the QDG finishing the week with an overall position of 11th.

Once the Sqn returned in September 2022 there had been a major re-orbat. WO2 Navunisaravi moved from B Sqn SSM to MT, Sgt Williams to the Training Wing and Lt Fulloway to an RHQ role. Whilst it is always sad to say goodbye to friends and colleagues, it is also a crucial part of Regimental life and very important to ensure that the four Sqn remain balanced with experience and leadership. WO2 McKinnon arrived to take the reins as SSM and Lt's Clark and Swailes "parachuted" in post a good showing on Crew Commanders. This also coincided with the move of QDG from 7X / 1(UK)XX to 1 DRS BCT / 3(UK)XX. This would mean a return to conventional warfighting as a mainstay and a much greater focus on NATO based exercises.

This allowed B Sqn to harness the hard-won experience gained throughout



On parade the night before the state funeral

sequential Op NEWCOMBE tours and then distil it into something that would generate a potent reconnaissance force for the Warfighting Division. The Deep Recce Strike Brigade Combat Team (DRS BCT) also stood up as a formation at this time. QDG, RL, and HCR provided the ground manoeuvre elements supported by a plethora of rocket and heavy artillery regiments. For the old and bold (most likely to be found in the MT / QM Dept...!) this can be seen as a return to "old school" Formation Recce doctrine. This is not an inaccurate assessment, but crucially for the QDG we are the only wheeled recce unit within the Brigade, and, with AJAX being slower than we would all like to arrive in service,

the only unit who actually has operational experience on the platform we'd use for real.

crucially for the QDG we are the only wheeled recce unit within the Brigade



The new Sqn was immediately put to the test during Op BALLAM (security support to the State Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II). Both B and C Sqn arrived at very short notice in to central London, accommodated in a disused office block above St James Tube Station, in regards to the accommodation I think it's fair to say its' charm lay in its austerity, but the less said about that the better! The main task revolved around supporting the Metropolitan Police in stewarding the enormous crowds that had descended on London from around the globe. Again, B Sqn did extremely well, already used



Ex BRAVO FIND



If I squint I can see Norwich play from here!

to public facing tasks from experiences in the summer. It would be wrong to say a “highlight” but it was a memorable honour and privilege being formed up next to the Mall and watching the funeral procession pass. Another would be being formed up for the national two minutes of silence outside our temporary base, in front of the public and then being loudly applauded for our effort, along with cheers of “God save the king!”

Upon returning to Norfolk the Squadron embarked upon a very busy two months of Basic Combat Skills exercises and Regimental level cadres. We conducted Ex BRAVO FIND which saw us deploy

onto Salisbury Plain Training Area and conduct low level reconnaissance skills. Exercises like this are crucial to remain current and competent in our war

fighting capability, the utility of practicing low level skills cannot be underestimated. It also afforded the Squadron a great opportunity to deploy in its new orbat and test the new troop constructs. It is always great to exercise on Salisbury Plain, and for the Crew Commanders serves to remind us all of earlier times in our careers. After this B Sqn was responsible for an iteration of the PNCO

Cadre and also the Recce Cadre – this was the first of its kind and designed at generating a level of parity for newly

arrived soldiers. This is especially important given the fact that a lot of the basic training had been disrupted during lockdowns etc. The Squadron finished the training year conducting some urban training in Corsham Mines. This is a unique training opportunity and was a great way to lead into the festive period.

The Squadron now looks towards 2023 where we will start the year with an overseas training exercise in Kuwait – Ex DESERT WARRIOR – which will give us a chance to work alongside a partner nation, conduct counter recce training and also set up strategic level engagement opportunities through our tactical actions. It’s been an excellent year for B Sqn and we look set to meet the challenges and opportunities of 2023 with relish!

RAOS

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**It is always
great to
exercise on
Salisbury Plain**

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Computer says no!



Corsham Mines...



... a safe operating environment!

C Squadron

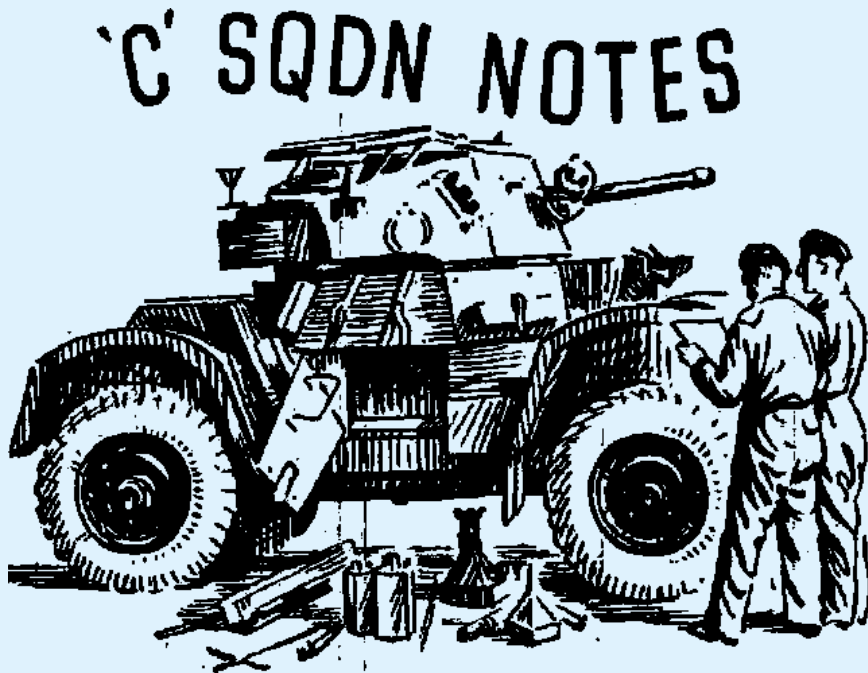
To break the habit of a lifetime, this year's journal article isn't going to claim that this year has been busy and hectic, but instead that it has been varied, with it involving a wide range of diverse activity. This range has encompassed everything from adventure training in Croatia, skiing in France, vehicle trials in Devon, all the way through to exercises in the depths of Corsham mines, support to a state funeral and exercises in Oman. C Squadron has been fortunate to experience these activities and it has proved a rewarding year.

The Year Begins

The year started after some well-earned Christmas leave when the Squadron could recharge batteries following the arduous deployment on Operation NEWCOMBE 2. These first few weeks were not only spent acclimatising to January weather in the UK, having come from 50 degrees Celsius in Mali, but also conducting administration to ensure everyone was safely and successfully back in the UK and in work. Towards the end of January, we donned our blue United Nations Berets again and headed over to Kendrew Barracks for the medals parade hosted by The 2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment (The Poachers). The Squadron, alongside the rest of the Task Force, received their medals from Commander Field Army, Lieutenant General Ralph Wooddisse KCB, CBE, MC. Despite some fairly rusty drill, it was a beautiful day, with bright sunny skies and the Squadron were fortunate to receive the UN medal in front of our friends and families. To celebrate, the officers' celebrated with a Partners Dinner night at the weekend, which was a nice end to the Mali chapter and saw everyone adorning their new mounted medals for the first time.

Beach Runs

The first few months of 2022 also saw the introduction of an activity which would become a monthly C Squadron staple – beach runs. There was no better way to help people adjust to the UK climate than a run along Holkham Beach in the brisk wind and usually wet weather associated with the North Norfolk Coast. These PT sessions saw the Physical Training Instructors, under the watchful eye of Segreant Nick Taylor, put the Squadron through its paces with a number of grueling tasks. This included everything from log runs and stretcher carries to wrestling in the surf. The majority of which



was of great amusement to the onlooking British public. Whilst most certainly 'second degree fun, these beach runs were mostly enjoyable, especially with the bacon and sausage baps and a cup of coffee from the nearby café becoming a welcome treat after each session.

Project THUNDERCAT

Another enduring theme which transcended the battle rhythm was continued work towards Project THUNDERCAT, the Light Cavalry's working group to update the vehicle we routinely use – the High Mobility Terrain Vehicle (HMTV). Throughout the year and across the country, members of the Squadron would attend working groups, forums and steering groups, all with the aim of feeding back our experience from operating on the platform in Mali. One of the highlights, was a trip to Devon to visit Supacat, the manufacturers of the HMTV. After a morning of feedback and meetings, Major Bryn Williams, Lieutenant Ed Dillon, Sergeant Johnny Canning and Corporal Ross Casey were privileged to try one of Supacat's new concept off road vehicles. The vehicle was basically a lightweight dune buggy with a tremendous engine. Once shown the ropes, we were allowed a quick spin around the Devonshire countryside which was great fun and resulted in some wide muddy grins. A similarly interesting day was also spent on the South Coast, when members of C Squadron attended a forum run by scientists to understand the future of armoured vehicles. The

forum 'Concept Mobility' showed off concept vehicles, unmanned drones and a plethora of interesting, and sometimes quirky gadgets.

Lessons Learnt

Another way the Squadron imparted their experiences from their recent operational tour to Mali was through a series of lectures and conferences hosted throughout the UK. The highlight of these was when a group of ten personnel from C Squadron, ranging from Trooper to Major, visited the Army Foundation College in Harrogate. This trip was hosted by Lieutenant Colonel Simon Farebrother MC the Commanding Officer of the college and former B Squadron Leader. The brief was an excellent opportunity for all ranks to impart their operational knowledge and experience to a younger generation with the presentation encompassing basic vehicle operation, all the way through to the reasons behind the involvement in the United Nations mission in Mali. Special mention must go to Lance Corporals Lily, Wright and Spencer, who only recently promoted, presented for ten minutes to an audience of almost 200 junior soldiers and support staff.

To assist with the pre deployment training of the Royal Scot Dragoon Guards, similar briefs were given throughout their build up training, as well as by C Squadron members supporting their mission rehearsal exercises and ranges. Over the course of the year, C Squadron



There was no better way to help people adjust to the UK climate than a run along Holkham Beach in the brisk wind and usually wet weather





I'm sure I put blues on orders – if I stand still they won't notice!

had contributed to a number of events, articles and feedback sessions to ensure that the knowledge from their time in the desert was passed on to the next rotations.

St David's Day

Despite being deployed on Operation NEWCOMBE 3, the Regimental Headquarters were keen to continue Regimental traditions, and so at the beginning of March, when the Task Force had returned from a patrol, the Regiment celebrated St David's Day with a series of fun challenges split between Mali and Robertson Barracks. These challenges varied from running the furthest distance, making of Welsh Cakes, obtaining radio 'shout outs' and social media uploads. C Squadron formed part of the 'Rear Operations Group' for this Regimental day and all members of the Squadron enjoyed taking part. A special mention must go to Sergeant Adam Humphreys' for coordinating the drawing of a QDG Regimental cap-badge on Strava, an excellent feat of digital and physical engineering. The day was great fun and thankfully, C Squadron alongside the ROG won the day!

AT

As the winter months turned into early spring, the forecast of events was primarily occupied by a series of

Adventure Training opportunities. These were designed and organised by the C Squadron Officers whilst deployed in Mali and despite numerous challenges, they all went ahead and included members from across the Army who we had served with.

Ex DOWNHILL DRAGON

The first trip overseas was to the Alps, where Lieutenant Tom Wills had organised an excellent ski trip for the majority of the Squadron to Les Deux Alps. After a monumentally long coach journey and ferry crossing, 45 personnel from the Squadron arrived in the beautiful Alpine resort, with wooden chalets, snow covered mountains and quaint mountain restaurants. As is traditional, everyone got acquainted to the resort by experiencing the local bars and clubs into the early hours of the morning! With sore heads, the Squadron was organised into skiing ability groups, varying from Ski Foundation 1 for beginners to Ski Foundation 3 for those with previous experience and qualifications. Throughout the rest of the week, the Squadron enjoyed excellent skiing tuition from a range of instructors from across Defence; individuals progressed from the

beginner green slopes to more arduous red and sometimes black runs. Special mentions must go to Lance Corporal Thomas for conquering his fear of

sliding downhill and Corporal Gilliam for spending most of the week crashing into various parts of the mountain. After a week, everyone managed to obtain a qualification and after one final night to celebrate the end of a good week, and the start of the six nations, the Squadron headed home to Norfolk. It is hoped that this exercise will become a staple in the QDG Regimental forecast of events.

Ex CAPSIZED EAGLE

Ex CAPSIZED EAGLE took place in early April 2022 under the coordination of Captain Bertie Lewis. This expedition saw ten personnel from QDG travel to the Island of Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands to enjoy a challenging and exciting sea kayaking package. Fuerteventura is one of the best locations in the world for sea kayaking due to the near perfect weather conditions and beautiful coast lines to explore. Captain Lewis had managed to organise world class instructors who provided the tuition over the five-day course. This included instruction from the basics of movement and control to more complex activities such as recovery and capsize skills. Towards the end of the week, the group were well verse in understanding the impact of wind, basic route navigation and complex recovery at sea. The course culminated in a 15km trip to a stunning smaller island off the east coast. On arrival, everyone was awarded the qualification. The week was physically demanding, but the accommodation included a pool which was used for rehabilitation and to relax overused shoulder muscles. The island itself boosted fantastic Spanish food and culture which the team spent

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A special
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Strava



the evenings enjoying. A superb time was had by the entire team, and it was a great opportunity to recuperate and relax after the arduous deployment on Op NEWCOMBE 2.

Ex EAGLE EAGLE

Another April expedition was the C Squadron Golf team going on tour to the Algarve in Portugal and playing the Carvoeiro Golfe Club. The trip started with an early start at the airport and the obligatory early morning coffee/pint. Here the team convened and, due to the airport workforce crisis, had plenty of time to talk about their swings and how they would try to get birdies and eagles. It was clear after the warmup round that most of the team were indeed deluded and that just getting the ball in the correct direction was the main priority. Sergeant Major Taylor claimed at one stage that he 'would never play again' and was off to sell his clubs. Fortunately, the team were back on form for the subsequent matches. Lance Corporal Lewis scored the best overall throughout the week and despite slander from Corporal Harrison, Lance Corporal Lewis also managed to make the most of his handicap to take 2nd place throughout the week. Captain Seb Maxell deserves special praise for not only surviving the C Squadron banter for a week but for also losing more golf balls than the rest of the entire team combined. Whilst the author is unable to verify, Captain Cooper claims to have scored an Eagle (apparently a good score in golf) on the final hole of the week, during a closely fought battle with Sergeant Major Davies 220. Overall, the week was a brilliant week of competitive and well-natured golf played in the sunshine and set the golf team up for future opportunities and success.

Ex SEA EAGLE

Ex SEA EAGLE or Exercise 'Seagull' as it became affectionally known was designed to provide members of C Squadron with the opportunity to test their sailing skills and earn some sailing qualifications. After jumping through the required paperwork challenges and a particularly frustrating Lifejacket legislation debacle, it was plain sailing from there, and officers and soldiers from the squadron set off for the Dalmatian Coast in Croatia. The plan was ruthlessly simple – a week exploring the islands which make up much of Croatia's coastline. The sailing was progressive, starting with boat familiarisation and the learning of technical elements, and knots, progressing to the more complex elements of sailing. Typically, when the knowledge and experience was at its lowest, the crew experienced a Croatian storm, but they thankfully managed to negotiate it and learnt some valuable



Parade Prep

skills. Once the storm clouds had cleared, the crew settled into a good rhythm, getting to grips with life on board ship. Time was provided at the end of each day for the crew to jump ship and explore the many islands which dominate the region. Over the course of the week and under the excellent tutelage of Lieutenant Toby Clark, the crew perfected their roles and responsibilities, consistently showing up other crews in the harbour at the end of each day. The self-proclaimed 'long-range sailing patrol' saw the crew visit four separate islands and even stumble across a decommissioned soviet era nuclear submarine pen! With tans topped up and thirsts quenched, the team headed back to the UK after a thoroughly enjoyable week.

Ex RUCKING DRAGON

On a glorious summer's Friday afternoon, the C Squadron rugby team departed for Dendermonde in Belgium to take part in the annual Flanders 10s rugby tournament. This international tournament encompasses the full spectrum of rugby, from the beer drinking rugby clubs to the fully professional rugby athletes and international veterans. The C Squadron team under the guidance of Sergeant De Jongh could hold its own at both ends of the spectrum, being able to enjoy the local beer at times but also playing competitive and good quality rugby. The team entered into the 'Social Cup' which is a social tournament played in the spirit of rugby, despite some of the games being fiercely contested and including some of the greats of the game. Throughout the week, the team played six games, winning three, drawing one and losing two. These games included playing a team of French ballerinas, through to a German military team. In the evenings all the teams would come together for entertainment, the highlight being when all 3000 people joined together in the central tent for the prize giving; this event showed the wide ranging and varied audience which attends and how the game brought people together from across the world.

The team used the journey back from Dendermonde as an opportunity to visit the various battlefields in the region. This included the site of Waterloo and the pivotal battles of both the First and Second World Wars. Spending a full day



Op BALLAM

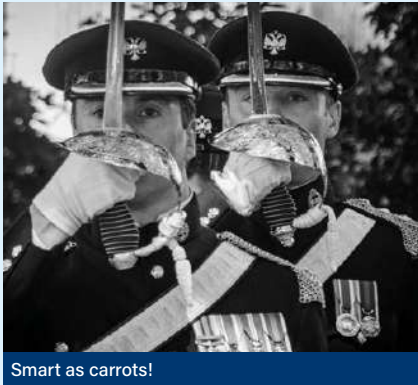
visiting the battle of Waterloo, learning how the Regimental forebears valiantly fought was an experience which the team will not forget – a poignant end to the week.

Ex URBAN EAGLE

After a series of post tour activities, including presentations, leave and adventure training, as spring turned to summer, the Squadron began to focus on a return to soldering. On 23 May, C Squadron deployed to Corsham Mines Training Area, part of the Salisbury Plain training estate. The purpose of this deployment was to conduct a dismounted urban exercise focussed on building core knowledge in this battlefield discipline. The deployment to Corsham Mines had followed a week of in-camp training, increasing the overall capability of the Squadron prior to operating in more complex terrain. The Corsham Mine complex is made up of 284 acres of underground tunnels and rooms, perfect for testing soldiers in multifaceted terrain with limited communications and no natural light. Soldiers initially practiced in Fire Team groups before progressing to Section, Troop and finally Squadron serials.

C Squadron, the first QDG Squadron to have operated in these mines, proved their capacity and capability to operate in this demanding terrain. The environment tested every level of command and showed that from Trooper to Squadron Leader, each person was integral to the battle and would have to seek ways of adding value at all times. Particularly important were the Corporals and Lance Corporals leading their fire teams and sections, all of whom performed incredibly well given the lack of previous training in the environment. The week proved to be a huge success and verified the ability for Light Cavalry formations to operate in the urban environment. Whilst this remains primarily an infantry tasking, C Squadron demonstrated QDG soldiers can be asked to fulfil any task asked of them to a very high standard.

Whilst deployed on Ex URBAN EAGLE, three members of the Squadron were fortunate to head to London for the day to be part of the United Nations Peace Keeping day in Whitehall. This was attended by numerous personnel from not only the British Army but other



Smart as carrots!

countries contributing to peace keeping missions throughout the world. Corporal Rugan, Lance Corporal Simms and Lance Corporal Francis represented the Squadron, donning their blue berets again for the event, which included a march through London City, a reception with numerous dignitaries and an opportunity to pay respects to those who had died whilst in the duty of peacekeeping. The three who attended represented the Squadron well and gave another opportunity for the QDG to be celebrated on parade.

PNCO Cadre including exercise and Bayonet Range

Alongside the return to basic soldering, C Squadron organised a Potential Non-Commissioned Officer course for those junior soldiers who required the qualification ahead of promoting. This saw a week of in-camp lessons followed by a week on exercise on Thetford Training Area. The in-camp lessons, taught by a range of both Officers and Soldiers included the roles and responsibilities of an NCO, map reading, values and standards and an introduction to the combat estimate. These lessons were all then tested during the arduous exercise, where the young soldiers were tested through section attacks, night navigation exercises and basic field administration. As part of the course, the students were also put through a bayonet range. Again, another element which was second degree fun and despite some very wet and tired junior soldiers, there were some big smiles as each student successfully completed this element. To mark the completion of the course, the lead instructors – Lieutenant Ed Dillon and Sergeant Pugh conducted a formal parade for the successful soldiers. This was attended by Brigadier Guy Foden, the new commander of 7th Infantry Brigade. After a successful parade and the awarding of the prizes, including top student to Trooper Sally Faulkener, there was a welcome period of leave for rest and recuperation.

Parade Season

As spring turned to summer and the QDG Task force returned from completing



A far cry from Augusta!

Operation NEWCOMBE 3, the Squadron focus shifted to the opportunity to complete a series of Home Coming parades to celebrate the successful operational phase. Once the programme for Ex EAGLES RETURN was released, the Squadron took their time to ensure their uniforms fitted well and that they got their heads back into foot drill. As the Squadron Sergeant Major, WO2 Gareth Roberts, noted, the majority of this preparation involved exchanging uniform due to the amount of weight lost experienced over the deployment on operations.

The first of the formal parades was the Freedom of Dereham Parade. C Squadron took the lead for this parade and ensured there was some fine Cavalry swagger. Despite a few timing, tongue and tik tok related issues, the Regiment looked exceptionally smart as it practiced its freedom of the local town and commenced the start of the parade season. The Squadron, along the rest of the Regiment then transitioned to Maindy Barracks in Cardiff. After a few days of rehearsals, the Squadron was fortunate to participate in the Freedom of Cardiff Parade in the presence of our Colonel-in-Chief, at the time, the Prince of Wales. This was the first time many soldiers had ever marched with a live drum and in the presence of Royalty. Despite this pressure, due to the steadying hand of some of the more senior members of the Squadron, the Prince of Wales received a smart salute from the marching division and a fun march through the city centre. To celebrate the occasion, a BBQ was held in Maindy Barracks followed by a quiet night in...

In amongst the demanding parade schedule and the scrutiny of the RSM's

drill programme, the Squadron was able to take full advantage of Maindy Barracks' premium location during the evenings and weekends. This included visiting both the Regimental Museum – The Firing Line, and the Principality Stadium. Mr Darren Carew, a former Senior NCO within C Squadron during Op HERRICK 9, who now works for the Welsh Rugby Union was generously able to provide free tickets to the Squadron for a grand tour of the Principality Stadium. All that went had a thoroughly enjoyable tour, with highlights included lining up in the tunnel looking out onto the pitch and having access to the changing rooms,



In true rugby and soldier style, the majority of the tour was spent with the Welsh and English mocking one another



press room and executive boxes. In true rugby and soldier style, the majority of the tour was spent with the Welsh and English mocking one another and their rugby achievements. It was also during this visit that Captain Will Groome generously offered to purchase two hospitality boxes for the 2023 Six Nations season for the benefit of the Regiment. It is this dedication to the Regiment which means Captain Groome will leave the Regiment next year with the affection of members of the Squadron.

Following Cardiff, the Squadron then moved north to Wrexham for the freedom parade. Lance Corporal Tyler Roberts quickly became the local tour guiding pointing out all the top dining destinations – all one of them. Wrexham was a long but well-received parade. Of note, it was nice to have the Regimental Comrades attend in force, not only for the parade but also for the reception which followed. Many drinks were shared by serving and veterans of C Squadron.

Towards the end of the parade season

and with a few sore heads, the focus switched back to South Wales as we headed to Swansea. At this stage we had been well prepared and had experience of the parades. However, no-one was quite prepared enough for just how long this freedom parade was! Despite the marathon march, local media posts and videos showed some excellent footage of a smart and well-disciplined Regiment. In the post parade reception, the OC, 2IC and SSM were acquainted with another former C Squadron soldier, Mr Tony Shuttleworth. Mr Shuttleworth shared his stores of serving in Aden with the Squadron in the 50s which were thoroughly appreciated.

Unfortunately, the Herford parade was cancelled due to extreme hot weather, so the Sqn returned to Norfolk having represented themselves to an exemplary standard throughout the parades. Heads were held high, and all looked forward to some summer leave.

Charity Golf Event

Just before some well-earned summer leave, and on the hottest day of the year, the C Squadron golf team had another outing, but on this occasion for charity. Sergeant Daniel Pugh, Lance Corporal Sell and Lance Corporal Shaw embarked on a charity event for McMillan's Cancer research. The aim was to spread awareness of cancer and to raise £500 for this important charity, and this was achieved by the team playing golf continuously for the daylight hours. They played numerous local golf courses but without stopping. As this coincided with the summer solstice, that meant almost 21 hours of golf! In total 25 miles were walked, and 72 holes of golf were played. Despite some sunburnt faces and sore shoulders, the team managed to 'drive' past the initial target and raised over £700 for McMillan, an excellent result.

Ex BARBARY STAR

In October 2022, a few members of C Squadron had the privilege to join the Royal Yeomanry (RY) as they conducted their Potential Non-Commission Officer cadre in Gibraltar. The course started bright and early on a Monday morning where the students woke to see the famous Gibraltar rock. From this morning onwards, each day the students thought that at some stage they would be made to run up it! The first few days of the course involved the Army Leadership Development Programme which included lessons on training delivery, the role of a NCO, health and safety and values and stand-

ards. To make the most of the location, the first few days also had a battlefield study integrated into it. This focused on the importance of Gibraltar and the rock itself during the Second World War. The second half of the course was a four-day exercises in and around the tunnels and training areas of Gibraltar. This exercise focussed on the basics, but everyone was placed into command appointments at varying stages so that their suitability for command could be assessed. Lance Corporal Edwards mentioned that the highlights of this exercise were the close quarter battle training, patrolling through the centre of Gibraltar town, bunker clearances and learning about the extensive tunnels and fortification which were built during the war, a hugely impressive feat of engineering.

Op BALLAM / Op LONDON BRIDGE

As you will all be aware, in September, Her Majesty The Queen passed away after over 70 years on the Throne. On her passing, the military enacted Operation LONDON BRIDGE, which is the colossal military support to the period of national mourning and the state funeral itself. To assist in the delivery of this operation, another operation called Operation BALLAM was introduced. The aim of Operation BALLAM was to provide additional troop support to the Metropolitan Police, security services, marshals and other agencies in London. C Squadron were selected to provide 80 soldiers to this contingent and therefore a few days after the passing of The Queen,

C Squadron found themselves yet again deploying on an operation, this time to London. After numerous coach journeys and a lot of waiting around, C Squadron arrived in St James in central London. Here we found ourselves accommodated in a massive disused department store above the tube station. Despite being told that the accommodation and food would be good (ha!), the Squadron were merely given roll mats and told to sleep on the floor of disused office blocks – all very odd. The first few days were a frantic blur of activity as everyone massed onto the site and tried to identify what our role would be. On several occasions, the Squadron deployed to support police vehicle checkpoints and to help manage the infamous queue which was forming to see Her Majesty lying in state. Aside from these tasks there was a lot of waiting around. Everyone got used to 'playing the system' with every person of the Squadron taking advantage of the ability to 'go for a run' around London. It

is amazing how many of the Squadron took up marathon length runs over this period, and, even more remarkable how Stella Artois was the choice of hydration! Towards the end of the period of state mourning, the Squadron was used more and more to help the police and provide crowd control. On the day of the Funeral itself, the Squadron were on notice to move, but managed to find a spot near Buckingham Palace to pay respects and observe the funeral procession. Despite being a very sombre period in our national history, all members of the Squadron were honoured to be part of this event and wish The King, a long and happy reign. C Squadron again returned to Norfolk after a multitude of forms of transport, including trains.

Handover

After two and a half years in Command of C Squadron, in October, Major Bryn Williams handover over the Squadron to the second-in-command, Captain George Barham. Major Williams gave an emotional farewell to the Squadron, presenting them with a United Nations flag which had been signed by all those who had deployed on Operation NEWCOMBE 2. In his leaving speech, he couldn't help but finish with a few quotes which had become ingrained in the Squadron, particularly 'Be Steady and Be Blue,' and 'in the Great Sand Sea, the Cavalry are King!'

A look to 2023

After a varied and thoroughly enjoyable year, the Squadron now begins to look at the horizon for future events. These primarily involve a deployment to Texas in the USA to support the multinational exercise - Exercise WARFIGHTER. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, a number of the Squadron will also be involved in supporting the training provided to Ukrainians, which will be a valuable contribution to the war effort and one which I know the Squadron will excel at.

Promotions/Awards

Before we close for this year, it is important to recognise a few members of the Squadron who have received honours and awards throughout 2022. Most notably, Sergeant Adam Humphreys, who was awarded a mention in Dispatches for his acts of bravery whilst in contact with the enemy on Operation NEWCOMBE 2. Major Williams and Lance Corporal Wright received Joint Commanders' Commendations for their time deployed on this operation. To recognise her support to females in peace keeping Lance Corporal (then Trooper) Faulkener was awarded the civilian Rising Star award which is a tremendous accolade.

BW & GB



the Squadron were merely given roll mats and told to sleep on the floor of disused office blocks – all very odd

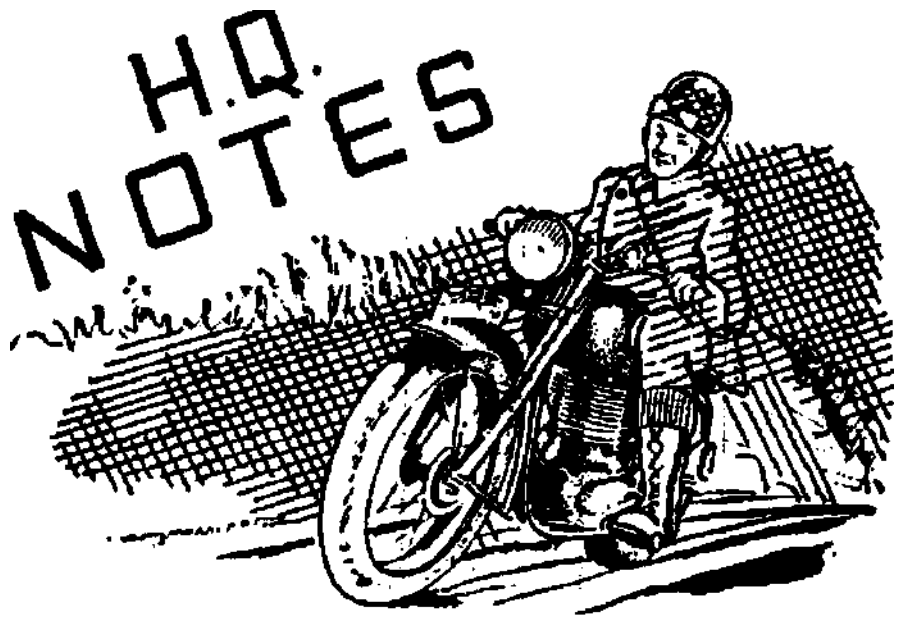


HQ Squadron

One of the most inspiring quotes I've read is from Winston Churchill, he said, "To each, there comes in their lifetime a special moment when they are figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered the chance to do a very special thing... what a tragedy if that moment finds them unprepared for that which could have been their finest hour." Churchill also often remarked, "If you want something done well, find a busy person to do it." I am sure that when our taskmasters in Army HQ need a job doing well, they turn to a trusted and 'busy' unit, so QDG often receives the 'tap on the shoulder'. It is Headquarter Squadrons job to make sure the regiment is always prepared for our 'finest hour'.

For HQ Sqn 2022 was a year of two very distinct halves. Firstly, from Jan to Jun HQ was the Rear Operations Group (ROG) for Op Newcombe 3. Under normal circumstances, a ROG consists of a skeleton crew left to hold the fort whilst the regiment is deployed, however, QDG elements of Op Newcombe 3 consisted of A Sqn, some enablers from HQ and RHQ. The above left the lion's share of the regiment (HQ Sqn, B & C) under command of the ROG led by OC HQ, Maj Rob Mansel. Secondly, from July to Dec, HQ, and the Sabre Sqn's (all now recovered from Op Newcombe) were focused on recovery and rebuilding. This was the first time the regiment had been together in one place for an extended period in a few years, and was marked by parades, adventurous training, courses, a new Commanding Officer, and resubordinating to the 1st Deep Reconnaissance Strike Brigade Combat Team (1 DRS BCT)

The beginning of the year saw activities you would expect to see to support dependants of deployed service personnel, including Sunday lunches in the regimental restaurant and Messes, BBQs, and functions. This support continued throughout the deployed period, firstly under the guidance of the Unit Welfare Officer (UWO), Capt Gaz Pearce (until Apr) and continuing with the new UWO Capt John Davies. Gaz moved on to take the post of Ground Liaison Officer with the new F35 Lightning Sqn in RAF Marham, we wish him and his family all the very best of luck



and we welcome John and family with warm congratulations on successfully gaining his Late Entry Commission.

January also saw the QM and MT departments switch support focus, in short order. From B Sqn attending an Overseas Training Exercise (OTX) in the USA, to a change of task in Africa (Sierra Leone) to conduct a Short-Term Training Team (STTT) task, showing good demonstration of the adaptability of the team with minimal staffing (under the direction of RQMS Dale Thomas and QM(T) Butch Davies). HQ Sqn operates in a continual plan and execute cycle, at the same time as executing the events taking place in Jan, there was a requirement to ensure the regiment was prepared for events in six months in time. It was during this period that the planning and Recce's to Wales and the Border Counties were taking place for the homecoming parades in July (Ex

Eagles Return).

February and March were months marked by change and a sprinkling of fun. Robertson Barracks perimeter fence encompasses the working camp and Service Families Accommodation (SFA), however, during Feb, HQ Sqn in conjunction with Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) managed the division of camp and SFA with a new fence line and front gate, which was a big change for many (with lots of hurdles to overcome). The work involved HQ enablers liaising with DIO and contractors and the Welfare team keeping families up to date with information. All of this was to facilitate the start of handing back housing and the first step on the road to the closure of the camp. Concurrently, we hosted the team from Army Basing and the civilian engineering company charged with designing and building our new camp in Caerwent,



Ops, Adjt & Chater

Wales. The new barracks will house QDG, 1 Rifles, Prince of Wales Division Band, and an Education Centre. It will be the MOD's flagship camp for the 21st century and completely self-sufficient in terms of energy as well as being carbon neutral. More importantly, it will see the return of QDG to the heart of its recruiting area, with a projected completion date in late 2028 – early 2029.

Not forgetting the fun, HQ / ROG hosted an all-ranks party (the first since the lifting of covid restrictions). This was a great opportunity for everyone to let off some steam and have a good time. We also celebrated St David's Day; however, this was done on 08 Mar so that we could link up with the members of the regiment deployed on Op Newcombe in Mali. The normal St David's Day challenges took place in Mali as well as Robertson Barracks via a video link, the CO managed to score the Sqn's efforts in the gym all the way from Africa, HQ Sqn coming in first place!

During March and April, members of HQ helped facilitate a Pre Non Commissioned Officers Cadre on Thetford Training Area, started preparations for the yearly logistic inspections, conducted a number of visits and took part in Adventure Training. Members of the HQ / ROG also had the opportunity to attend a battlefield study with our paired Reserve regiment, The Royal Yeomanry. The study called 'Exercise Yeoman Digger' took place over two weeks in Turkey and covered the WW1 Gallipoli campaign, the first week covering the battlefield study followed by a week sailing off the Turkish coast.

In May, OC HQ and Capt Matt Hansen (ROG 2IC) were invited to visit our Allied Regiment, The Governor General's Horse Guards (GGHG) in Toronto, Canada to celebrate Trooping of the Standard and a drumhead service. This event celebrated 200 years of continuous service to Upper Canada and Canada and to bless the Regiment's newest Battle Honour "Afghanistan." A previous visit to GGHG by the QDG Band in the early 90s certainly made an impression and the stories from that visit are legendary amongst some of the people we met. Part of the visit included attending the Canadian RAC Conference, hosted in the Ontario Regiment Tank Museum. When the curator heard we were British Army he asked, "Do you know George Clegg and Shaun Banister? One of them owes me a pack of fags." Small world! We were hosted wonderfully over the week, firm friendships made, and the bond between our two regiments strengthened. We look forward to returning the hospitality in the coming year.

In June we started to receive people returning from Op Newcombe, which marked the transition from ROG back



OC HQ and FM



Ops, Adjt & Chater



Sgt Dunn Inspecting the Food HQ BBQ



Adjt CinC & FM Cardiff



Ex Eagles Recovery



Fiji Day grogg



Mr Ruddy Ex Eagles Rtn



Ex Eagles Recovery
PTI Inst & MBike Inst



CO & Wife Fiji Day



OC HQ, Watson, Taylor & Davies HQ BBQ



Sgt Grills RET, Gen Dannet , CofR & LM Dereham



Capt Thomas & Mr Mckinnon Waterloo

to HQ Sqn. As the weather warmed up more BBQ's and Families days were organised, however, the transition did not mean a slower pace, indeed Exercise Eagles Return (Home Coming Parades) was only weeks away and had grown to include a Freedom Parade in Dereham, HRH attendance in Cardiff and an extra medals parade in Cardiff Castle. There was also time for sporting events in the form of the QDG athletics, which was hosted in the University of East Anglia athletics stadium. The regiment also sponsored the Hereford Jubilee Boxing Night in Jun, the QDG table was a perfect example of the wider QDG family and included JNCOs and partners, members of the RCA and Veterans (Sub Thomas MBE) and Officers! A great event followed by an evening in Hereford. Lt Dickie Fullway only had his Mess Kit with him but managed to borrow some clothes off various people including OC HQ (luckily, they are of similar height) so that he could join the evening in town after the event.

Throughout July the Regiment conducted Exercise Eagles Return, this included Dereham Freedom Parade and evening Cocktail Party, Cardiff Parade (With the Colonel in Chief), Op Newcombe Medals Parade (Cardiff Castle), thanksgiving service at Llandaff Cathedral, Wrexham Parade, Swansea Parade and Mansion House dinner. The final parade (Hereford) was cancelled at the eleventh hour on the recommendation of public health England due to extreme temperatures. All parades also included post parade functions. The Exercise took 12 months of planning and involved the whole regiment in its execution. This was no mean feat and completely against Army policy, which states, "Public



"If you want something done well, find a busy person to do it"



the new RCMO Capt Dale Thomas who had moved from RQMS) and we congratulate him on his successful Late Entry Commission. Even though all departments had spent the previous year at



OC HQ & QM GGHG Visit Canada

funding will only be available for 100 people to attend a freedom parade within 50 miles of base location or 50 people at further distances". The significant short fall in public funding was covered by the

Regimental Trust, without which the events would not have taken place, highlighting how lucky we are as a regimental family to have the Trust and Trustees stewardship.

After some well needed summer leave in August we hit the ground running in September with a barrage of yearly inspections. Most of the department heads were new in post after a regimental Re-Orbat (including

minimal staffing due to Op Newcombe 2 & 3 all external inspections passed with no issues, which is testament to the hard work of all team members in HQ, most covering two or even three positions.

September saw the regiment resub-ordinate from 7 Lt Mech BCT to 1st Deep Reconnaissance Strike Brigade Combat Team (1 DRS BCT) under 3rd UK Division. The immediate effect for HQ Sqn was alignment to providing Real Life Support (RLS) to Ex War Fighter in the US between Jan & May 2023. In addition to the normal drum beat of support to the regiment, this task has taken considerable planning and will see 600 supporting troops and 850 exercising troops take part in US / NATO's premier validation exercise. The RLS element will be provided by HQ and C Sqn with OC HQ as the lead.

HQ was focused on the main effort of War Fighter preparation between October and December, with over 30 ISO shipping containers filled with stores for the exercise that has been collected from all over the Army. HQ elements have been deployed in Germany, across the UK and in the US, collecting stores, conducting Recce's, and attending planning meetings. The G4 lead Capt Matt Hansen QM(A) is working on a level far above that of a normal unit QM with a budget in the millions of pounds, which is testament to the trust and reputation of QDG within the Army command.

In closing, I draw you back to my opening quote of "If you want something done well, find a busy person to do it". There has been much more activity done by HQ that I have space to cover in this article. HQ Sqn is a busy place, and I must commend all members of the Sqn for a job well done in achieving our mission of ensuring the regiment is always prepared for our 'finest hour'.

RCM



Sgt Grill RET Dereham Pde

QM Main Dept

For the hardest working department in QDG... - 2022 saw the department spread thin across the UK and Mali. The QM, Maj Dan Brown, was in Mali with: SSgt Al Pope running the logistics bridge between Mali and the UK supported by Cpl Steve Thurston; and the every-versatile Sgt Richy Powell supporting everything else G4. Their time in Mali is covered in the main Op NEWCOMBE article, so all I'll cover on Mali, is that they kept the DE mantra of 'G4 just happens' alive through their seamless delivery. The reality was the swan fable – all's calm above the water, what you can't see is the effort under the surface. As a team, a great credit to QDG under Maj Browns leadership.

Back in the UK, the start of 2022 had WO2 Dale Thomas with the rest of the QMs department working hard with the changes to RBSM (Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley). Dale jumped feet first into the LE world, post his board results the previous October. He became the QM for the ROG (Rear Ops Group) and picked up his Capt in Feb 22. He was the main G4 PoC in RBSM for the team in Mali, getting resupplies out via the RAF. Also leading with liaison between QDG and the team building the new main entrance to camp. The latter role was difficult when trying to support so many different groups that have an interest in RBSM and access.

Luckily the RCMO (not sure who that was...) was on board and secured, with APC, the move of WO2 Rhys Davies into the RQMS(A) role early to support Dale. The pair, with the support of the rest of the team in RBSM delivered through a very turbulent time. Rhys who hadn't long gotten back from Mali himself, after a deployment as SSM C, got his feet under the desk and started to deliver straight away. He'll be a credit to QDG when he takes over as RSM of the Royal Yeomanry later in 2023. He'll take them his experience on deployments and his problem-solving ability, which has been proven as RQ in 2022. Our links won't ever have been as strong, as they will be when he is RSM.

Once the team, with the rest of the 1LO, where reasonably set and ready for what 2022 had to offer: the return of QDG TG to RBSM; all the builds and heating works on the site; the marches in Norfolk and Wales; and the training events they would support. There was a steady year ahead of them, that they could plan for. Roll into May 2022, and all this would turn on its head. Over a bunch of back and too WhatsApp messages, Dale was boarding a flight to Kentucky in the USA... A five-day trip starting in Ft Leavenworth and ending after a road trip to Ft Hood in Texas, QDG had been 'volantold' to provide the RLS for 3UKXX's Ex WARFIGHTER 23.4. This task was a warm welcome from 1DRS BCT and 3UK Div, with what felt like a vertical mountain to climb. Dale put together a good recce report, got back to the UK and was heard laughing down the corridor as he said 'catch' to the RCMO – QM Des.

The RCMO looking through his memory banks of his time as the RQ(T) and bringing his time as the NSE (National Support Element) commander in Poland together, slumped in his seat... In July 22, the RCMO Capt Matt Hansen became the QM after a handover from both Dale and Dan. Supported by his new team in the QM

department, they grabbed hold of the problem and got to work: Rhys leading with getting the loan-pool equipment in, ordering 30 ISOs to RBSM and solving every issue that came up; Sgt Del Delana picking up the Accommodation SNCO role and removing some of the pressure from the rest of the team; LCpl Brad Moore getting his head into his books, to work out how we get all the DG (Dangerous goods) into the US by boat; Tpr Rowan Clow always there to support the team with a brew; and the 1LO with the new commander, SSgt Lila Gurung, getting the demands for all the kit in. The task was multi departmental and thanks must go to WO2 Martyn Ruddy and his Tech team, the LAD, MT and both C & HQ SQMSs.

Whilst the planning on how to support c.1400 troops in the US was going on, there was an opportunity to visit a similar Ex in Germany. The QM volunteered to go to Ex CERBARUS in Germany as the BGLO, so he could see

what was expected. It was a great opportunity and very quickly the task was clear – keep the brews going and don't mess people about! Taking advantage of his routes, the QM decided to take (steal) all the Ex CERB RLS kit. He got on the phone and soon there was a team, headed by SSgt Ben Wilks, driving to Sennelager to take over all the kit.

Back in the UK the department got a new inflow from the Sqns. Sgt Dean Speed was given the new role of SHE SNCO, which he has taken on and ran with supported by Capt Martin Flitcroft the AFPA. Cpl Jamie Harrison who took on three roles: two as a 2ic, SHE and Accommodation; and leads with the VERTUS store from Brad Moore.

With the focus being fixed by Ex WARFIGHTER it was great to have the support of the DIO and VIVO team on site. They understood that the QM has a limited bandwidth

and made sure they supported him. The thanks must go to Mrs Carey Cooper, Mr William Holmes, and Mr Derek Clapinson who are always working to support QDG in RBSM. Usually, they are the first to be blamed but the last to be thanked.

QDG had a great Marching period post Op NEWCOMBE. This was in no small part thanks to Lin our Taylor on camp. Most of the Soldiers needed their No2s bringing in and ribbons added. She worked hard and as always delivered. Thanks Lin.

A mentor for the QM and the wider Regiment in 22 was Capt Martyn Flitcroft. He's been at RBSM longer than QDG and has knowledge that would be lost without him. For the QM he keeps him on track with SHE and acts as a soundboard. The hope is QDG move before Martyn retires, but that's unlikely.

The part of the department that keeps the QM out of trouble is the 1LO team. This year they had: SSgt Al Pope posted out, who moved on post Mali; and will lose LCpl Asiwomi Awudy early in 23. The rest of the team with SSgt Lila are working hard, none more than Pte Limbu who is always there when there is work on.

As the QM, I owe a debt of gratitude to all the G4 team across QDG and the Civilians that support us.

MTH



**The reality
was the swan
fable – all's
calm above
the water,
what you can't
see is the
effort under
the surface**



MT Troop

From the dusty sands of Mali to the streets of the UK, members of MT have been at the core of QDG activities during 2022. Wherever there has been a QDG Sabre Sqn soldier across the globe, they have been supported by MT; Delivering kit and equipment to ports, Transporting soldiers to embark on Operational tours and ensuring the wheels are turning at RD.....MT has done it all!

With OPERATION NEWCOMBE 3 requiring a hefty input from MT, MTO Capt Trev Homer deployed as the A1 commander to Mali and SSgt Will Hughes remained at RD as MTWO in support of the ROG. Whilst the ROG battled against the ever-changing commitments with little workforce, those deployed face the greatest challenge QDG MT have faced since OP TELIC, the LRRG A1.

The LRRG A1 was the largest element to hit the ground during OPERATION NEWCOMBE. It was a monumental feat, all the heavy enabling elements moving up to 2000 Kms over 20 days covering inhospitable terrain. The entire LRRG was kept moving with fuel, rations, and water; an oft thankless task but an absolute critical one. A task that would have been unachievable without the support of Capt Homer and his A1 team. A1 had control of not only the LAD and MT assets but an additional element- The GMSG. The GMSG is a group of specialist surgeons, doctors and nurses that enabled A Sqn and A Coy R IRISH to push deeper for longer.

The GMSG ensured A1 and the LAD had plenty of opportunity to correct the doctors inability to self-recover their vehicles, they seemingly loved to seek out deep soft sand whilst cutting their own tracks. All this was a pure delight for Capt Homer and Sgt "Sky" Korovulavula, who to this day, break out into shakes of rage at the thought of axle deep sand on



MT heavy units Cpl Finlay, Cpl Ratalack, LCpl Owen

an SV commanded by a doctor.

From power lifting to marathons, the LRRG conducted various charity and competitive events whilst deployed, with Cpl 'Ratty' Ratalack, LCpl Finlay and LCpl Owen flying the MT flag during each of the testing events. Sky and Cpl Tukana playing key roles in the various rugby events often seeing Wales, Ireland, England and Fiji being pitted against each other.

June saw the return of those who deployed to Mali with most taking some well-earned leave before the Regimental re-ORBAT in September. Many moved onto other roles within the Regiment and new faces moved into the department. Capt Homer moved on to become QM(T), Cpl Yard to the QMs department and Cpl Ratalack to Bovington as a DMI. WO2 Hopkins took over as MTO with WO2 Navunisaravi in as MTWO, the steadfast Sgt Korovulavula remaining as MT Troop Sergeant. LCpl Ian Owen also remained and has kept MT in the good books with the QMs, working tirelessly to maintain the Troops green fleet holdings against the backdrop of ceaseless trawls and taskings. The stream of post-tour



A1 Commanders Battle Beast... feared by doctors and surgeons

inspections and audits have definitely caused the new team to hit the ground sprinting!

LCpl Murphy has returned to the joys of controlling the white fleet desk, his patience being tested daily by the constant stream of Troop Leaders and Troopers requesting vehicles as close to tasking as possible. Cpl Rick Williams continues to work his magic with D Licencing, creating a large pool of coach driver to enjoy the taskings that 2023 will no doubt bring. Cpl Mather has finally returned to do some work after a prolonged stint enjoying the delights of a trawl to Germany, he continues to enjoy monster in moderation.

2023 will no doubt provide sufficient challenges for MT and those who work behind the scenes to keep QDG moving and fighting.

As ever MT stand ready.....unless you want a 4x4.

RH



Standard MT leaguer Drills... shade and sliders



A1 Leaguer at sunset

Training Wing

2022 proved to be a busy year for the Training Wing with plenty of transition following the Regiment's return from Op NEWCOMBE. WO2s Ruddy, Davies, Griffiths and Navunisaravi all occupied positions in the Training Wing with Mr Navunisaravi the incumbent Training Wing Warrant Officer (TWWO). He is soon to be replaced and so the curse of the TWWO continues! To those that have worked in the Training Wing this year, the Regiment thanks you for your hard work and for the quality of job that you did.

In truth, the Training Wing were happy to see the end of QDG deployments on Operation NEWCOMBE. It is no mean feat for a Regiment to meet the training start states for such an all-encompassing deployment. Soldiers of the Training Wing worked tirelessly to organise and coordinate the courses and training for Mali (and were happy to do so). It was made worthwhile when reports returned to the Regiment of soldiers acting with endeavour and professionalism to perform well on-course.

In a post-NEWCOMBE and post-invasion-of-Ukraine setting the Training Wing set their sights on new tasks and new objectives. Activity remained largely centred around Sqn groups and high-quality training was delivered in innovative settings. Capt Groome and SSgt Hazelwood planned and delivered Urban Warfare training for C Sqn at Corsham Mines, a complex mine system close to Salisbury Plain. Concurrently, individuals from the Regiment were supporting and delivering high quality Jackal vehicle training in an overseas location to SFSG (Special Forces Support Group).

Ex EAGLES RETURN saw members of the Training Wing drive JACKALS and

COYOTE to far flung, remote and backward areas of the UK (Wales). SSgt Hazelwood is proud of the 1800+ miles covered in the vehicles with not one single vehicle "lost". Whether this relates to navigation or vehicle reliability, we'll never know.

Most recently the Training Wing acted as the key enablers for Ex MULLENS CUP. It was a real team effort with Capt Groome planning the training aided by Sgt Williams and WO2 Navunisaravi, SSgt Hazelwood, Cpl Cope and LCpl Lewis facilitating the training. MULLENS CUP 22 proved to be a real success. With not many teams able to enter (due to the high volume of Regimental activity), the competition was still able to prove the

concept of delivering physically and mentally demanding training from Robertson Barracks. PT style runs preceded tests of basic soldiering and culminated in pistol shoots on our 'in-house' 25m Range, the winners being Sgt Howell's team from A Sqn.

We now look forward to yet another busy year in 2023. The Training Wing team remain on hand to assist the Regiment with their plethora of tasks and relish the challenge of ensuring individuals, and the organisation writ large, continue to be ready for whatever is thrown their way.

WREG



Welfare Office



Cpl Bernard reliving his youth



Capt Davies embracing the tweed

2022 has been an extremely busy year for the small Welfare team. We have overseen BGHQ and A Sqn deployed to Mali, played an integral part of decompression in Gibraltar for those returning, organised and delivered various welcome home parties, and worked closely with Noah's Ark Pre-school, all while many faces of the Welfare team have changed over.

While most of the Regiment were deployed on Op NEWCOMBE at the beginning of 2022, Sgt Kev Young and Cpl John Bernard were busy delivering various trips around the local area, as well as evening activities in the Dragons Den for the spouses and dependents. These trips are funded by the deployed family's welfare grant that the Regiment receives while on Operations. Both families on Robertson Barracks and at reach back in Wales benefit from these activities, maintaining the Regiments family ethos.

Fortunately, the current UWO Capt John Davies returned from Bovington to take over Capt Gareth Pearce. This allowed for continuity on RBSM and a UWO 'forward' to run the decompression package on Devils Tower Camp in Gibraltar as members of the Regiment

returned from Mali. The package offered a series of home coming briefs and recreational activities such as lounging on the beach, water sports and an all-ranks BBQ. Although not all enjoyed timely flights due to the RAF – no change there!

Now all safely returned, it was time for some inter Sqn celebrations prior to some well deserved leave. A series of Sqn BBQs facilitated by the Welfare team, culminating with a Regimental summer fair for all to attend. I must take this opportunity to thank all those involved making the day a success!

The Community Support Development Worker, Miss Sarah Coote has delivered some fantastic activities during the leave periods, offering the children a safe place to engage with others and test their abilities while having fun. Additionally, running the youth club through the week and contributing to other key events through the year, such as Halloween and the Christmas Pantomime provided by The British Forces Foundation.

“
**not all enjoyed
timely flights
due to the RAF
- no change
there!**

We say goodbye to Revd (Maj) Stephen Wilson and hello to Revd (Capt) Ailsa Whorton, arriving in time to deliver Remembrance Day and Christmas Carols in the village church.

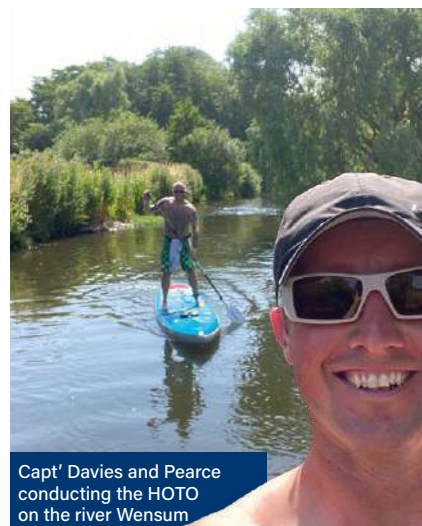
Noah's Ark Pre-School is continuing to thrive under the management of Rebecca Langton and her team. Providing the very best early years care to our service children along with the children from the local community. Further funding has been agreed to refresh the nursery garden from Early Years Norfolk.

A great year for the QDG Welfare team and the community group that supports us daily on all that we want to deliver to the families of the Regiment and local community. 2023 will bring new challenges with further deployments on the horizon. With Capt John Davies now a board member on the Armed Forces Covenant Trust (Norfolk), hopefully we can secure more funding to deliver another memorable year.

JOD



Summer Fair



Capt' Davies and Pearce conducting the HOTO on the river Wensum



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LAD

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards Light Aid Detachment have had a busy year focussed on supporting the QDG Task Group on Op NEWCOMBE 3 in Mali. A hugely difficult and varied task, it took our soldiers and equipment to their limits both due to the difficulties of the environment and the challenging nature of the situation. Conducting repair to enable the capture of terrorist group fighters and not allowing being accidentally attacked by a Malian helicopter to interrupt the delivery of Equipment Support, we returned from Mali tired but hugely proud of our achievements. With 75 vehicles of 7 different types to support, all with their own unique issues, it was an intellectual challenge as well as physical, and we succeeded throughout thanks to the high standard of the LAD as individuals and as a team. The LAD ROG also supported us fantastically from the UK, providing tricky parts when required, and supporting the regiment and brigade whilst we were deployed, including deploying elsewhere themselves. Hugely rewarding, this year has been a fantastic experience for the whole LAD.

Operations

QDG LAD has tested its mettle as part of the Long Range Reconnaissance Group deployed on UN Peacekeeping Operations in Mali. Supporting the QDG Task Group, the LAD consisted of an LAD HQ, three Sub-Unit Fitter Sections and a National Support Element. Supported by augmentees from 1 R IRISH, 1REME and 33 Engr Regt, the LAD deployed with the Task Group. Covering thousands of kilometres across challenging terrain in temperatures regularly exceeding 45 degrees, the LAD prepared themselves for what Mali had to offer. With limited scope for



Sunset spannering.

resupply, the LAD developed accomplished diagnosis, repair and recovery, whilst being almost entirely self-sufficient in an environment amongst the most difficult the Corps has faced since its inception. The support delivered to the Task Group far outweighed the sum of the LAD's parts and allowed the Task Group the freedom to manoeuvre and complete its mission.



Working hard or hardly working...

Training and development

With much of the LAD deployed on Op NEWCOMBE, the remaining ROG took the opportunity to maintain the development and training of LAD members away from camp. Cpl Pratt deployed to Norway with 2 Royal Anglian to provide Recovery support, allowing him to develop his recovery skills within a new and challenging environment. This included multiple recovery tasks from Skjold base to various locations in 24-hour daylight. Various members of the LAD deployed to outside Units allowing them to complete their 3-2 Trade Progression and to gain

valuable experience on unfamiliar equipment. The highlight of this was one of the Electrical Technicians working at 5RA, gaining experience on Mobile Artillery Monitoring Battlefield Asset (MAMBA), learning how they operate and common faults that occur.





The Supercat centipede.

Sport

The LAD has been strongly represented within both RAC and REME football with 10 members representing QDG in league football and the LAD at the REME 6s and Festival of Sport. Cfn Brookes was selected for the Army development boxing team with the culmination of her training representing UKAF at the England Boxing National Development Championships, winning both bouts at 57kg becoming the Senior Development Champion. LCpl Edwards joined the Army Motorcycle Road racing team as pit crew, setting up and repairing the bikes for practice, qualifying and racing, allowing him to utilise his trade skills in the sport that he loves.

AS



Reinventing the wheel.



SPS Detachment

As for all it has been a busy year for the Detachment at 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. Several OTX's combined with Adventurous Training, success in the sporting arena and Team Cohesion events has ensured that life at Robertson barracks has been enjoyable to say the least.

Having deployed to Kuwait, Denmark and the USA personnel from the Detachment have had the opportunity to test themselves in various conditions while also taking time to experience the cultural differences that these locations have to offer. Pte Hill took the time to participate in a traditional dance in Kuwait while Pte Limbu decided to embrace the Cavalry lifestyle to its fullest and enjoy his first horse riding experience in the USA.

Capt Huntley, Cpl Cooper, Cpl Umerah and LCpl Thornton put in a stellar performance during the Triple Crown Challenge. The training programme delivered by Cpl Cooper in the build up ensured that the team were well prepared leading to them achieving maximum points for the March element of the March and Shoot. Overall, the team finished in the top third of the 75 teams which entered the competition. Under the guidance of the new FSA SSgt Jones the team are looking forward to



AGC-TCC-QDG

entering the Military Skills competition in the next edition of the Triple Crown Challenge.

Mixed in with the busy schedule the Det has ensured that it continues to take advantage of the opportunities that the Army has to offer. A Multi Activity training package to Brecon in South Wales and visits to the Climbing Centre, Escape Rooms and exploring the local area on bike have been enjoyed by many. Several personnel in the Det have taken the opportunity to participate in sport, this has seen both Cpl Cooper and Sgt Raikoso represent the Corps in Athletics and Volleyball respectively and Pte Limbu being awarded Sports Colours for Football.

As expected Det has seen a turnover of personnel, all of whom left with our best wishes. Surprisingly this year has been the addition of our own pair of "Ugly Sisters", WO2 Farr and Cpl Bain both thoroughly enjoyed their roles in the pantomime put on for the Dereham branch of the Scout Association.

JR



Amans horse mount



Indoor Climbing



Cinderella Panto

Padre

After a delayed start due to falling ceilings and being chased by a bull (don't ask!) I finally arrived at QDG in September 2022. I wasn't really sure what to expect – APC Glasgow had called me up one day..."so you're good in isolated locations Padre – there is this one-of-a-kind regiment in the back of beyond – we are not really sure what they do, but they are kind of infantry/recce/light cavalry, and they have funny vehicles." "Okay, I said... anything else?"

"They're Welsh".

Not the answer I had expected – but this was the hook, my having spent all my holidays in North Wales growing up on the Wirral which borders the country of Wales.

I was previously with the Artillery, 4th, up in North Yorkshire where I had spent 18 months so the move to Norfolk was a big one for me and my trusty best friend Hamish, a grumpy Scottish Terrier, funnily enough who was born in Wales.

It has been a great move though and I love Norfolk and working with everyone at the Welsh Cavalry. My first big gig was Remembrance and having got in touch with the local church we did the first local parade for a long time in Swanton Morley.



Do you have a moment to talk about our Lord & Saviour?

A Christmas Carol service followed and standing on a chair counting down the 12 days of Christmas in the regimental restaurant well, shall we say, was memorable!

So what does a Padre do – I hope many of you are aware I don't just do religion! Although, of course, this plays a big part, the best part of my job is to listen. So, when things get tough, or maybe you want some time out for a chat – come find me. The kettle is always on and you will make a grumpy Scottie Dog's Day!

AW



Catering Department

2022 has been exiting and challenging year for the department, again filled with uncertainty from one day to the next with so many trawls and taskings, but again the department rose to the occasion. With the pandemic now well and truly behind us the chefs had the opportunity to showcase their skills once again. LCpl Watson had the first task of the year by being deployed to Salisbury Plain by assisting the training of the Ukrainian Soldiers by making sure they were well and truly fed. Sgt Hodgson and Cpl Akerman then deployed to Gibraltar to assist with the decompression for the unit returning from OP NEWCOMBE.

We then said goodbye to Sgt Hodgson who quietly left the regiment after 22 years of service, this left poor Sgt Dunn dealing with all sorts of taskings and regimental demands fulfilling the UCM role aging him by many years in the process. We were then able to fulfil the Waterloo celebrations with the traditional Menu which was enjoyed by all in attendance. Next came EX EAGLES RETURN, most the department travelled to Wales to support this event. In the middle of the heatwave watching the QDG soldiers sweat from head to toe in their service dress, we were sent to several locations

to support including Wrexham, Cardiff and Hereford. Whilst this was happening LCpl Watson deployed to South Cerney for several weeks again preparing the Ukrainians with nutritious food. New arrival Pte Copper was TRAWLED to Northern Ireland to start learning his trade.



The new range stew menu.

After a busy summer and leave we finally had the chance to send the chefs on well overdue career courses. LCpl Tice and LCpl Watson were away for 11 weeks learning new high class culinary skills on their Chef Class 1 course, Cpl Akerman went on his Production Chef supervisor's course with all 3 exceeding with fantastic course reports. Next came OP LONDON BRIDGE in where Pte Wanjiku deployed at short notice to Wellington Barracks to support the unfortunate passing of her majesty Queen Elizabeth the 2nd.

We then welcomed the new UCM to the department SSgt Rana who settled in quickly being tasked immediately with the preparations of EX WARFIGHTER 2023, which then lead to the Christmas functions for 2022. Many were planned and executed with the Officers Mess enjoying canopie evenings and dinner nights alike.

In 2022 we welcomed SSgt Rana and Pte Cooper into the department. We said goodbye to Sgt Craig Hodgson after 22 years' service. Congratulations goes to Pte Wanjiku who was selected to LCpl who then received the news of his next assignment to Plymouth.

SD

Gymnasium

Introduction

The Gymnasium has had a good year in 2022-2023, We have had a number of PTIs leave but more now qualified. A Sqn and RHQ had competed pre deployment training and took over C Sqn on Op NEWCOMBE, the regiment has had a change of CO and RSM. The Gym has taken beach runs, obstacle courses, PNCO Cadres, Recce Cadres, charity event and AT, hosted sporting events plus many other things this year as well as the normal day to day PT programme and fitness testing.

January beach run

The Squadron Leader from C Sqn requested a beach run so we headed to Wells-next-the-sea. January weather didn't disappoint, there was rain and a cold wind for the whole session. The session started with a run through the wooded area where we could explore the sand dunes using partner races to decide who the real legends were. After the first phase we moved onto the games phase this was to challenge teams through a series of different games we played bulldogs charge then onto casualty evacuations relays and we finished with a finale of combat conditioning which is where you build up the techniques slowly to then be able to have a head to head wrestling match of sorts. The finale is set in a way to build suspense by having everyone sit in a circle facing outwards shoulder to shoulder and the PTIs walk around and then pick 2 opponents, once the PTIs should the words of command "turn and face" everyone turns in and the 2 opponents come to the centre to settle who is the top dog.



No pain, no gain.

PNCO Cadre

The Gym always looks forward to the PNCO courses as its always good hard Phys! Obstacle courses, logs and stretchers, team work or the importance good communication and leadership training and also maybe the most important part mental resilience training. You always get to see the true character of someone during arduous situations – "SSgt Ellis" Early morning PT starts at 0600-0730, its normally darker colder and longer than normal PT this sets the scene well for what is about to come. Most of these sessions have a demoralising aspect at the end where the students on course think that they about to finish the session but the gym staff will have something up their sleeves, again this is where you see who has what it takes to be a leader.

Recce Cadre PT

The Recce Cadre was introduced this year to help the new soldiers that had just left training to understand how the Regiment works on operations and exercises. So naturally there has got to be a PT element to this Cadre. The PT is focused on working as a team rather than an individual, the PT is set in a way that is challenging but as a team many hands make light work but only with good communication.

Mountain Biking

The Gym managed to get 8 new mountain bikes this year. Mountain bike skill training was held on a Wednesday sports afternoon for those that were interested in the sport and then the unit had set up a club to go further afield on a Wednesday. These bikes have also



Mountain biking here.



Sliding into another early knock off.

been used for Adventurous Training, the first trip was to Slovenia on Ex Eagles Paddle. This was a 2 week package with kayaking and mountain biking. Slovenia is a beautiful country but has real mountains unlike the UK. Slovenia was really challenging for everyone uphill and down a real adventure for all and testing every ones skill, courage and fitness. Insert Slovenia Pics

The REME LAD also had an AT trip in Aviemore Scotland but this was a winter trip not a summer trip and the conditions were the complete opposite. The first day was clear until the journey back to the accommodation when it dropped about half a foot of snow in an hour. The rest of the week was hit and miss with the riding locations but everyday the groups managed to have a good day despite some snow.

Eagles Recovery

One day the Squadron Leader of HQ Sqn Maj Mansel pitched an idea for an event for the Rehabilitation and the Reconditioning PT groups to complete a challenge in line with Op Teamwork, this was to be an all-inclusive event for



Mountain biking there.

those not able to challenge themselves on normal PT due to injury. In the end the event was called Ex Eagles Recovery and the challenge was to complete the Peddars Way trail which is 46 miles in length mostly cross country. There was a walking group led by Sgt Taylor and a mountain bike group led by SSgt Ellis. The walking group made it to the first checkpoint this was at the 10 mile point and all the riders 12 in total made it to the end of the 46 mile trail. The mountain bike riders found it hard towards the end especially with their rear ends being a bit tender from about the half way point.

Team Building

The Gym is known as the busiest hardest working department in the Regiment but we did manage to get a team building day in. We went to the Norfolk Snowsport dry ski slope for a good laugh at PTIs falling off skis. The day went really well only 2 people crashed into the barriers. After skiing we went for a meal at the Norwich Turtle Bay, a really good day was had by the hardest workers in the Regiment.

CE

Mountain biking everywhere.



Officer's Mess

New Year in Mali

The Officers' Mess entered 2022 with a majority of members celebrating New Year's Eve in Mali, an occasion aided by two delicious cans per person (maximum) and the knowledge that PJHQ were on leave in the UK. At home those officers who remained with Regimental Duty hosted their partners for a relatively informal dinner night – an event marked by the discovery of several previously unrealised seafood allergies shortly after the prawn starter...

The early part of the year, with the Mess quiet was the perfect time for some reorganisation and re-hanging of the pictures (no small feat given we have several hundred). We were extremely lucky to benefit from the hard work, dedication and excellent eye for detail of Richard Dennis, one of the Regimental Heritage Trustees. Richard worked tirelessly and the result is marvellous, with everything from swords, shabracks, oils, and watercolours now in perfect order and displayed beautifully. Our thanks to Richard once again.

As the Regiment returned in strength to its spiritual homeland of Wales for Exercise EAGLE'S RETURN, so too did mess life. The officers first descended on Cardiff's third best Italian-themed restaurant for the dine-out of Lieutenant Colonel Lloyd before moving swiftly on to a small local pub named "Coyote

Ugly Saloon." Featuring traditional Welsh drinks (sambuca, Smirnoff Ice), Welsh dress (cowboy hats, Daisy Duke shorts) and Welsh songs (rock, country) the bar was the perfect place to unwind after a busy day of smart walking.

As the summer wore on, and temperatures continued to rise, it meant only one thing – it was time for the biggest summer ball the mess has seen in recent years. All officers in camp pulled together as one to prepare for it, though often only

because Captain Maxwell had threatened them with pain and/or death if they didn't make more decorations. The theme was Ancient Civilisations and officers didn't hold back in designing the Seven Wonders of the World - Captain Barham hastily assembled the Office Block at Alexandria, the EME designed and built the Good Pyramid at Giza and Captain Upward managed to paint a single Roman shield. Despite a budget of £0 (and thanks to an abundance of MFO boxes) the ball was a roaring success. Champagne flowed like the River Nile and the

food was devoured and thrown in equal abundance. As the sun rose on Super Cider Sunday it soon became clear that the traditional Viking burial style disposal of mess decorations was going to be stopped by the nation's biggest drought. Unable to burn Norfolk down, officers instead played cricket and quenched their thirst. While this was going on, B



Despite a budget of £0 (and thanks to an abundance of MFO boxes) the ball was a roaring success



A Sqn medals parade.

Squadron officers dutifully prepared to deploy to Birmingham on Op UNITY. Breaking up the 4-hour journey with a stop at Darby's, Burger King and then another Burger King for good measure they ensured the finest traditions of SCS were upheld.

The arrival of Autumn heralded several new arrivals: Major Duncan Wiggins as both A Squadron Leader and President of the Mess Committee. Replacing Major Charles Lyne-Pirkis RAMC who had moved on to the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (ed: Never heard of them!) his first task was to create a new mess committee from subalterns who had no experience of managing finances, silver or wine from the dark Covid years. Following a tumultuous few weeks of reorganisation, the ship was steadied and we could return to our main effort: forcing 2Lt Asquith (a member of the Wine Society) to focus on finding better wine. We've also been lucky enough to regain a Mess Sgt in the form of Sgt Powell and it has been a real boon having an experience SNCO behind the scenes once again and the difference, particularly during dinner nights, is palpable. Sgt Powell has been





Good



Better



Perfect

ably assisted by LCpl Francis, Tpr Jones and Tpr x who have supported some important community hosting events in the Mess with great skill and a certain degree of patience.

As October loomed the weather may have cooled down, but the social calendar did not. First came a successful and enjoyable curry evening hosting members of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess. After an excellent dinner, the famous manhole covers were lifted and one of the most hotly contested rounds of the "Robertson Barracks Rabbit Warren Rumble" in living history was played – what happens underground, stays underground.

To introduce our new Brigade Commander and to foster greater familiarity with the staff officers at 1st Deep Recce Strike Brigade Combat Team, the Mess gladly hosted Brigadier Neil Budd and members of his team as well CO and XO Royal Yeomanry for a successful and delicious dinner followed by some of the traditional Mess favourites – shouting boo at the French and a game of Freda. Shortly after this dinner night came a visit by officers from the Savoia Regiment. Serving a similar wheeled light recon-

naissance role in the Italian Army, the officers and soldiers found they had a lot of similarities – not least in their long, historic relationship with the French! We were most impressed by the Savoia regiments after dinner toast which had us all shouting, hollering and wanting to be at the French at the charge.

As 2022 was drawing to a close the annual Trustees visit was a further excuse to wine and dine ourselves (and guests) and cement the relationship we have with our trustees, an asset to the regiment that many others don't have. A long day of touring camp, meeting soldiers and regimental presentations preceded a thoroughly enjoyable dinner night that according to the kind thank you letters took some of our guests back 40 years to their time in the Mess.

2022 was seen out in style – first with a cocktail party held for local dignitaries. They were stoked to be invited to the mess, and nothing could extinguish their

burning enthusiasm for the local area. The atmosphere heated up throughout the night and everybody left with a warm glow about themselves.

As the bells of Christmas leave began to ring, the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants'

Mess made their annual visit to the Officers' Mess. An exchange of inoffensive carols led to much merriment and after ensuring they finished all of the champagne, the seniors kindly led the officers down to their mess for a further shindig thus marking the end of another successful year in the Officers' Mess.

All that remains to say is a big thank you to Jade the Manageress, Sgt Powell, Jo the hardest working cleaner in NATO and all of those staff, both military and civilian who work so tirelessly to keep the Mess running smoothly and in fine fettle, particularly given how busy the end of the year was for us all, we couldn't cope without you! Here's to continued success in 2023!

GB

“
An exchange
of inoffensive
carols led
to much
merriment



Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess

It was a quiet start to 2022 for the Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess due to the ongoing deployment of OP NEWCOMBE 3 and operational leave. Although a large proportion of the mess had been committed and absent, in no way did it affect the culture, comradery and commitment of the Mess to plan and deliver some great activity. We intended to take full advantage of the considerable Mess funds which had accumulated over the period of Covid 19 and we aimed to go a full year of functions with no additional billing.

This early part of 2022 saw the birth of 'Tuesday Club' by founding members Sgt David 'Any Pocket' Watson, SSgt Michael 'No Hangover' Emmings and SSgt Nick 'Mess Champion' Wright (PEC). A regular weekly meeting of like-minded individuals who would discuss current affairs, politics and more importantly to find out who could drink the most coke zero, and to discover who the best pool and darts players were. This club sought to maintain morale of the Mess and think up good ideas for the busy forecast ahead. The return of the OP NEWCOMBE 3 troops were eagerly anticipated and the first item on the calendar once the Mess was reunited was a BBQ in the garden. We fortunately had good summer weather and it was great to see the Mess altogether again. This was greatly needed to share the experiences of Mali (and the pain of the Rear Operations Group). That evening, dits were spun and by the end of the night everyone had heard about Sgt Jonny Canning's weight loss of over 30kg! – We still don't believe him!

Next was the eagerly anticipated Waterloo 207 commemoration. Unfortunately, both the cricket and rugby trophies were claimed by the Officers' Mess. The experience of the WOs' & Sgts' Mess could not overcome the youth of the Officers' Mess, not even with SSgt Davies 220's dodgy referee watch. In the evening, to welcome the Officers' Mess and hear the story of the battle again over a fantastic meal and a plentiful flow of wine was brilliant. The dinner night lasted until the sun came up. We had been without a proper Waterloo for 3 years due to Covid 19 and it was a truly memorable event.

After another period of well-earned summer leave for all, we were again into another busy period of functions. We hosted another Generations Weekend, which was an opportunity for friends and family to get an intimate experi-

ence of our professional and Mess lives. The morning consisted of clay pigeon shooting, pistol and rifle shooting, and capability stands. The bar was open after lunch and we had the premier league football on during the afternoon, before the main event which was the formal dinner night. It was fantastic to be able to give something back to those who do so much for us, hosting our friends, family and share the Mess experience with them.



The dinner night lasted until the sun came up



The following week saw the Mess dine out Capt Homer, Capt Thomas, Capt Davies and WO1 Watson. This was long overdue and the right thing to do to celebrate their incredibly successful careers and send them off on their new ones 'up the top'. Hearing the tales of their highs and lows was a privilege in the brilliantly delivered readings by WO2 Ross Hopkins, WO2 Rhys

Davies, WO2 Tom Hamilton and SSgt Joe Ewbank despite some of their best efforts to keep us on the table past midnight!

With the year drawing to a close we still had the Christmas period to celebrate. The Christmas function was arguably the best ever, with décor and entertainment fit for a wedding. It was great to see so many partners attend, this was our chance to host them in splendour and thank them for all their support in 2022.

We can only hope that 2023 brings us as much opportunity as 2022 to get together and celebrate our rich history and prepare ourselves for our future endeavours. 2023 will be another busy operational year and there will no doubt be tribulations ahead. We know though that regardless of geographical location in the world, every member contributes to making the Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess the valuable institution that it is with their professionalism and commitment to their family, friends, and the Regiment.

MB



Promotions



Mess in Mali.

Waterloo Rugby, another victory to the Officers





Waterloo Dinner



Generations Weekend



Promotions



Regimental Mascot



Corporal's Mess

It has been a steady year for the Corporal's Mess, with a quiet start to 2022 due to operational commitments in Mali and the endless trawls that seem to find their way into most of our daily lives. As a tribute to Op Newcombe and the NCOs who served on the peacekeeping mission, a painting has been commissioned by the Corporals' Mess, which will be a great addition to the collection. However, with the regiment now back in the UK and with the parades complete it was time for the first official Mess do since Covid. By no means did this disappoint and it ran perfectly well and in keeping with the proud traditions of the Cpls' Mess. The Lucknow dinner night was a resounding success and after a busy year, a great way to get the Mess together to share stories and enjoy a drink and celebrate our most coveted battle honour.

With a new year came some promotions! As a Mess we must thank Sgt Ross Casey for his devotion to the job of PMC and congratulate him on his very worthy promotion to Sgt. He will be a fine addition to the WOs' & Sgts' Mess and we all wish him the very best for the future. As Sgt Casey moved on, it was time to get "out with the old and in with the new". I found myself in the position of PMC and the rest of the committee also experienced some movement. Joining myself as the PEC was Cpl Harrison, and with the foundations set we were both keen to get stuck in and continue the good work. Other appointments included the PEC 2ic Cpl Lunness, Bar Mangers: LCpl Palmer and Bitten along with the Property JNCO LCpl Sweeny and Fire NCO Cpl Ward; all the names listed here have worked incredibly hard over the last six months, making the Mess a busy, enjoyable, and safe place to be.

The Mess is never quiet and even when there are no events taking place, the background activity is always a buzz



with mess improvements! At the forefront was the introduction of some long overdue fridges and some bar stools which brought some new life into the bar area. After a year of lukewarm beers, fellow Mess members relished the chance to sample a cold pint in a comfy seating area! With this recent success we are now looking forward and introducing an improvements day. It is hoped that this will further benefit the Mess and enhance our ability to work collectively for the mutual benefit of the Members.

As the year quickly came to an end it only meant one thing, the Corporals' Mess Christmas Ball. This presented a chance for Mess Members and partners to get dressed up, eat, drink, and most of all, have a good time. A Christmas function is never as simple as you would first imagine. There's a lot to plan to give the Mess Members and their dependants the evening that they deserve. From invites to entertainment, decorations to food, and of course, everyone's favourite, a free bar and big prizes. An enjoyable night was had by all with a lot of laughs and wine consumed along the way! Judging from the clean up the next day, mostly red.

The Mess is looking forward to a successful 2023 with plenty of functions, sports competitions and a few pub quizzes along the way.

All activity in 2022 could not have been achieved without the collective buy in from the entire Mess which includes the constant support from partners and families which we never underestimate. Additional to this, are those that continually push themselves forward to better the Mess at each and every opportunity. From the whole committee and I, we thank you and look forward to more of the same in 2023. Cpl Parsons.

LP



Regimental Christmas Day 2022

Gunfire, a Carol service and the Regiment all back in Robertson Barracks together as one. This year's Christmas Day was going to be a good one! With COVID 19 out of the way, it was a great opportunity to take part in one of the very best days in the calendar and build on the cohesion of the Unit and bring us closer together. At a time in which we are constantly being pulled to the four corners, days like this are fully embraced!

Christmas week began with St Eligius Day, a day which Cpl Downey put together under the watchful eye of the ASM. Command tasks, cart races and a quiz were all on the agenda, along with a good period in the REME refreshments area. A fantastic day and a brilliant start to the festive week. After St Eligius Day there were various activities held within the Messes and then it was time for the main event.

Regimental Christmas Day began with the usual gunfire, and sausage baps being delivered by the Sqn Chain of Command. After this, we then conducted a Regimental Promotions and Awards Parade. Three LCpl promotions were given, along with Sgt Maj Hazelwood picking up his SSgt – Congratulations to everyone! Once the promotions were made, we then moved onto Sports Colours and Regimental Awards. The winners for these have been listed in a tabular format for ease as there were many.

With the parade now complete, it was time to form up and head to the All Saints Church, Swanton Morley. Padre Whorton gave a brilliant service, and it wasn't too long before we were heading back up the road. Christmas Dinner was the next serial. The Seniors and Officers were already a bound ahead of the Troops and found their way into the Cookhouse where the Catering Team had done an amazing job of setting the place up. Nothing was left to chance and the whole place was looking spot on. Once in the Cookhouse the soldiers were greeted with their two cans. Everything was ready, and it was minutes before everyone was tucking into their food. As far as the eating went, many of the regiment found a rogue sprout hitting the back of their heads, but it was all in good humour and the meal was a success. During the dinner, the Padre instigated a sing off, which saw the Regiment rage verbal war against each other and sing the 12 Days of Christmas. A brilliant way to end the festivities and then move onto the relevant Messes.

After a period of rehearsal, each mess opened their doors to their opposite

numbers and enjoyed a few Christmas drinks together. A fantastic way to end what was a brilliant day. Without days such as this, we really would struggle to foster that 'Espirit de Corps' that we sometimes take for granted. As we now go onto leave, we hope everyone has a good bit of time with their loved ones and enjoys the Christmas period with their own families. Nadolig Llawen!

DC



Award/Trophy	Recipient
Gomer Lloyd Trophy	WO2 Roberts 089
Queen Elizabeth	Sgt Williams
Leathersellers	Cpl
Mann Trophy	LCpl Moore
Sports Colours	Capt Kite, WO2 Fisher, Capt Kite & Capt Groome
SSgt	Sgt Maj Hazelwood
LCpl	LCpl Baker
LCpl	LCpl Dempsey
LCpl	LCpl Bennison





Exercise IRON INCA

Exercise IRON INCA, a 14-person trekking expedition to Peru's mighty Machu Picchu, allowed the country to display its broad tableaux of landscapes, from the rainbow-streaked Andes to the thermal springs of Cocalmayo.

Our journey began in the historic Inca city of Cusco at 3,400m, once the empire's gleaming capital, where our enthusiastic tour guide regaled the party with tales of sun worship and child sacrifice.

Four days of altitude acclimatisation followed, in which we toured 13th Century temples and hiked in the surrounding mountains, whose unique hue is caused by the Andes' varied mineralogy, tectonic plate movement and harsh environmental conditions.

The main five-day Salkantay trek began at Challacancha, with our first campsite at Soraypampa, a day's walking that passed the glacial waters of the Humantay Lake, and a chance to sport my regimental Speedos.

As we rose to the 4,630m Salkantay pass the following day, altitude training allowed us to enjoy the stunning vista from our journey's peak. A steadier day followed, hiking from Chaullay to Sahuayaco among the ravines and waterfalls, before arriving at camp in time to enjoy the hot springs and roast our own coffee.

Terrain steepened and humidity increased on the fourth day as we climbed through rainforest to the shrine at Llactapata, from which we glimpsed the first views of our destination. The final day's ascent took us up the steep stone steps from Aguas Calientes to the famous citadel.

After climbing Machu Picchu Mountain in the vain hope of catching impressive views of the settlement from above, we explored the fascinating labyrinth of dry-stone structures making up the "Lost City of the Incas". This done, we descended to Aguas Calientes and caught the long train back to Cusco, where pisco sours and questionable karaoke awaited us.

Although a 3rd (UK) Division expedition, my place on the trip as a QDG was generously supported by a grant from the Regimental Trust.

This truly rewarding expedition in a fascinating country also delivered the Summer Mountain Foundation qualification to the nine eligible team members, opening doors for futures adventures.

ADC



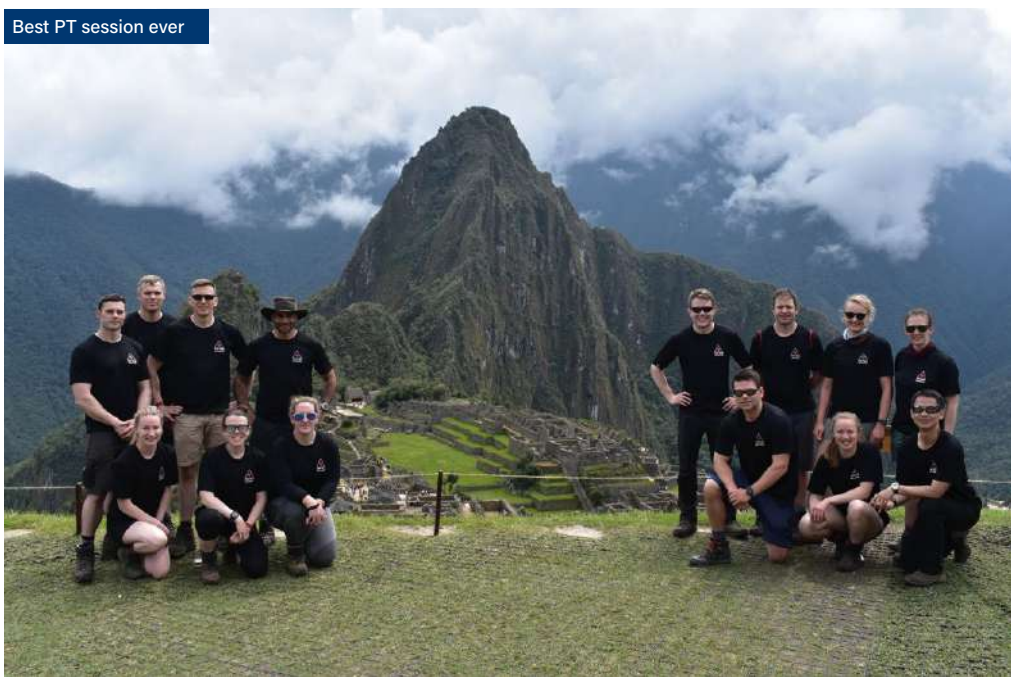
Acclimatisation in the rainbow mountains



Suitably attired in the glacial lake



Welsh views from Machu Picchu Mountain



Best PT session ever



We thought Indiana Jones was making it up

Machu Picchu on my Army gap year



Regimental camouflage in the Andean snow



The team at Salkantay Pass

We really could be anywhere



Ex Wessex Storm 2022

There are many forks in one's journey through life. When B Sqn were told in January 2022 that half of them would deploy to Sierra Leone on an STTT and half to Salisbury Plain on Ex Wessex Storm, I could see the fork before me. That afternoon I could see the fork behind me, increasingly in the distance, as I packed yet another warm layer into my bergen. I was sportingly consoled throughout by my Brother Officers, between them discussing whether they should pack 3 or 4 pairs of swimming trunks.

From this far away, the fork looked alarmingly like a pair of fingers bidding me on my way. The swimming trunks were packed (3 pairs) and it was consolation time again... In February 2022, the Light Dragoons Battle - group were deploying on Ex Wessex Storm. This is the biggest and most resourced exercise that occurs on these shores and is a significant test (and comparison point) for a Regiment. It is there - fore taken rather seriously. It is unclear then, at what point the Light Dragoons realised exactly that they were missing half a squadron worth of troops. Luckily for us the penny did eventually drop, and at this point, with the exercise fast approaching, the Light Dragoons decided to light the beacons; the Light Dragoons called for aid, and the QDG answered. 2nd and 3rd Troops of B Squadron arrived at Knook Camp, where we were greeted by the concierge and had our luggage taken to our rooms. Our northern cousins had been there for nearly 2 weeks already, and were keen for news of the outside world. They welcomed us warmly, quickly integrating into our squadrons and ready to begin training. Both Troops from the QDG were very junior; neither having completed a mounted exercise as a formed body of men before. This made the early stages hugely educational, from maintaining the vehicles on the tank park to moving in formation to hide routine. There was even opportunity for a quick gastronomy lesson, when one trooper was caught boiling his hot dogs loose in the BV. Every day is a school day, particularly when every brew has a faint whiff of reconstituted pork.

Everyday really is a school day, particularly when every brew has a faint whiff of reconstituted pork

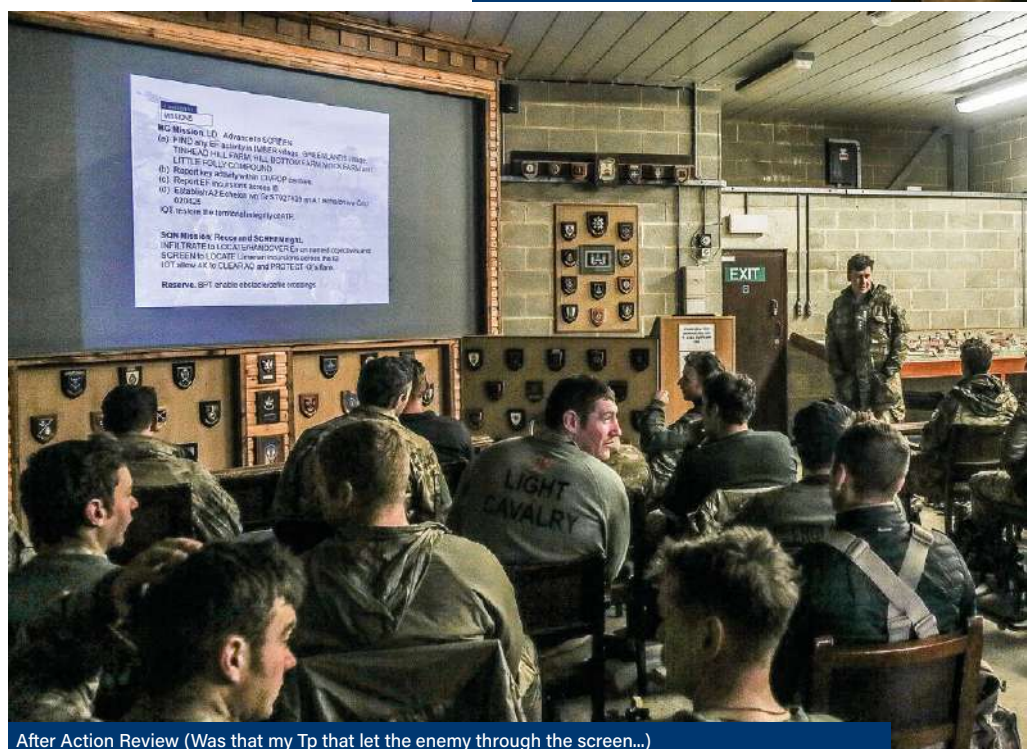
cated delay action across the mighty River Berril. Through this phase the QDG were tested on the fundamentals of mounted reconnaissance; completing various screens, route recces, CTRs, ambushes and delays. The Light Dragoons passed Phase 1 with flying colours, steered no doubt by their adopted Welsh core. Phase 2 is christened the 'Optimisation phase'. Here, the Battlegroup is supposed to be stretched. The stretching the Light Dragoon Battlegroup received was to

travel great distances along scenic A-roads, completing serials at specified Training Areas along the way. Highlights included a raid on a particularly hard to find airfield (very) near Bath, and a replen at our new home in Caerwent. The Coup de Grace was a concluding 2-day serial on Sennybridge Training Area. I wonder if they needed that 4th pair of swimming trunks? The two Troops from the QDG learned a vast amount being on a major mounted exercise. It was invaluable time locked in together as a group, with no commitments beyond soldiering and bonding. It was the only time I have had the privilege of commanding QDG soldiers from a Jackal, and for that reason I shall treasure my time on Ex Wessex Storm. (Apart from the Brecon bit, I could have gone without that.)

SLU



22A, 22B and the boys



After Action Review (Was that my Tp that let the enemy through the screen...)



2nd Tp ready to step off



Views that make it worth it



22A complete



Jungle Warfare Instructors Course 2022

58 of us departed from Heathrow on the 10th October. 19 hours later the humidity and the machine-like drone of the rain lashing down on the airport roof were the unmistakable signs that we'd arrived in Brunei. We were herded on to a coach and gratefully received litre-bottles of water. The rain began to fall so hard as we wound our way toward Medicina Lines that we were forced to slow to a crawl. It was a daunting glimpse into what would soon become part of our daily routine.

The accommodation was minimalist. Long rooms with 20 steel beds, plastic mattress and no air conditioning. The first two weeks were the acclimatisation phase. Each day began with 5am runs along the beach as the sun rose, followed by basic tactical lessons in the lecture theatre such as contact drills, methods of patrolling as well as an introduction to the local wildlife.

At the end of this two weeks we made our first trip into the jungle to put into practice what we had learnt. Within minutes of our first rehearsal beginning I had been stung by a scorpion and paid the price for lying too close to an ant nest, a lesson I fruitlessly vowed not to make again.

The first exercise, innocuously known as 'Routine Drills' was a bit of a beast. The exercise involved fifteen days of hard patrolling with heavy weight (my kit weighed over 60 kilos the day we deployed) and we had lost over 10% of our cohort by endex. The first four days of the exercise were focused on navigation before we moved on to section and platoon level

tactics. The poor visibility, unreliable mapping and the 20m contour intervals took some getting used to. We were taught strict adherence to paces and bearings as well as how to read the light through the trees and the shape of the ground.

The final phase of the exercise involved an eventful 36 hour ambush. It was just an hour after ambush-set when an unmistakable shriek of pain was heard from the killing group. The concern of the DS as they ran toward the scream was the first indication that it was something serious, confirmed later by the sound of rotary blades coming in and out. Two hours later another shriek went out about followed by the same rush of DS and sound of helicopters.

In the early warning group we were completely oblivious of goings on. Not wanting to attract any unnecessary attention from the DS, we remained silent in our fire positions. It

was only when the chief instructor, a 22 WO1, arrived asking if anyone had seen a scorpion that we understood the situation. We

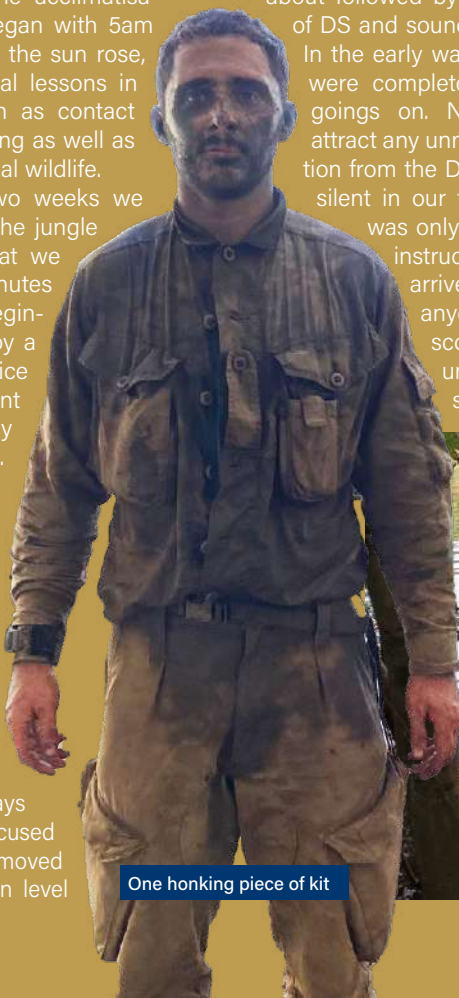


Flank protection set

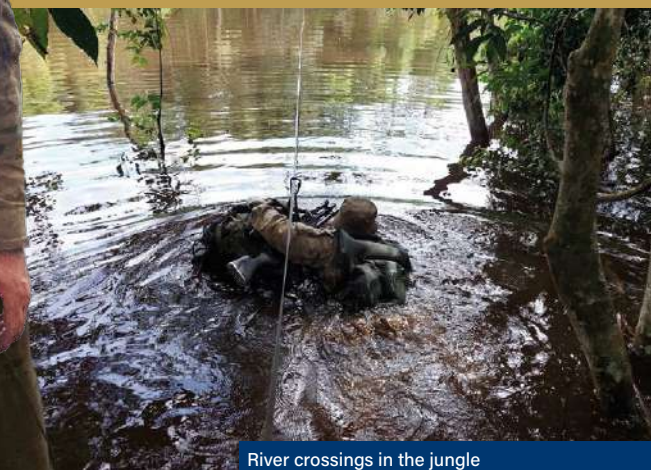
then watched on somewhat concerned as the most composed and professional member of the training team began searching amongst the dense undergrowth of the primary jungle at night for a scorpion with a loaded Diemaco rifle and a head torch.

Next came the riverine and a demanding LFTT package before an eight day final exercise on which we were at points reduced to as little as 34 men. Before long it was home-time. One dislocated shoulder, eight kilos lighter and carrying an unfortunately located case of ringworm, I got on the plane incredibly grateful for the experience but eager for the creature comforts of a proper shower and my own bed.

FM



One honking piece of kit



River crossings in the jungle

Regimental Engagement Team

Undoubtably having the Regimental Engagement Team (RET) has played a vital role in raising awareness and promulgating knowledge across the Principality. Changing the targeted audience's perception on joining the regiment and subsequently helping gain Welsh soldiers into the recruiting pipeline has been great to see. At the point of writing this article, we have 47 soldiers in the pipeline, with 81% of them being from Wales and Border Counties. A massive increase on the statistics we were witnessing only two years ago. These statistics are not just a credit to the RET, but speak volumes of the buy in from all our instructors at Phase 1 and 2 Establishments who all frequently converse in supporting the recruiting network.

Traditionally, the RET has continued to support and forge formidable relationships within 160 Brigade and Recruiting Group. This has helped us with many recruitment and engagement opportunities across Wales and the Border Counties. Furthermore, with ourselves now being familiar faces in Wales, we have been put on a level playing field with the other Engagement Teams. Thus, helping us to increase distance we can throw our recruiting net and increase the numbers that we see coming through the gates at Robertson Bks.

In addition to working alongside local Schools and Colleges, the RET has produced admirable results when playing a key role in supporting multiple charities on meaningful events, specifically: Dreams & Wishes, The Army benevolent fund and the Royal British Legion, to name but a few. Recently, the RET and ten soldiers from Regimental Duty have completed a surge across Wales. Facilitating reinforcement to the Royal British Legion with raising money. Not only was it awe-inspiring to assist and support, but we were able to maximise the presence of the cap badge within the Principality. Staggeringly, we managed to raise over £20,000 which will go a long way to help service personnel and families in need.

Traditionally the RET has sustained its valued attendance alongside the



Tri-service poppy selling



Collecting for the RBL

local Cadet Forces across Wales. The RET has played a key role in supporting and staging a realistic portrayal of Field Craft and displaying the skills of a Light Cavalry soldier. This was demonstrated in the Easter and Summer Camps conducted this year. The RET have attended various centres, keeping Cadets engaged working alongside the Regiment to task soldiers from the local regions. Whether it be Haverfordwest or Clwyd and Gwynedd up in North Wales, we are always greeted warmly and have a good time.

In July this year, the Mali home-coming parades took place. This saw the Regiment conduct freedom parades in several key cities in Wales. This allowed

the RET to conduct a three week "KAPE" tour with a Jackal around multiple locations across Wales. The team were stretched, but it was great to add value and the planning for this started the day RHQ and A Sqn left camp.

This year unlike those previous has been largely COVID free. This has presented us with the ability to do more with less. With the statistics now in a good place and our activities well received all over Wales, we look forward to further demonstrating our ability to forge further relationships across the Principality. For everyone that has supported us in our endeavours, we thank you and we look forward to a very prosperous 2023.

SG



Visiting local attractions



LCpl Jones on display

The Gambia STTT

In September 2022, a team of 9 pax from B Sqn, QDG, led by Lt Walsh, deployed to The Gambia to conduct an STTT focussed on developing the fighting capability of the Gambian Armed Forces (GAF) in support of their UN pledge. The team delivered a tailored programme specific to The Gambian requirements which included: low level dismounted and mounted combat skills; CIED skills (delivered by our attached RE specialists); and OBUA, including the application of LOAC and gender-based training.

On arrival to the Gambia, the team was immediately faced with a number of changes and the plan had to be adapted rapidly. It is a credit to the soldiers deployed that they were able to amend their lesson plans to deliver in a completely different area and with far more limited resources. The team was able to draw from a wealth of local experience from both the team from BPST(A) and the GAF Training School instructors assigned to assist in the STTT delivery. Building a working relationship with our Gambian counterparts was vital to the success of the training and the whole team benefited from their assistance, with a special mention going to the iconic Sgt Amadou Bobb, infamously known amongst the GAF as 'Ammunition'.

The STTT culminated in a 3-day FTX which confirmed the GAF's understanding of the taught material and was held as a complete success by the GAF HQ. The whole team was overwhelmed with the level of enthusiasm they received throughout the month but were blown away by the appreciation demonstrated in the closing ceremony, which was attended by British High Commissioner, David Belgrove, and CDS GAF, Maj Gen Yankuba Drammeh. Having the opportunity to work with partner nations in a defence engagement role was an incredible and humbling opportunity and one which the team will not readily forget.

ACW



The Combined QDG and GAF training team



QDG's footballers can lose anywhere in the world



'My neck is not that long!'



Game recognises game



Peeping corners

“

The whole team was overwhelmed with the level of enthusiasm they received throughout the month

”

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Rugby

QDG RFC was eager to get things back on track after an undefeated 2019 season, that was marred by COVID which kept the team from bringing any silverware back to RBSM.

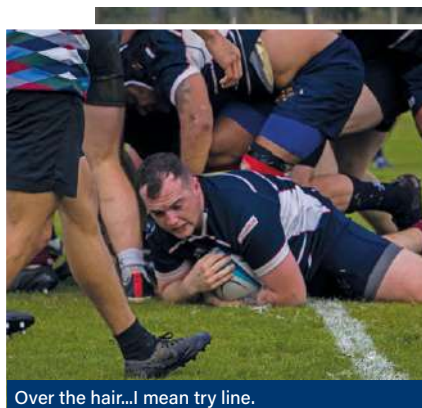
By participating in a Task Group/Multinational Touch Rugby Competition and defeating every opponent, C Sqn set the standard while deployed in Mali. This included a Barbarians team that was comprised of all the best players from the other teams. Club captain, Cpl James Casey, got in touch with the WRU, who sent us a signed Wales jersey and a few WRU Match balls.

In Mali, A Sqn continued the rugby theme with a tournament featuring Welsh, English, Irish, and Fijian teams. Rumour has it that Sgt Sky's refereeing may have favoured his compatriots over his colleagues. Again, the WRU provided Welsh Kits courtesy of former QDG SNCO, Daz Carew.

After returning from Operations, C Sqn was able to take advantage of some adventurous training by organising a rugby tour to the Flanders 10s through Sgt DJ. Even with a limited squad strength/size, we were able to compete adequately in this festival-style tournament with semi-professionals and finished in the top half. Scuffles with French teams, drinking games with the Irish, a Sgt Adam Humphrey's guns show on the dance floor, and an internationally famous celebratory double-back by Lt Swailes were among the highlights.

Now that the entire Regiment had returned from operations, we were back in Wales conducting homecoming parades (Ex EAGLE RETURN). There was no better way to promote QDG in its recruiting territory than by displaying some rugby! A match against Morriston RFC, winners of the Division 2 League, was organised by local soldier Tpr Dempsey.

The decision to play the game in quarters was made by the referee on a scorching day with lively spectators lining



Over the hair...I mean try line.



Hiding in the gym has its perks

the touchlines. The defences of both teams were extremely solid. However, QDG scored out wide in the second quarter thanks to a quick turnover, fast handling by LCpl Tukana, and blistering pace by LCpl Cellan Williams. Morriston made some changes with their larger squad, and a lot of attacks came after. Cpl James Thomas' exceptional defensive reading kept them out. A hard-fought and well-earned 5-0 win.

Now back into a familiar Regimental battle rhythm, QDG RFC entered the Army Rugby Union Knock-Out Cup. We drew an unknown quantity, Wattisham Warriors in a home fixture.

Maj Pecks Jones' professional approach, which he brought to the team during the 2019 season, has served QDG RFC well. Sgt Sky organised the changing rooms, Sgt Chez Williams set up the pitch (complete with gazebo), and even Tpr Chew, a rookie, led the team warm-ups. The background staff were

exceptional, this allowed the team to concentrate on one thing – the W.

An enthusiastic team run prior to kick off was punctuated by WO2 Nav's passionate reminder to the team that QDG have never lost at home, that this is a "fortress," and that we should not "leave the field unless we are carried off." The team looked sharp with Cpl Rees, the Captain for the upcoming season, calling the shots.

With a strong set piece from debutant front rower Sgt Raikoso, QDG came out of the blocks firing, with Sgt DJ striking first from the base of the scrum. As the game opened, tries were scored in the wider channels thanks to individual brilliance and Fijian flair. 27-0 at HT.

Warriors scored as ill-discipline set in early in the second half. Following this wake-up call, QDG intensified the pressure. Cpl Ronan Lewis, who came back from Crickhowell just for this game, threw precise line-out balls. He then scored because of the driving maul dominance. Sgt Squeaky Griffiths scored and did some epic open running thanks to Cpl Bobo's strong midfield carries. 56-7 FT score.

Post-match rituals included a reception in the Cpls Mess followed by a trip to Spoons. Some squad members won't forget lessons they learnt from missing taxis and enduring a long, cold walk back to camp.

The Royal Armoured Corps rugby team has always benefited greatly from QDG's talent pool, and this year was no excep-



5-0 hot victory in Morriston



56 -7 victory against Warriors



Other RAC units are welcome to play...



Vuni and Rav running camp routine

tion. QDG received an influx of rugby talent during the 2021/22 season. Tpr's Hudson, Laverua, Ravonokula, Rokoua, Rosa, and Vunivosa all represented the RAC whilst in Phase 2 training. The RAC was able to advance to the final against the Infantry thanks to a combination of this new talent and the QDG players who were already well-known. Sadly, we lost 36-29 after a thrilling 80 minutes.

This current 2022/23 season continues with RAC comfortably ranked third in the league, keeping us in League 2 for next season. With Maj Dom Staveley as secretary, Andy Smith as manager, WO2 Gaz Roberts as DOR/Head Coach, and Cpl James Casey as captain, and providing at least 8 players per game, QDG continue to play a significant role in the RAC setup. Our commitment has been undeniable; in the match against Army Medical Services, QDG comprised 14 of the 23 players, leading to a 53-7 victory.

Outside of the Regiment/Corp, QDG players have also been representing civilian teams. Some players play social rugby for the local Dereham RFC. While the Fijian trio of Tpr's Laverua "the Wizard," Ravonokula, and Vunivosa recently joined financially thriving Norwich RFC. More established players are currently playing for higher level North Walsham and Bury St Edmunds.

This season, QDG have also been in full force at Aldershot, home of Army Rugby. In the U23s, players Tpr Levi Roper, Tpr Ravonokula, and Tpr Che Hudson, as well as coach Capt Will Simpson have been

involved in their inter-service build-up/campaign. In the Men's Senior XV Maj Jason 'Bongo' Davies remains influential as a coach and kindly invited WO2 Gaz Roberts to gain experience as a coach. Cpl Rees and Tpr Vunivosa were successful at this year's Army Trials and are currently training with the squad ahead of future fixtures. Again! Vunivosa has also had a busy summer representing a highly decorated Army 7s team.

This year, the team would like to say goodbye to a few important members. Bill and Ben, aka Capt Hugo Chaplin and Capt Will Groome, with their childish bants; Hugo only appeared in 7s cameos, and Will still living off a fluke conversion he scored against the Defence Academy in 2019. Sgt. DJ, a Springbok enthusiast who can play anywhere from 4 to 15, said his goodbyes to the military in style by playing games for the Army Rugby League team. Finally, LCpl Tyler Roberts, Daddy's Little Soldier, who has stood out both on and off the field for QDG & RAC. He is strong defensively and is referred to by the opposition as "that little cannonball." He can be heard shouting "BANG HIM!" from the

side-line. We won't forget you dropping your pre-game pic'n'mix on the car park floor!

Even though QDG RFC was forced to withdraw from the Army Cup because of a busy Regimental FoE, the team is still ambitious and is looking forward to any friendlies we can fit in. The team's reputation ripples through the Army, Welsh, and Norfolk rugby.

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to sports, WO2 Gaz Roberts received the Gomer Lloyd trophy to cap off another exciting QDG RFC year; for his ongoing support of the Corps and Regimental Rugby teams, where he was a key player and coach.

Regardless of what propaganda the Football team pushes out, Rugby remains the main sport and heartbeat of the Regiment!

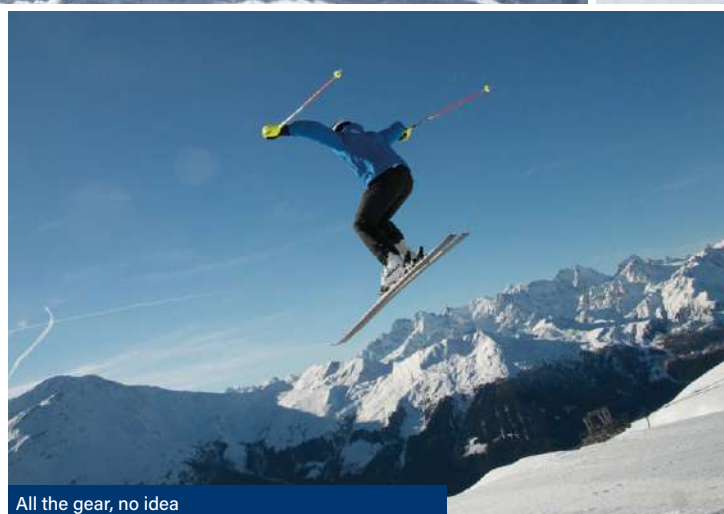
GR



I promise this is my last game



Just your typical Verbier crowd



All the gear, no idea

Alpine Skiing



Fat is fast

In December, the QDG Alpine Skiing team once again loaded up and made its annual trip to Verbier, Switzerland, for Ex White Knight 38. The team was accommodated in a Chalet owned by a retired Major from The Black Watch, David Boulter, who settled in Verbier after meeting and subsequently marrying a chalet girl, a life that the team all aspired to live.

Having been graded, training began, with some individuals finding their ski legs quicker than others. The QDG novices received praise from their Swiss Ski School instructors for their complete and total unwarranted confidence, quickly throwing themselves down slopes that were a stretch beyond their ability. This attitude, perhaps motivated by the ability to track one's speed through GPS, paid dividends when it came to the speed events, with LCpl Newbold dropping over 30 bibs in one day of racing.

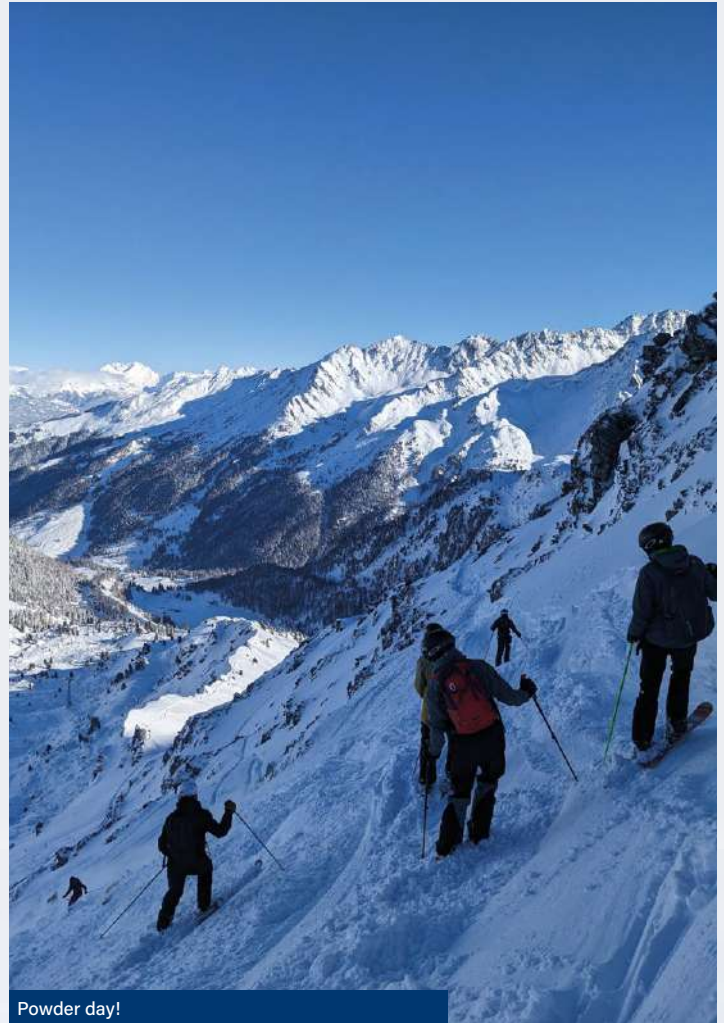
Of course, it wasn't only the novices who were progressing well, with Lt Toby Clark swiftly impressing the Exercise team and making a name for himself in Group One. Whilst his form somewhat faltered in the RAC Championships (perhaps somewhat distracted with other



Before breaking a ski



Christmas jumping



Powder day!

aspects of Verbier life), his successes at the Divisional championships, seeding 10th overall are of considerable note and leave Toby in an excellent position to lead the team over the 23/24 season.

Alongside the skiing, Exercise White Knight has a large focus on team bonding and community engagement, and this is often where the QDG truly shine. Each unit is responsible for hosting an event or social and all are encouraged to make the most of our location. We were once again praised for our organisation of the Christmas day party, which consisted of a drinks reception and freestyle competition at the Snowpark. The event was attended not only by exercising troops but also by an array of guests, including multiple veterans who regaled in tales from their attendance of EX WK 5&6 in the 1980s and made comments on how the jumps were 'far bigger' in their day. Other notable events include a night with the retired HCav Officer/singer-songwriter, JB, James Blunt or indeed, the Jaeger Bomber.

The 22/23 season can be considered a success both on and off the slopes with the QDGs reputation upheld.

AW



Ready to take down the Death Star

Basketball

Until this year, the QDG Basketball team had largely lied dormant following the COVID pandemic. However, with an influx of keen players joining the Regiment and with the rallying call of Basketball OIC, Lt Walsh, the QDG has competed in its first competitive tournament for over 3 years.

With an incredibly busy Regimental FOE, maintaining a consistent training programme has been somewhat difficult, but in this year every effort has been made to rebuild the team and invest in a core group of players who can lay the foundations for future success. The team now trains weekly on Tuesday evening as well as running scrimmages on a Wednesday afternoon. Although largely dominated by novices, the team has been fortunate to benefit from the experience of our attached arms players, Cpls Carradus (RAMC) and Bain (SPS) who have been able to share their knowledge and run developmental training sessions. The Regiment is also fortunate to have an experienced player as the team 2IC, LCpl Fletcher, who has invested a considerable amount of his personal time into bringing on the newer players.

Although the team faced a disappointing result at the UK Inter Unit Midlands Competition, the players should not be disheartened, as for many, this was their first experience of competitive fixtures. The team performed admirably and now understands the benchmark when competing against Corps and Army players. Novices such as Tpr Robinson, the team's MVP for the competition, highlight the potential in QDG Basketball and set a good example of what can be achieved with the right attitude and determination.

The year 2023 will be used to further develop the team, with the aim of qualifying two internal level one basketball coaches. We look forward to more fixtures in the spring, and will no doubt have a better run at the silverware.



3 Ls in one day



Benny's ball



Half the number, half the height



Robbo gets the silverware

Squash

On Wednesday 28th September, QDG entered the Midlands Festival of Sports. The Squash team sailed through the group stages straight into the semi-finals, only dropping 1 game in the process. The semi-final was a slightly tighter match up, however the team managed to again sail through 3-0.

The final was against 23 Engr Regt, keen to get revenge from their group stage loss to us. Cpl Cooper took his match 2-0. LCpl Newbold dug in blind until the very last point, however the competition was strong, and he just missed out on the win. Being level now at 1 apiece, it was down to Sgt Dell if QDG was to win. Sgt Dell didn't fall to the pressure, and took his match 2-0, leaving the final result 2-1 to QDG, and the Regt being crowned Midlands Champions.

Cowes Week

During the first week of August, Second Lieutenants Clark and Swailes took a crew of QDG soldiers to Cowes Week to compete in a week of competitive inshore yacht racing. Cowes Week is the largest sailing regatta in the world and takes place off the Isle of Wight. It is a key part of the British sporting calendar and this year was particularly special as a novice QDG team were in attendance. The QDG were racing onboard White Knight 7, a J109 that belongs to the RAC Yacht Club. Despite it being Tpr George's first time on a yacht, and the majority of the crews' first time racing, we managed to hold our own in a competitive fleet. The town of Cowes was bustling and ensured our evenings were just as exciting as the racing prior. Highlights of the week included a cocktail party at the Royal Yacht Squadron and the Mount Gay opening party in Cowes Yacht Haven. Visits from Major Hoey and Lieutenant Al-Khamiri gave a boost of energy to the crew both on and off the water and brought some much-needed experience

to a young crew. The best result of the week was 6th out of a fleet of 20 boats with the QDG finishing the week with an overall position of 11th. The foundations were firmly set for a new era of QDG yachting. The next event in our calendar is the Combat Arms Sailing Regatta held annually in Sea View. To build on our success at Cowes Week, and to further cement sailing as the sport of choice, we will be submitting two teams this year.

TC



Is it meant to tip this far?



chins and chips

Fieldsports

The 2022/2023 season has really been a turning point for QDG Fieldsports after a tricky period due to the Covid-19 restrictions followed by the majority of the regiment being away in Mali for last season.

This year saw the opening of Holkham fishing lake to the wider regiment and a superb days shooting had by the Officers' Mess on our neighbouring Hoe Hall estate.

Holkham Fishing lake, run by the Norfolk Fishing Club (NFC) is a stocked trout fishing lake with the ability to course fish for Roach, Rudd and lure fish for Pike at certain times of the year. The regiment

has 2 rods available within the membership which has as of this year been opened up to the wider regiment. Fishing is strongly encouraged on Wednesday sports afternoons as it enables individuals to enjoy the phenomenal countryside that we are surrounded by as well as an opportunity to take a break from busy regimental life. Look forward to a write up in next years journal from those that have been enjoying the opportunity!

The Officers' Mess shoot day on our neighbouring Hoe Hall Estate saw the mess enjoy a days shooting with like permission from the Kieth Family. This

was the first day for the vast majority of the mess after three years deeply missed years. We split into two teams of guns where we would 'shoot one, beat one' with those with no or less experience have a coach stood with them on peg. This worked extremely well with everyone managing to shoot at-least one bird, in some cases their first!

After the day we retired to the mess for a very fun dinner. The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all. A special thank you to James Kieth for hosting us and John Hassell for putting on the day.

EJC





Dangerous Dave is on it again



Another loss for Cpt Maxwell even with his handicap

Golf

After a frustrating few years 2022 finally saw the lifting of Golf's COVID restrictions with a full calendar of fixtures planned for the coming season. C SQN had recently returned from a spell of hard-earned leave post operations in Mali and brought with them a healthy number of new golfers keen to get stuck in. Courses all around Norfolk were soon filled with the familiar shouts of 'FORE' as Dragoons got back into the swing of things fighting winter rust in preparation of the coming season.

The first event of the year saw 9 QDG personnel fly out to Faro, Portugal on what is the regiments first ever Golf tour. Over the next four days the team would play three rounds of Golf at Pestana Gramacho Golf resort. A combination of afternoon tee-times and relentless winds resulted in some great and not so good golf being displayed. SSgt Taylor after playing the sport for several years was finally hit with a ball courtesy of a thinned shot from Cpl Mather. Capt Maxwell has learnt always to check the number on his club after being deceived by SSgt Davies 220's antics. And most notably Capt Cooper was rewarded with an Eagle on

the PAR 5 18th hole after his hard work organising the trip. A successful tour enjoyed by all and one that we plan to repeat in the future.

Numerous Army Golf Association Eastern region events throughout the year saw QDG representation from mixed members of the regiment with long time regulars Sgt Watson and LCpl Parker turning in respectable scores.

LCpl Sell managed to convince Sgt Pugh, LCpl Shaw and SSgt Taylor to participate in Macmillan's Cancer research 'the longest day' challenge in what would prove to be the hottest day of the year so far in late June. The challenge consists of four rounds of golf back-to-back equating to 72holes of golf over 25 miles. Starting at 0500, hole 72 was completed sixteen hours later. Sunburnt, blistered and sore legs were rewarded by the team raising over £700 for charity.

2022 saw another first for QDG golfers



Courses all around Norfolk were soon filled with the familiar shouts of 'FORE' as Dragoons got back into the swing of things



with a team entering the Army inter unit championship. Held over two days at the Army Golf Course, Aldershot. After respectable scores posted in day ones Stableford competition the team progressed to the Matchplay knockout stages eventually being eliminated in a 2&1 loss in the semi-finals. LCpl Shaw picking up the winning point with LCpl Sell only losing his match on the 18th hole.

The team participated in the festival of sport walking away as winners before the season was rounded off with a bogey competition held at St Neots GC with Sgt Watson winning a '4 ball' voucher for an away day. Golf remains a thriving sport within regiment life with both old and new members of the team representing QDG at regional, corps and Army level. We look forward to 2023 where the calendar of events is already filled and bringing some silverware back to Robertson Barracks.

KT



MTP, the perfect camouflage for hair loss



Lads and Dads

Regimental Football

There was a slow start to the 2022 football season due to Op Newcombe 3 and the associated post-tour leave that followed. Nevertheless, we took the opportunity in early May to conduct football training with senior members of the squad from the ROG. With the indomitable WO2 Fisher as the new football officer, supported by the indefatigable SSgt Emmings as player coach, we fielded a very strong squad comprised of 40 footballers to compete in the Major Unit Cup and the Army East Midlands League.

The squad was now training twice a day with structured training sessions by part-coach, part-striker SSgt Emmings. The squad was mainly comprised of young, fit, robust footballers who enjoyed a more faster attacking style of football.

The first friendly saw us play against 8 Fd REME and what a game it was! Leading the game for most of the match thanks to LCpl McDermott and Tpr Royal, we then decided to switch off and concede two last minute goals to lose the game 3-2. For a young squad this was a massive learning curve and will only improve the squad in the future.

Next, we faced 7 Bn REME at home and, with a vast amount of home support, it was time to redeem ourselves. The game was in the balance with QDG down 2-0 until the last ten minutes when our player-coach SSgt Emmings pulled one back with a header. It was in the last gasp of the game when LCpl Jones (not the horse) decided to go forward for the



Postman turned footballer

corner and, unmarked, put the QDG on level terms and it finished 2-2.

Finally, it was Major Unit Cup Day! The QDG were at home against 30 Signal Regiment, and this was the first time that we were sitting flush with all the ROG and Operation Newcombe 3 footballers fighting for a place in the squad. 30 Signal Regiment started the brightest, but we were strong in defence and held them to 1-1 at half time. After a brief break, we came out fighting and, with a good piece of play from LCpl Harcourt down the right wing, switched the play to our main striker Cpl Donnachie for a close range tap in. The celebrations were short lived thanks to a red card and suddenly 30 Signals, with nothing left to lose, put



Chop 'im

our defence under increasing pressure. Two vital defensive mistakes on our part gave a well deserved win to 30 Signal Regiment.

Next year we will look forward to the Cavalry Cup and involvement in the East Midlands League, however this will come with some challenges due to Regimental commitments across the world. A special mention must go to all those that continue to represent the RAC team and a congratulations to Cpl Donnachie who once again represented the Army U23 and the men's senior team. My last point is a massive thank you to SSgt Emmings who provides us with a good platform to work on and all the best in the future.

DF



That were absolutely diabolical

Athletics

On Wed 20th April, 11 SP from QDG entered the UK Midlands Athletics Competition. The main body of the Regt was in Cardiff so with only ROG SP to pick from the odds were against us. Upon arrival to the Birmingham Athletics Stadium, it was then we realised that some teams had up to 32 SP in their squad meaning they had flexibility to do just 1 event each.

Some members of the QDG squad had to enter 4 events each just to ensure that we participated in every event to score as many points as possible. We managed to get many top 4 finishes and held our own against those massive squads.

Thanks to SP from QDG entering numerous events and not being phased by the competition, as a team we managed to secure 2nd place, slightly missing out on the title to 2 Royal Anglian.

Below is a list of the Gold, Silver and Bronze rewards for the Regt.

CC



Tpr Lingwood



LCpl Lewis



LCpl Palmer



Cfn Limehouse

Cpl Cooper

Cpl Cooper	400m Hurdles winner, Triple Jump runner-up, 400m Relay runner-up
LCpl Lewis	Javelin 3rd place.
Tpr George	800m Winner, 400m Relay runner-up
Tpr Lewis	3000m Steeplechase runner-up, 400m Relay runner-up
Tpr Lingwood	400m Relay runner-up
Tpr Nobes	Hammer Throw Winner. Discus 3rd place.
Tpr Thapa	High Jump 3rd place.



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A Sqn Adventurous Training

After the Deserts and Wadis of Op NEWCOMBE 3 and the parade squares of Ex EAGLE's RETURN A Sqn deployed on Ex TRIDENT EAGLE (Offshore Sailing) and Ex EAGLES PADDLE (Kayaking and Mountain Biking). The budding sailors of A Sqn departed for the Royal Britannia Naval College, Dartmouth to undertake 2- weeks Offshore Sailing on the RAC Yacht, White Knight VII. Skippered by Lt Clark (the Regiment's resident Sailing and Skiing Officer) we set sail. With a few of the crew feeding the fish, the basics were understood. This was for many the first time on a sailing yacht, a literal drop into the deep end. The first week we made best speed to Salcombe, but with the weather forecast for this week being heavy rain, thunderstorms and above 20 knots gusting wind, a re-evaluation of the plan was needed. The crews developed their confidence quickly, perfecting the skills and drills of coming alongside and putting up the main sail and keeping the yacht 'ship shape'. They also quickly became skilled galley chefs, with daily culinary delights! However, constrained by dire weather conditions the crew enjoyed the entertainments of Devon more than the waves. On our return, after an enthusiastic jibe we ripped the main sail coming back into Dartmouth. Fortunately, a spare was quickly sourced, and the sailing continued.

The second week started off bright and clear with the wind behind us. Skippered by Maj Kemp-Gee RY, we set sail. Luck was obviously not on our side, and very quickly ripped another mainsail. Making for a very unhappy RACYC Commodore (Maj Hoey) and restricting our sailing considerably for the rest of the week. However, we were not to be deterred. Under foresail and spinnaker and occasionally motor, the crew toured the south coast from Salcombe to Torquay. They demonstrated their newly acquired knowledge particularly with the spinnaker which is a complicated procedure even for an experienced crew. The crew achieved their Competent Crew qualification, with Cpl Couch achieving his Day Skipper. Overall, an adventure was had by all.

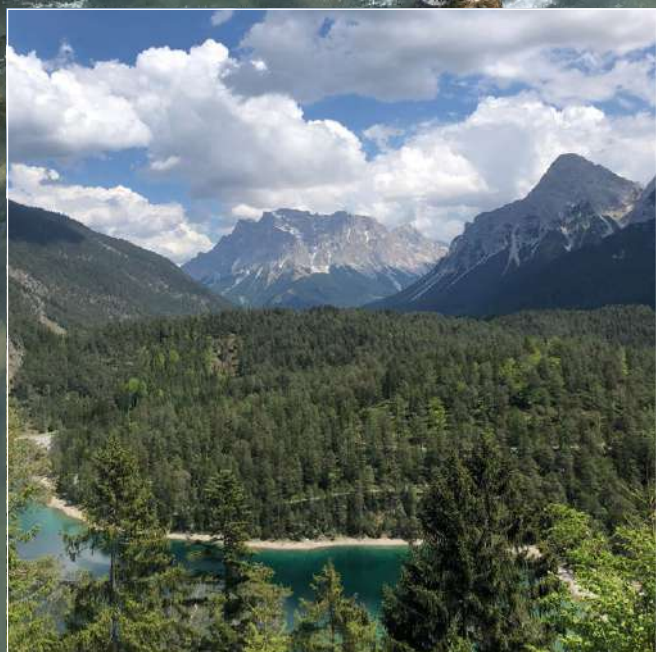
Ex EAGLES PADDLE took a group of soldiers from A and HQ Squadron to the beautiful Lake Beld in Slovenia. The group spent two weeks getting to know the local lakes and mountain bike trails while completing the Inland Kayak Foundation course and building on quality mountain days on the newly purchased QDG mountain bikes. Thanks to SSgt Ellis RAPTC, Cpl Gilliam, and Pte Mace of the MPGS, all instruction came from within RBSM and this was a huge benefit to the success of the expedition. Our own RAO even noting that it was considerably under budget! The wooden spoon for the trip must go to Sgt Dell RE, who ended up with grazes on every part of exposed skin. It was a fantastic trip, but I would not drive there again!

ZS

Fast and Furious 22



Ex Bavarian Eagle



Ex Bavarian Eagle was a Multi-Activity Adventure Training exercise in Wertach, Bavaria, Germany. B Sqn QDG deployed 15 participants on the Expedition to test soldiers in a challenging environment whilst fostering team ethos and spirit. Over a 10-day period, soldiers took part in hill walking, kayaking and Klettersteig in order to test character and build cohesion. Alongside the day's activity, the soldiers threw themselves at the Bavarian way of life and became acquainted with the local beer gardens. Further afield, day trips to Munich and Kempten allowed the soldiers to further immerse themselves in German culture.

Kayaking

The first day on the water was aimed at a complete beginner, the instructor started on land and talked through the equipment we would be using. We then progressed onto the water where we learnt basic strokes and how to escape the kayak in the event of rolling. The instructor was excellent at bringing on beginners to a good standard of paddling in a short space of time ready for day two which took place on a fast-flowing river instead of a lake. Some soldiers struggled with rolling under the water and showed panic when exiting the kayak, but it was good to see them develop and learn how to control this fear as the day went on.



Hill Walking provided an excellent opportunity to mentor and develop navigation



ways in which to overcome and manage fear in a relaxed setting and allowed for plenty of opportunity for coaching. On our second day we travelled an hour and a half to one of the best Klettersteig routes in the region. This was unani-



A cultural afternoon...

Klettersteig

The first day was spent learning the basics of climbing. It was an informative day which covered basic knot tying, abseiling and belaying. The climbing was technical and there was something for all abilities. Climbing was a great mechanism for teaching soldiers

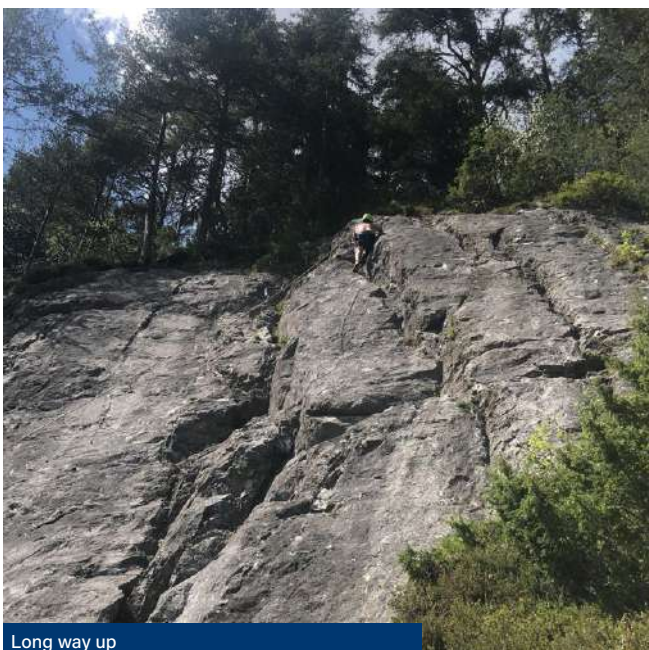
mously the most popular activity; it was great adventure for the group.

Hill Walking

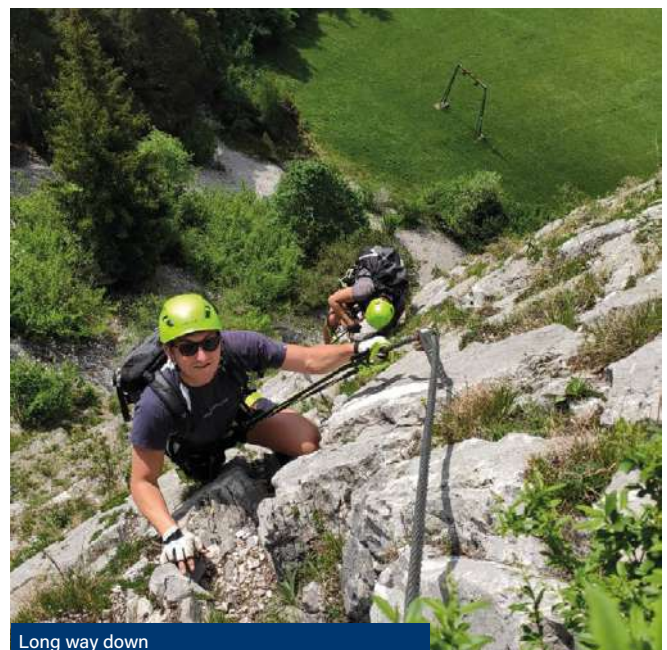
Hill walking provided an opportunity for soldiers to add quality mountain days to their logbook. Each day there was a summit of a local mountain (weather dependent). The days lasted around 5 hours and covered between 10 and 20km. Hill Walking provided an excellent opportunity to mentor and develop navigation.

B Sqn hope to return to Bavaria in July 2023.

TC



Long way up



Long way down



Op Ballam

On Thursday 08 September 2022, after 70 years of glorious reign and at the age of 96, Queen Elizabeth II, the UK's longest serving monarch died peacefully at her home in Balmoral, Scotland.

During a time of profound national and international mourning, B and C Squadron 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards were dutifully called upon to assist with her majesty's state funeral and the preparations for the event. A ten-day national mourning period began following her death during which the Dragoons gratefully deployed down to London to help the proceedings over a number of days, ably helping members of the public attend various sites across the Capital as part of the funeral whilst also aiding the Metropolitan Police with some of their duties during a difficult period. The Squadrons were also generously visited by General Sir Simon Mayall KBE, CB during their time in London. Before departing, the Dragoons were truly honoured to have the opportunity to pay their final respects to the Queen as they watched her funeral parade pass by out of London and be able to salute her one final time.

May she rest in peace.

SRBM

*"I cannot lead you into battle,
I do not give you laws or
administer justice, but I can do
something else; I can give you
my heart and my devotion to
these old islands and to all the
peoples of our brotherhood of
nations."*

Queen Elizabeth II, on her first
Christmas Broadcast, December 1957.



Lt Gen Sir Simon Mayall, KBE, CB visiting B and C Sqn.



Op NEWCOMBE 3

As the sun finally set on 2022, I reflected on the task I had been set for the QDG's journal – a task that I definitely did not leave to the last minute if my Mother asks! I flicked through the small diary I kept in Mali and scrolled through the photographs that all seem so far away from my current post in the Falklands. Thursday 24th March 2022, a day we ended at N15° 03' 23.32" E00° 38' 27.09", sticks in my mind as one of the best days I had out on patrol with 1st Troop, A Squadron, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards.

Starting as most days on patrol did, with a first light departure from the leaguer on our mission of finding a route from the Task Group (TG) leaguer to the Squadron's (Sqn) leaguer location. By now, everyone in the Sqn was very familiar with this role and it seemed to work very easily in our opinion, the A1 Echelon (supply lorries and heavy vehicles) may have a different opinion but fortunately this is my article, so we did that role most swimmingly!

Shortly before midday, the CO released the Sqn to go to Hourara, a semi-island town in the River Niger that a year previously had been the site of a weapons cache that the Light Dragoons found on their patrol. The Sqn's plan was sound and every vehicle understood just what they were to do. As we entered what would have been the Terrorist Armed Group (TAG) reconnaissance screen 2nd Tp sent on the radio that they

had managed to catch up with an armed man who had fled on sight of them. The news of this meant that we had to launch into position quickly and that meant that all of the drivers and lead vehicle's crew had to pick the best ground, a job that they did very well indeed. Within minutes we sailed past 3rd and 4th Tps in their cut off positions, crossing the 'land bridge' onto Hourara.



The locals were genuinely happy to see us, insisting that Tpr Firth tried out their new(ish) pushbike



Our first task was to establish a cordon to stop anyone from fleeing onto the far shore, once that was done and Sgt Griffiths had overwatch from some high ground, the Search Team within 1st Tp set about conducting area searches of the fields and likely cache locations. This was hot work, on foot, in the sun, wearing full personal protective equipment (PPE) rummaging around and leaving no nook or cranny uninterrogated. That afternoon we built a very decent picture of what had been happening to that town in the past few weeks and months, the locals were very pleased to see us and the older men were almost too chatty! Towards the end of the day, we found some items of particular interest in a derelict shed. As 2nd Tp had found a weapon and the EOD robot had already fallen over, we were told to keep eyes on overnight and that EOD would come out first thing in the morning. This meant that the Tp would have to



A selfie that the Spaniard (Cpl Mathieson RE) took on my phone

have double the amount of people awake throughout the night but it did give us a rare chance to patrol through the village in the day, through the night, and into the next morning – something that I was very excited for!

The first patrol we did walking just in front of a vehicle, giving us good cover from the slew-ring, and saving a bit of weight from our backs after such a long day on foot. This added to what was already a fantastic day. The locals were genuinely happy to see us, insisting that Tpr Firth tried out their new(ish) pushbike and forcing ice on us as thanks. One chap even recognised the British uniforms and asked if we were Light Dragoons, which we denied after throwing-up a little. On our way to the Desert Box that Sgt Griffiths had sited, we stopped by a field and chatted again to a man that was very friendly to us earlier. He wanted to gift us a watermelon, that we then gave him a bag of leftover rations for.

That night we mounted a foot patrol through the town, very quickly bumping into a young lad called Ibrahim and a group of young boys (12-18) who insisted



The man and his watermelon



Cpl Jones on the vallon (film photo)



A view of the field mid-search (film photo)



LCpls Cox and Haden doing a boundary search (film photo)



'The Major' and the man going through the rations (film photo)

we sat with them outside a derelict house that they used as the 'Hourara Club for Young Boys', that we in 1st Tp were all made honorary members of. The lads use this courtyard as a place to chat, drink tea, and listen to music all together without bothering their parents. They had no end of questions for us, as well as really enjoying English music and hearing how much our kit weighed. Something that has really stuck with me from that night, as proof that we did some good there, was a man of about twenty-two coming to us, being a former member of the Club himself, thanking us for our presence as he shook all of our hands. He explained, with a lit

cigarette in his mouth, that he came up the river from Labazanga (a large town with a Malian Army presence a few miles down the River Niger) to see his parents after hearing that we were there. He went on to say that men of his age could not stay in the village for they would either be forced into a TAG or beaten, maybe even killed.

At our request, Ibrahim and the gang led us to the local shop and we happily spent some of our petty-cash on some drinks for the Club and the shopkeeper. We then returned to the Desert Box, for an early start lay ahead of us. As if the locals had not done enough to show us their appreciation of the security that our presence gave them, we patrolled

past a very jubilant celebration that they insisted we joined in on. A young couple had used our presence to get married and actually have a little party after it, an unreal testament to the effect we had. Even the frogs around us seemed to be having a shindig, for they would not give us a minute of silence!

The MoD have announced that the UK will withdraw from Mali this year, after only a couple of years. It is getting less stable there, and no one would want to have a British soldier get injured there, nevertheless, the presence of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards made a difference to the people of Hourara. If only for that day.

ZAK



11B in full soar (film photo)



Op Newcombe – Royal Irish

I deployed to Mali as a Platoon Commander from Nov 21 to June 22. As part of the Light Mech Infantry Company deployed on Op Newcombe, our primary purpose was to interact with the local population in remote urban centres that had limited security presence from Malian forces or other UN partner nations. As part of the LRRG, we would patrol vast swathes of the Sahel around Gao for periods of up to 3 weeks. Whilst patrolling out to remote settlements, our counterparts (brothers) in the Light Cav Squadron would find and mark routes through this inhospitable terrain for the rest of the Task Group, whilst the LMI Company provided protection for the sustain, recovery and medical elements of the TG. Once the LRRG arrived closer to the urban areas, the LMI Coy would patrol into these remote settlements to conduct Human Terrain Reconnaissance. This usually looked like 3 Platoons patrolling different areas in the larger settlements, or separate villages where the population density was smaller and more spread. We would locate where local key community players were living, through conversa-

tion with the local populous or through identifying certain buildings such as Mosques, marketplaces, or Medical Centres, and then look to conduct Local Leader Engagements with these people. Information critical to us was the security situation in the area and the state of the local economy, but equally as important was what they needed, such as food, water, infrastructure, and medical facilities. This key information gathered from our Human Terrain Reconnaissance would then be compiled into detailed patrol reports, that were then fed up the chain of command to the higher echelons of the UN. Whilst we were patrolling



in these areas, we found that we provided short term security for the local populous, allowing them a respite from Terrorist Armed Groups and local criminals.

If I had to choose my favourite memories from the tour, they would be as follows.

Labazanga, March 22

Although we were gathering an abundance of information on the needs of the people who inhabited the areas



we were patrolling, the UN could not remedy these issues overnight. Extensive planning and funding would need to take place within the higher echelons of the UN as well as a permanent security presence on the ground. As a result, it was very rare to see a physical, tangible result of our work in the initial months of the tour. We all knew this would be the case, however when fatigue set in on long patrols, it was easy for us all to become slightly disenfranchised. When we patrolled into Labazanga, a riverine settlement on the border of Niger, we met with the Village Chief and witnessed the opening of a water tower that had been built by the UN. A huge crowd of local people turned out for the event, and the joyous emotions on display because of the water towers construction proved to us how much this meant to them. Equally, it was a physical result that reminded me and my Platoon that we were having a positive impact in Mali.





Lelehoy, April 22

We were patrolling in a town called Lelehoy on the West Bank of the River Niger, for the second time during the tour. We knew this town had been subject to strict rules from a Terrorist Armed Group after our previous patrolling there in January. To name a few, this meant no modern education, sport, games or smoking and strict restrictions on how the villagers went about their day to day lives. One afternoon mid patrol, when 2 Platoon was having some respite from the ruthless afternoon heat in our 'ring of steel, we were approached by a large group of local children. The guys interacted as brilliantly as they always did, doing their best to converse with the children and having a laugh and joke with them. One of the Section Commanders decided to try and explain the game 'duck, duck, goose' to the children through our interpreter. Soon after there was a large group of both local children and Rangers sat in a circle, and a fantastic game of 'duck, duck, goose' ensued. The local kids had never played the game, and one or two didn't really understand or agree with the rules, but nevertheless they were absolutely engrossed with it and loved it. It was quite humbling to think that these children usually weren't allowed to play games with their friends, and that the small window of security the LRRG had provided allowed them this basic human right. Not as per the pam, but the best display of hearts and minds that I saw throughout the tour and a memory that made me incredibly proud to have worked with those Rangers.

TT



Op Unity

On the 15th June 1815, the Duchess of Richmond hosted a ball that would go down in history - there was dancing, costumes and general merriment amongst the British and allied officers. Little did they know that early the following day, they would be travelling across the country post-haste to join their men and face an army under the dreaded Marshal Ney.

Two hundred and seven years later, the soldiers and officers of B Squadron shared a similar fate. The day after the Officers' Mess Summer Ball saw the opening of the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and some officers, just as their forebears had in 1815, turned up still wearing their dancing shoes.

B Squadron were billeted in a small, wifi-less cadet camp in the middle of Cannock Chase Forest which, as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, proved to be a rare gem in the oft-maligned county of Staffordshire. In a reshov of 2012's Op OLYMPIC, the Government had shortly before requested that the British Army support G4S to provide a comprehensive security presence across multiple sites in one of the UK's largest urban centres. The atmosphere across Birmingham was electric as people from across the world came to support their team, whilst anticipation rose amongst B Sqn as they waited to see whether they had been chosen to attend the beach volleyball...

Alas, they had not but an acceptable replacement was found in the Rugby 7s tournament. With the gates mostly closed during the games, dragoons were able to watch the games as they unfolded. Soldiers cheered loudly for Wales, officers cheered loudly for England and - under the watchful eye of WO2 (SSM) Navunasaravi - everybody cheered loudly for Fiji.

A variety of sports soon replaced the rugby - soldiers were sent to venues hosting sports as diverse as netball, taekwondo, cross-country mountain biking, swimming and gymnastics. Tasks included bag searching, metal detecting and the supervising of G4S on the entrances and exits to and from venues. With the minor exception of Trooper Rowland's mystery metal object, most working days passed without incident as a compliant and good-natured general public poured praise on anyone in camouflage.

As the three weeks came to an end, the soldiers bid goodbye to their temporary home. A small champagne/two can celebration was held, alongside a final volleyball tournament and indoor barbecue, and the following morning the big white busses arrived to carry them home to a well deserved summer leave.

RWF



Ex Cambrian Patrol

September brought a few new things to the QDG - a fresh ORBAT, myself, and an undivided effort from B Sqn to field not one, but two patrols for Exercise Cambrian Patrol - a mere four weeks away. The clock was ticking.. teams had not been finalised, kit checks not conducted, AFVs not recognised! Firstly two patrol commanders had to be chosen and who better than two of the newest officers just weeks out of Sandhurst, 2Lts Webster and myself. Having successfully avoided a stint at Brecon prior to Bovington, we were now somehow in to experience all Sennybridge had to offer. The other members of the patrols were pulled from across all squadrons, Cpl Rowlands was the only Cpl across both teams so LCpl Wilkinson was chosen as the second patrol 2IC. A couple of members had previously completed Cambrian Patrol but overall there was a lack of experience in some of the skills required. Admirably this did not hinder performance nor drive to complete the Patrol. A two week intensive training programme was undertaken, driven by the NCOs and Tprs. We knew a lack of sustained physical build up training would be our worst enemy, yet this did not stop either patrol over the 57-62km. Both patrols finished with all members, avoiding the severe penalty for losing any on the way round - it did cost a few

the skin on their heels, and after some complaints of a "sore leg" during the second half, Tpr Dempsey was later diagnosed with a ruptured achilles! Having completed Cambrian Patrol in 2018 I can say it is no easier the second time round and justifiably retains its reputation as the world's toughest military patrols competition. To come away with a Silver and a Bronze was a true statement to the grit and professionalism of QDG soldiers who turned round such an excellent result in an extremely short period of time.

HMM



NATO Landcom

Following a hugely eventful two years in HQ LONDON DISTRICT which saw the COVID lockdowns and Op RESCRIPT, the funeral of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh (Op FORTH BRIDGE) and the Platinum Jubilee; I received a set of Orders from my wife that clearly stated her 'Intent'. In good Recce style I was to 'FIND' a suitable overseas posting that provided better weather; less State Ceremonial and Public Duties (SCPD); and importantly a house with a garden. A job working for NATO in Izmir (Türkiye) was, of course, the only logical option. Further, the break out of war in Ukraine made HQ Allied Land Command (LANDCOM) an interesting opportunity not to be missed.

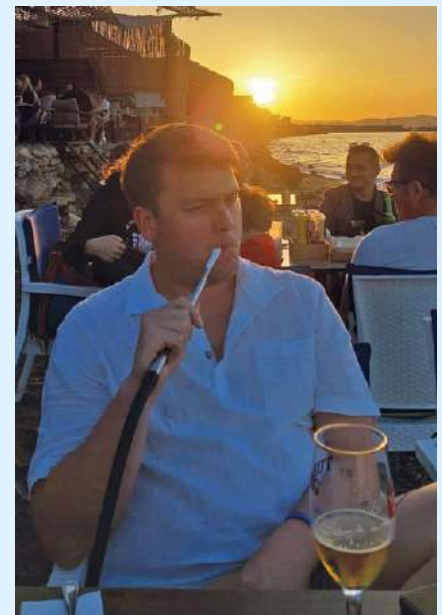
Having deployed on a NATO Operation (Op CABRIT) in Poland in 2020/21, I had a vague idea of what NATO did and how it was organised. My time so far in LANDCOM has indeed confirmed what a complex, culturally diverse and at times awe inspiring organisation NATO can be (when it works at least). With the ability to call up 10 Warfighting Corps, the number

of soldiers, fighting vehicles and equipment, that can be quickly and effectively mobilised is impressive to say the very least. HQ LANDCOM itself provides the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) land domain expertise and advice. It also delivers training to all NATO Land forces at readiness, from Warfighting Corps HQ down to the Sub-unit level. As a joint multi-national HQ almost all NATO member nations are represented providing opportunity to engage with not just Turkish culture but a plethora of attitudes, interests, languages and concerns.

The city of Izmir, located at the end of the ancient Silk Road, has been home to a wealth of different cultures and ethnicities for hundreds of years. As a result the people are friendly, tolerant and unique in their view of the world. Outside the city one cannot move for things to do and see such as the Graeco-Roman ruins of Ephesus or the ancient city of Troy. We would certainly advise a trip out to Türkiye for anyone thinking of visiting. It of course goes without saying that if you

are stopping by Izmir then do let us know, our door is always open to any QDG, past and present. Tesekkürler.

ETPO



St David's Day 'a dewi sant'

This year the Regiment has been deployed all over the globe, from West Africa to Salisbury Plain. With our Soldiers so widely spread it was critical that this year's St David's Day be designed to allow everyone to take part. It also provided the opportunity to experience other Regimental traditions when combined with St Patrick's Day celebrated by A Coy 1 Royal Irish who were working alongside the Regiment in Mali. It was also great to see the Regimental Comrades Association get stuck in again and QDG recruits in Phase 2 training completing several tasks under the watchful eye of WO1 Pete Cubitt.

Whilst the Regiment was unable to celebrate on 1st March due to being out on patrol over the course of Op NEWCOMBE it nevertheless provided an event to look forward to for those deployed. On the 8th March the combined St David's and Patrick's Day began at the reasonable hour of 0001hrs to avoid temperatures that rose up to 40 degrees. The task was simple, each Sqn was to accumulate the maximum number of miles possible by any means necessary, be in walking, running, cycling or crawling. The particularly adventurous chose to start the day by running a full marathon with LCpl Young, LCpl Carew and Tpr Huish being among the first to complete distance. Throughout the night, over 600 miles had been completed and with the temperature providing a low of around 25 degrees, the team were already putting in a huge amount of effort! The miles kept coming in throughout the day and with Cpl Thomas keeping track, there was no way of pulling the wool! He made sure that all mileage and participants were taken care of and between him LCpl Rees and the PTI's, the day ran in an amazingly efficient manner. By 1000hrs the LRRG had already hit over 1,000 miles – a great effort!

At 0815hrs the Commanding Officer and Maj Mansel delivered the day's selected tasks to all QDGs in theatre and back in the UK. The Squadron Sergeant Majors then briefed their teams, making it clear failure was not an option. Tasks to be completed included receiving a message from a famous celebrity and acting out a skit from a popular Welsh or Irish film. For this skit, there was some top level acting and with LCpl Phillips being editor in chief of the LRRG, there was only one way it could go. LCpl Harcourt

put together a great rendition of Twin Town with LCpl Young securing victory in this task. Other tasks included getting a picture from a drone spelling out 'Happy St David's & Patrick's Day from the LRRG' and of course the traditional leek eating competition. Never before have I seen the leeks go down range so quickly with the fastest eater taking only 23 seconds. Indeed, I had to check that the winner hadn't swallowed his fingers!

Such commitment to winning could be seen in the competitive spirit that soon developed. A Coy took it upon themselves to don balaclavas and trash the GMSG block then double padlocked A Sqn's iso container, which contained their chariot. A bold move but one that was swiftly answered by the A1 Commander, a resident of the GMSG block. Karma would soon come back to them and with only two ration menus for 6 months and the dread of eating Chilli Con Carne, normality was swiftly restored! The day ended with one last run to account for the required

mileage and the traditional chariot race, organised by A Coy. To say that it was competitive and sometimes a bit risky is an understatement! The Royal Irish took the chariot race very seriously, to call it a baptism of fire may well be an understatement. However, everyone finished in one piece... just about.

The final parade of the day was initially held over Zoom back to the UK. Using this platform, we managed to speak to members of the Regiment at ERE and brief all soldiers at Regimental Duty in the Gymnasium. Incredibly, the joint distance covered was 3,129 miles, a brilliant achievement by all. The day was a big success and one that allowed us to raise a good amount of money for the Dreams and Wishes Charity. The day was a huge success, and we all pass our thanks onto everyone from the wider Regimental community for getting involved and contributing towards our national day.

DC

1st place	HQ Sqn
2nd place	C Sqn
3rd place	A Sqn
4th place	F Sqn
5th place	E Sqn
6th place	B Sqn
7th place	RCA 2022



A Coy took it upon themselves to don balaclavas and trash the GMSG block





ATC Pirbright

Army Training Centre (ATC) Pirbright is about 30 miles west of London, close to the towns of Aldershot and Guildford. ATC Pirbright delivers the 14 week training course known as the Common Military Syllabus which is completed by all adult recruits (age 17+) when they join the Army. The course is designed to develop the individual and team skills in a progressive manner, preparing recruits for their Initial Trade Training, where they learn the specific skills for their chosen Army trade. ATC Pirbright delivers Phase 1 Training for new recruits joining: Army Air Corps, Army Medical Services, Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Corps of Royal Engineers, Corps of Army Music, Royal Regiment of Artillery, Royal Corps of Signals, Royal Logistic Corps, Adjutant General's Corps, Intelligence Corps. Sadly the Royal Armoured Corps recruits are no longer trained at Pirbright. They are now trained at Catterick with the Infantry recruits.

Life at ATC Pirbright is very enjoyable. The permanent staff are all highly



motivated and committed to delivering high quality training to the recruits. The sports facilities are exceptional, including high-tech gym equipment and flood lit running track and sports pitches. There are lots of opportunities to go on AT at Pirbright. 2023 will see personnel going

skiing, rock climbing and sea kayaking. A recent survey showed that over 90% of permanent staff at Pirbright would recommend a posting here, which shows that it's a great place to work!

BL



HQ ARRC

In October I bade a fond farewell to the world of Regimental Duty after four happy years at Robertson Barracks and headed across the country to take up a post at the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps HQ on the edge of Gloucester. The sight of hills on the horizon is still taking some getting used to but we have received a warm welcome from my new colleagues and neighbours and it is a great place to be.

The ARRC is one of nine Corps HQ across the NATO alliance. It was established in Rheindalen in 1992 (formed from the remnants of the Cold War-era 1 (British) Corps) but moved back to the UK in 2010. It has deployed several times, to Afghanistan and the Balkans. While most of the staff are British, it is a multinational HQ with people from 23 partner nations, with the USA and Italy providing the largest contingents.

During 2023, HQ ARRC will train towards validation to take on the NATO Readiness Force role in 2024 (with 7th Bde – the Desert Rats – underneath as part of the Very High Readiness Task Force). This is a busy training pipeline culminating in the three-week Ex Steadfast Jupiter

in Romania and then tested by Ex Brilliant Jump in the new year.

The HQ is a good place to work. Its multinational nature means that there are lots of interesting people and experiences to learn about. I share a desk with a Turkish commando, a Italian SF infantryman and a para engineer. To gel together, there is a full social calendar, and with most people having families the working hours are very reasonable! I have also already enjoyed a week of skiing AT in Austria which was extremely convivial.

On the serious side, the war in Ukraine is sharpening NATO's focus on warfighting capabilities and there is a very real possibility of deployment during our turn at readiness. With minimal troops under command from day to day, the majority of staff are purely tasked with improving their own performance, a very professionally satisfying existence. With roles for combat soldiers from Cpl to Lt Gen, I'd strongly encourage QDGs looking for a change

to apply for a post here.

DH



3rd (UK) Division

It has been an unprecedented year for the Iron Division, as the Army's Europe-facing Division with its principal 2-star deployable headquarters. The new Future Soldier structure has brought great changes to the organisation, not least the establishment of the 1st Deep Recce Strike Brigade Combat Team in July and the subordination of our Regiment in September.

When we briefed the Chief of the General Staff in January on our enduring operational commitments of Operation CABRIT in Estonia and Poland and Op ELGIN in Kosovo, we could not have anticipated how the Iron Division's work in Europe would evolve throughout the year.

Prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we conducted hasty planning to deploy the 1 R WELSH Battle Group to Estonia early, thereby doubling the UK's commitment to Operation CABRIT. Since then, we have also deployed soldiers on multiple exercises and operations across Europe alongside NATO and JEF partners.

In comparison to routine operations, the speed of decision making has been fascinating to watch, with Operation HARFA being a case in point, deploying a Challenger 2 Sqn from the QRH to south-east Poland only weeks after ministerial discussions and a couple of quick recces.

Exercise CERBERUS was a highlight in the Div HQ's calendar, not only validating



Ex CERBERUS showing you can never be too careful on ferries nowadays

six Brigade HQs and gaining valuable deployed HQ experience but proving we could deploy thousands of troops and hundreds of vehicles by land, sea and air at speed on the Army's largest exercise on the continent for over a decade.

Working as the overseas operations lead for the Division throughout this unique year has been enormously

rewarding and 2023 looks to be similarly eventful with numerous operational deployments and validation of the Div HQ on Exercise WARFIGHTER in Texas. The Div will continue to develop within its new structure under the GOC's strong leadership and will strive to be, in his words, "useful, useable and used".

ADC



Divided by a common language on Ex CERBERUS

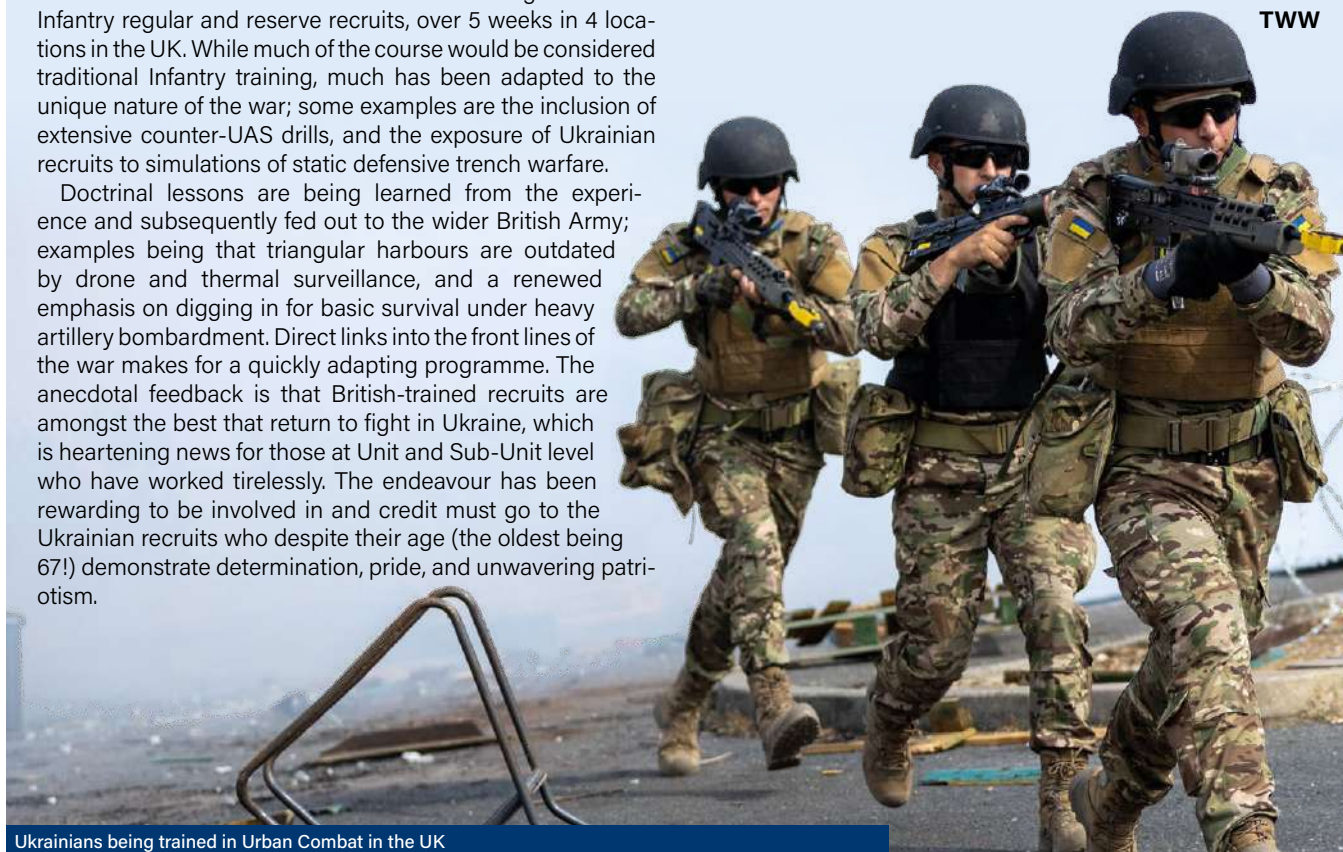
11 SFAB

11 Security Force Assistance Brigade, currently commanded by Brigadier Justin Stenhouse (late QDG) is conducting Operation INTERFLEX. This operation is training Ukrainian Armed Forces in basic combat, which between June and December 2022 had generated 10,000 Battlefield Casualty Replacements for the Ukrainian Army and will continue into 2023. The course is a combination of the courses taught to British Infantry regular and reserve recruits, over 5 weeks in 4 locations in the UK. While much of the course would be considered traditional Infantry training, much has been adapted to the unique nature of the war; some examples are the inclusion of extensive counter-UAS drills, and the exposure of Ukrainian recruits to simulations of static defensive trench warfare.

Doctrinal lessons are being learned from the experience and subsequently fed out to the wider British Army; examples being that triangular harbours are outdated by drone and thermal surveillance, and a renewed emphasis on digging in for basic survival under heavy artillery bombardment. Direct links into the front lines of the war makes for a quickly adapting programme. The anecdotal feedback is that British-trained recruits are amongst the best that return to fight in Ukraine, which is heartening news for those at Unit and Sub-Unit level who have worked tirelessly. The endeavour has been rewarding to be involved in and credit must go to the Ukrainian recruits who despite their age (the oldest being 67!) demonstrate determination, pride, and unwavering patriotism.

In 11SFAB's business as usual, the concept of Security Force assistance is being fleshed out with expansion of Op CORDED to Botswana, and other deployments around the world that will seek to deploy SFA Infantry Companies for 6 months to enable deeper and enduring relationships with our partners, to be able to train them in times of crisis and conflict.

TWW



Ukrainians being trained in Urban Combat in the UK

Republic Of Korea, US Army

During August Sgt Pugh was lucky enough to be selected to be a part of a contingent of 17 UK service personnel that augmented the United Nations Command (UNC) HQ in the Republic of Korea (ROK).

Individual augmentees play a role in providing advice, critical staff work and expertise to the UNC HQ in its contingency planning during times of crises - so it was confusing to hear that Sgt Pugh had been selected!

The Crisis Management Exercise (CMX) and Exercise Ulchi Freedom Shield 22 (UFS) ran over the period of August and September 22.

The Korean Peninsula is still in a state of armed conflict stemming from the 1950s because a formal peace treaty was never signed. Therefore, the initial CMX was a UNC-driven phase to exercise the procedures to deescalate tensions on the Peninsula prior to the outbreak of hostilities in attempts to maintain the Armistice Agreement.

This was the first time such an exercise

had been held on the Peninsula in 4 years.

The scenario for the exercise that followed was based on an armed conflict and was designed to enhance the ROK/US combined defence posture and strengthen the security and stability on the Korean peninsula. This was the first time such an exercise had been held on the Peninsula in 4 years and was, for the first time, commanded by the ROK 4th General. The exercise was a significant complex major exercise that involved the ROK Government, ROK Combined Forces Command (CFC), United States Forces Korea (USFK), UNC and subordinate component commands under CFC and representatives of the United Nations Sending States [to the Korean War] (UNSS).

For the Exercise, Sgt Pugh was employed in the Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) Coordination Cell within the UNC Operations Centre (UOC) at UNC HQ. His primary role was to track the status of the various

UNSS NEO plans and to liaise with duty staff in the UOC, British Embassy and other UNSS to facilitate the execution of those national NEO plans. The role also required representing other UNSS concerns and requirements for a NEO.

DP



Sgt Pugh thought he had escaped doing the night shift



Ukrainians being trained in Urban Combat in the UK

Army Headquarter: The Land Operations Command and Directorate Futures

The Land Operations Command runs the Army's trawls, so it is perhaps only right that Jackson and Carter should be submitting this journal entry 3 weeks late... Beside trawls however, our primary focus is to run the Army's operations and so we find ourselves split across the two halves of the LOC: 'Generate' and 'Operate'.

Carter is in the latter as SO3 Africa. In this role he supports all British Army activity in the continent, including Op PERCIVAL in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, several Projects in Ghana, Cameroon and Short-Term Training Teams across wider North and West Africa. So far, he has not managed to bluff any trips away ... a deeply average performance and a big 'work on' point for next year.

Meanwhile, Jackson ... well Jackson seems to bounce between jobs. Sitting in Generate, he is in such high demand that he has had three roles in almost as many months ... Officially slated as SO3 Training Cts, he moved straight to SO3B Ops Cts following the invasion of Ukraine. 5 months later he moved back to SO3 Training Commitments but now finds himself as SO3 G5 Campaign Plans. Yes, that's right ... someone entrusted Jackson to plan our Operational future. In this final role (we think), he finds himself spearheading the 'Land

Campaign Directive'.

Elsewhere, we are joined in Army Headquarters by a few familiar faces; specifically in Directorate Futures. This includes Lt Col Paddy Bond, who is currently working in FFD. We are told FFD is not "First Field Dressings", but rather "Future Force Development"; an altogether more impressive title. The second,

is Maj James Curry who is working in MCP. He claims this stands for "Military Capability Plans". In reality, he works for "Military Car Parks" as their chief attendant.

Should anyone find themselves at a loose end in Army HQ, please give us a shout.

MJC / GESJ



CO gives the RSM a lesson on Admin

Africa for Parkinson's Guy Deacon

Driving 12,000 miles through Africa in a VW campervan. Satnav, music and plenty of cigarettes, what could possibly go wrong?

When Colonel Guy Deacon decided to drive solo, from Sherborne to Cape Town he conveniently ignored the 101 things that any sane person might worry about, including the small fact that he was suffering from well progressed Parkinson's Disease.

So in November 2019 Guy set off from the Courts of Sherborne School, wending his way down through Europe, and then hopped across to Morocco. Everything was going fine, Guy was eating up the miles and exotic destinations - Marrakech, The Atlas Mountains, the sand dunes of the Algerian borderland, the dusts of Mauritania reaching Dakar in Senegal - the most westerly point in Africa. By February 2020 he was getting used to smoothing customs officials, meeting kind people who went out of their way to help him and was building a following of journalists and supporters of the Parkinson's charities he was raising money for. It was all a bit too easy.

It was the crossing from Guinea Bissau into Guinea (I challenge you to find that on a map!) where things hardened up for Guy. He was low on his medication (he has to take nine pills a day), there was an ominous leak from underneath the armour plated engine and the roads were turning into mud tracks. When he limped to the border with Sierra Leone he discovered right hand drive cars were forbidden in



You get into a downward spiral very quickly



the country! For most of us, hearing this would be devastating. For Guy his charm, a lot of patience and a good contact in the High Commission sorted him out.

Covid came and went, and it was now March 2022. Guy was back in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone where his van had patiently been waiting for him. 6,000 miles down, 6,000 to go.

Before we continue the journey with Guy, it is important to realise that two years for a Parkinson's sufferer is a long time and Guy's condition had only gone one way. This is how he described it to one of his keenest followers, BBC journalist, Rory Cellan-Jones who is a fellow sufferer:



As a Parkinson's sufferer, Guy has to regularly "re-charge" by resting on a hard surface

"You get into a downward spiral very quickly. And then Parkinson's grabs hold of you even more quickly, and you simply can't do anything. You can't make a sensible decision, you can't move, you can't turn around to talk, all the things that are dreadful become more dreadful."

With this in mind, imagine being in the van with Guy as he tackled the next leg of his journey. Monrovia, Liberia and The Ivory Coast went well, and in these countries Guy was able to do a lot more PR for Parkinson's Africa, appearing on TV and radio shows to explain what the disease was and how it affected people. The symptoms of slurred speech and restricted movement were not, as many people believed in Africa, the result of being possessed by the devil.

By now, Guy's shock absorbers, not to mention those on his van were getting tired. In Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria an ever growing band of supporters reached out to Guy, without whom he freely admits he would not have been able to continue.

Nigeria is wet and Cameroon even wetter. The road between the two is the most difficult road in Africa and it was here the clutch finally gave in. The van was towed across the boarder to the nearest town and Guy had reached a low point on his journey. Luckily he is a very very stubborn person. This saw him through some dark periods and by hook and by crook he was back on the road and crossing the Equator in Gabon on 19th August 2022.

Congo sounds a tough place and proved to be so. The pages in Guy's blog are a bit hazy here, suffice to say that the roads were so rough that the van's prop



Guy crossing the equator in Gabon on 19th August 2022



Guy broadcasting about Parkinson's on Angola radio

shaft sheared which left Guy stranded on the side of a very remote road. It says a lot about Guy, that he calmly flagged down a truck heading south to Angola and hitched a ride for both him and his van, across the border, through the bandit province of Cabinda, all the way to the gate of the British Embassy in Luanda.

The ambassador to Angola, Roger Stringer, a fellow ex army officer, immediately took Guy under his wing and it was in this fantastic country that I joined Guy for two weeks as his driver. Seeing Guy, first hand, dealing with seemingly insuperable problems is a lesson in bottomless patience. The spare part I had brought out to mend the van.... did not fit. Never mind, the local mechanic (one of the many who bent over backwards to help Guy throughout Africa) reassembled the van, we strapped the prop shaft on top, and set off in two wheel drive.

Angola is a misunderstood country. Our first encounter was with a charming hotelier (we were camping in his car park) who explained that he had fought

on the Communist side long civil war, simply because his whole community had. The Soviet backed communist side (MPLA) won. No longer Marxist, this party has led a very stable and peaceful country since 2002. Another passionate Angolan, who sold us some new tyres, and in whose garden we camped for two nights, explained to us that having experienced one million fellow Angolans killed, the whole country was simply tired of war. It is now very peaceful and very friendly.

On crossing the border into Namibia, Guy was on his "home straight" towards Cape Town. The toughest part of the journey was over but the most emotional part was yet to come. It has been a lifelong dream of Guy's to drive through Africa, but little did he ever think he would do it while coping with Parkin-

son's. I have seen him not being able to get money out of his wallet, struggling to peel a banana and ending up in tears simply attempting to put on a pair of shorts. Sharing these experiences with Guy I now better understand the effects of this inhibiting disease.

For some of Guy's journey, including his final moment of arriving at Cape Agulhas, Guy has been accompanied by filmmaker Rob Hayward. Rob has documented key moments of Guy's amazing journey and a film of this epic challenge is due out in summer 2023. You will cry.

To see all the amazing stories of encouragement and help he received look up www.guydeacon.co.uk

M A-M

The toughest part of the journey was over but the most emotional part was yet to come



"30 years dreaming, two years planning, 16,000 miles over 12 months travelling, over 20 countries and 3500 pills later I reach the southern tip of Africa"

British Forces South Atlantic Islands

In late September 2022, a newly gazetted Captain of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards was loaded onto an Air Tanker flight and flown for 18-hours down to the Falkland Islands. This self-proclaimed hefty half-Arab was to be in the role of Aide-de-Camp (ADC) to Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands (BFSAI), and the extra gold of the aiguillette really does add a certain *je ne sais quoi* (I don't know what that means) to the QDG uniforms... If I do say so myself.

As the history buffs amongst you will be aware, 2022 was the 40th Anniversary of the Falklands Conflict, in which 255 British Servicemen lost their lives, the focus of my first 3 months in post have been visits to do with the Remembrance period in this 40th year. In early November, 136 veterans and next-of-kin flew down accompanied by UK media and the Minister for Defence People Veterans and Service Families. Mid-November saw a group of parliamentarians, and SAS/SBS veterans. Late November BFSAI hosted HRH The Princess Royal and Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence. Finally, in December former Royal Marines who were based here when the Argentinians invaded came down.

These visits were all very special, in



3 Cheers for Brig Dan Duff late QDG



their own way. The most notable parts were meeting someone who was minus 3 months when their father was killed, chatting to the senior Officers from the Conflict on why and how they decided what they did, going on a walk of the battlefields with HRH, and finally getting shown photos from the last stand made in the Governor's house back in 1982 by people who were genuinely there. There have been many experiences that I never thought I'd be having when I turned up to Sandhurst in January 2019.

In the margins, I have filled my time ridiculing the RAF personnel stationed here for having next to zero militarism,

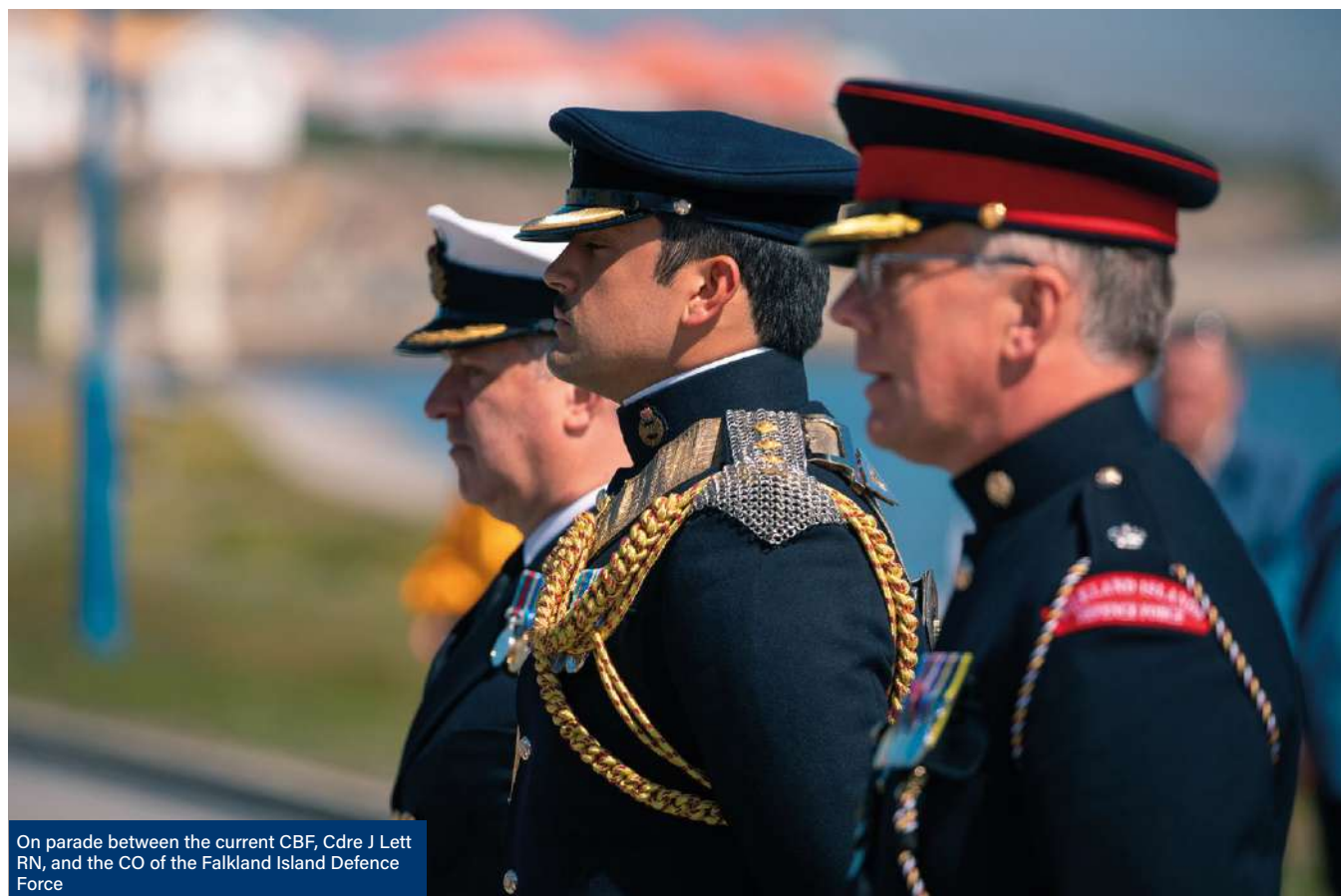
and getting all of those who will listen into the way of being 'jolly smart'. Thanks to Eds Dillon and Carter I have taken up fly fishing, and I am familiar with the penguins that are found here. The only real downside to being here is the lack of fellow QDG soldiers or Officers.

As stated, it has been a bizarre first few months amongst the fast-jets, sky-sabre battery, navy warship, and penguins. The most surreal was HRH Princess Anne stating her "shock" at seeing a QDG, then asking "what are you doing here?". A question I ask myself a lot down here, all with a smile on my face. 3 Cheers for Brig Dan Duff late QDG for getting good postings and taking young officers with him!

ZAK



At the top of Two Sisters with HRH Princess Anne



On parade between the current CBF, Cdre J Lett RN, and the CO of the Falkland Island Defence Force

Sustaining in the Defence School of Transport



Firstly, most of you may be wondering exactly why an Royal Armoured Corps Late Entry Officer has found himself as Deputy Chief of Staff at the Defence School of Transport (DST), and I must admit, that after 6 short months in post I am wondering the same. A lesson to learn for all from this; be careful what you put on your PPP to APC!

Anyway, with currently over 60,000 wheeled vehicles in service, DST delivers the Tri-Service vehicle and transport training required in support of frontline operations in theatres around the world. Although most will automatically assume that this is primarily RLC focussed, this is far from reality. With most of our

students receiving secondary trade training or indeed completing career courses towards promotion. This ranges from RLC Master Driver to RE Class 1 and everything in between. Additionally, DST has found itself delivering driver training to Ukrainian students and we are currently working up packages to deliver more structured driver training for elements of the Army Reserve (#RY).

Like Swanton Morley, the infrastructure in DST is tired and held together with good will. The similarities are uncanny though, with as an example the Officers Mess being a mirror image of what we call home. Well apart from the lack of decent silver on display and good craic.

That said, I have worked in worse places and although the RCMO will undoubtedly look to hang me for this, don't be shy to explore employment outside of Regimental Duty. It will undoubtedly offer you an opportunity to assess yourself against your wider peers, but more importantly, allow you to grow your wider understanding of defence.

Although unlikely, if any of you are in the area or down to complete a course at DST, please look me up. With only 3 RAC out of routinely 2,000 on site, your presence would be appreciated, and the kettle is always on.

CLH

Waterloo Ride

Thanks to the gallant and diligent way in which the Kings Dragoon Guards conducted themselves in 1815, the Officers of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards still get invited to attend the bi-annual Waterloo Ride, organised by the Dutch but hosted by the Belgians. It is a collection of British, German, Dutch, and Belgian Officers who conduct a battlefield tour both on foot and horseback.

This was the first one that had been run since the pandemic and the QDG sent five junior Officers, with even the attached RAMC liaison getting to go! With such a large presence, it was hard for us to not be the charming, entertaining, and lovable cavalry-people that we naturally are in the QDG. In

fact, we were so well received that the Dutch Officer Training Academy delivered us a plaque of thanks, and we were also invited to their equivalent of the State Opening of Parliament! Which no one could attend due to operational commitments, unfortunately.

Though our social qualities had been praised, our riding left some to be desired, with a couple of tumbles and horses going the wrong way. Poor 2Lt Clark had such a small horse, that he had to get it to trot in order to keep up, which was highly amusing!

A thoroughly enjoyable trip, and yet another reason why 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards are the envy of all.

RPoC HQ West Midlands 2022



Hello and welcome to the 2022 Regimental Journal and the life of Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) Regional Point of Command (RPoC) Headquarters West Midlands (Venning Bks, Donnington).

Our Vision: "An agile, high-performance and customer-focused whole-force team; delivering an excellent service to the units, service personnel and their families within the WM AoR"

Core Purpose: "Engaging with society; facilitating the Cadet experience and delivering the Firm Base in order to enhance the lived experience of SP and their families across the WM AoR"

The HQ merged from 11 Signals Brigade in Feb 22 to form the RPoC West Midlands (WM) Commanded by Col Paul Gilby, otherwise known as Col Shove (MERCIAN) for all UK Resilience Operations (Military Aid to Civil Authorities, MACA) and all Firmbase matters working under Regional Command (RC). This is part of the Integrated Review (IR) which was announced as part of the restructuring of the British Army. The rationale behind the RPoC other than MACA is to focus on the Lived Experience infrastructure issues in order to allow

the fighting brigades such as 7LMBCT to focus on preparing soldiers for worldwide operations without being tied to non-soldiering business. The RPoC will deal with Living and Technical infrastructure for all units including Reserve Forces & Cadet Associations (RFCA) based within the West Midlands region. I took over the role of DCOS post Regimental duty as HQ Sqn Ldr and the recent tour to Mali as the BGLO for OP NEWCOMBE 3. Since taking over the role the focus has been to set the conditions for a further merger of RPoC HQ West Midlands and RPoC HQ East to RPoC Centre under the command of the current Deputy Commander 7LMBCT Col Sam Plant-based in Cottesmore (Kendrew Bks) IOC is 30 April 23. This will expand the Area of Responsibility (AOR) across the whole of the midlands-including the regiment based at Swanton Morley - this is great news as I feel we can influence the Lived Experience for our soldiers through various funding streams available- certainly for the time they have remaining at Robertson Bks before the move to Carwent. As with many mergers of organisations this has been a difficult time for all of the workforce especially the Civil Servants (CS) most are geographically fixed and unable to move to a new location across the country- I have spent long hours with the team going through CS mapping processes and trying to secure the CS jobs appropriately. FOC is Aug 2024, so there is some flexibility in the location of the workforce as we develop the RPoC to suit the needs of the whole of the AOR. One other major output of the RPoC is the assurance inspections regime, a DCOS responsibility conducted by all the SMEs through the operating functions- G1-9. As we develop the merger to RPoC Centre we have to change the insignia and Heraldry for the new organisation, currently we were the MACAW Parrot as HQWMS TRF:

The proposed new TRF for RPoC Centre is that of the British Bulldog on a black background with red boarder - this has both west and east history and will hopefully be passed by PS12 and the Army's Dress committee before IOC 30 April 23.

PDJ

RMAS

With my two years at Sandhurst now coming to an end, this feels like a great opportunity to reflect on what has been an incredibly varied and fulfilling two-year posting. Having transitioned from the Defence Engagement Coy where I was fortunate enough to deploy under OP SHADER to Iraq; someone thought it a good idea to give me a platoon within

the Regular Commissioning Course and remain with them until they commission in April (you will have to ask them whether that was a wise move or not). Despite the exercises changing in location, duration, and name, (seemingly on a termly basis), what remains constant is the testing environment the OCdt's are placed under. Assessing

their command and leadership with a CSgt breathing down their neck, and a Captain asking you to reconsider Q7; the old and bold among you will be pleased to know that the course remains equally as challenging, intertwined with a level of complexity that looks to mirror the wicked problems that these young officers will grapple with upon commis-



End of the Intermediate Term with EXERCISE ALLENBY'S ADVANCE in Brecon

Leathersellers

With Gavin Bacon as Master, 2021/22 saw the Court and Committees advance the Leathersellers' commitment to supporting and enabling individuals and communities, fostering opportunity and supporting a sustainable UK leather industry.

Across the grant awarding Committees of what is now the Leathersellers' Foundation (the renamed Leathersellers' Company Charitable Fund), the strategic focus has been refined, defined and implemented.

For charitable giving this meant the introduction of targeted new funding for charities focusing on Adverse Childhood Experiences. People who have experienced six or more ACEs have a life expectancy 20 years lower than that of the average population. Multiple ACEs prevent individuals from achieving their potential, in opposition to a core aim of our Foundation's work. In just six weeks we received almost 150 applications, demonstrating the need for support in this area.

The Foundation's work in education and improving social mobility also continued at pace as we reinforced our long-term commitment to our partner schools in south-east London, Colfe's and the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools, as well to undergraduates across the country with our student grants programme, which dates back to 1602. We also took the time to better understand approaches to social mobility

and commissioned a specialist education consultancy to produce a landscape review to help inform and understand our future practice.

2021/22 saw the formation of a Leather Strategy that encompasses charitable giving from the Foundation, related minor trusts and the Leathersellers' Company, and considers how best to support both its historic industry and those who use the material of leather. The five pillars of the leather strategy are: celebrating leather; business and maker support; leather education; the leather industry; and heritage and conservation.

Foundation grants across charity, education and leather totalled £3.4m.

In wider Company news our offices benefitted from refurbishment and redesign providing new office and meeting spaces, and the major redevelopment of Number 3 St Helen's place is nearing completion and will provide new tenants with modern, secure, and sustainable offices. We look forward to welcoming them to St Helen's Place soon.

We were pleased to award The Leathersellers' Award for Outstanding Leadership to nominees from our three key military affiliations across the Armed Forces: 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, British Army; HMS Audacious, Royal Navy; and

230 Squadron, RAF. Each year the award seeks to recognise excellent examples of young leadership. Many congratulations to Corporal J Harrison of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards who received the 2021/2022 award for his professional, selfless, and motivated work, particularly in the support offered to the Ground Manoeuvre Surgical Group.

Vital contributions to preserving our heritage and history were also carried out. Our most iconic painting, the 16th century portrait of Henry VI which hangs in the Court Room, has undergone much needed conservation work. A significant split in its wooden panels has now been repaired. Additionally, damaged paint has been consolidated and retouched and a new structural support

has been created to form a sealed micro-climate that will protect the painting from low humidity and environmental fluctuations going forward. The frame, which had suffered from wood movement and loss of gilding, has also been repaired.

But perhaps the most historically significant moment of the 2022 livery year, was the Installation of Clare Lennon as the Company's first lady Master since our establishment by Royal Charter in 1444.

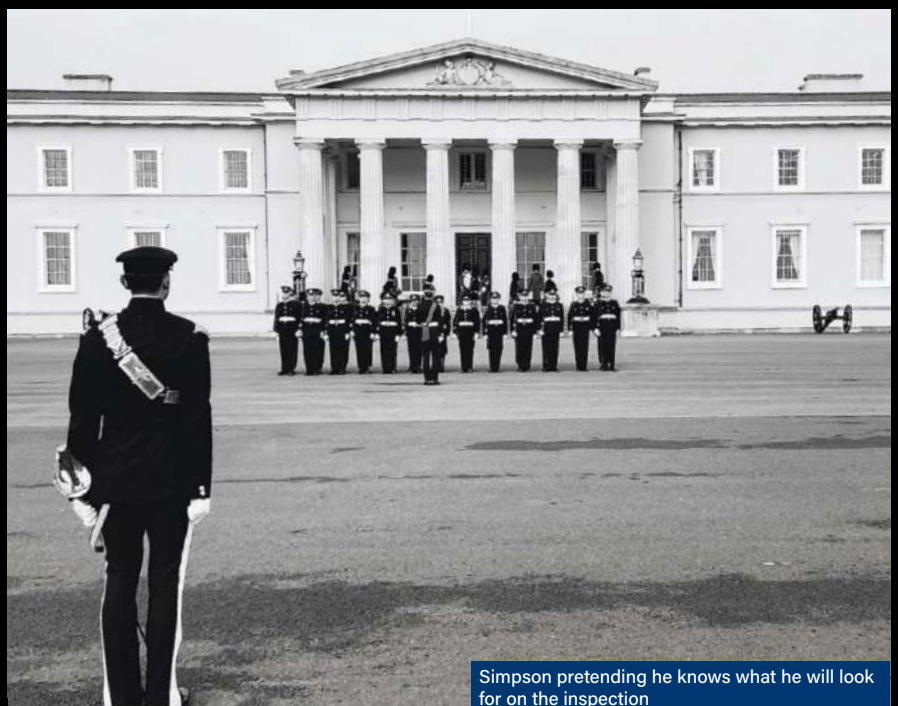


2021/22 saw the formation of a Leather Strategy



sioning. A greater emphasis is now being placed on their academic work, and cadets must place an equal level of attention to this aspect of their development, as they would their fitness or green skills. 29 PI, Borneo Coy (aka Sovereign's PI) have just been through the turbulent Regimental Selection Board Process and have all now finally found a home. I forgot what a stressful this can be and found myself wearing 3 or 4 different hats throughout the week as Officer Cadets were left with only one choice they had never previously considered. With the risk of sounding like Captain Cuddles; the motivation, professionalism and good humour means that this group of individuals are a pleasure to instruct, and I could not recommend a posting to RMAS for a SSgt or Capt anymore. We need a QDG presence at the Academy to ensure we attract the best possible talent and strengthen the amazing work the Regiment is doing.

WS



Simpson pretending he knows what he will look for on the inspection

Message from the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment Sri Lanka Armoured Corps



Presidential and Regimental Standards Marching at the Ferret Scout Car during the 74th Independence Day Parade on 04 February 2022



1st Reconnaissance Regiments' BTR 80 at CCC under MINUSMA

From the beginning of the year 2022, the Regimental Headquarters, along with the Headquarters Squadron, A Squadron, and the B Squadron deployed at the Rock House Camp in Colombo (Home of Armour). Further, two troops from the B Squadron deployed in the Special Forces Camp in Seeduwa and the Transit Camp in Rathmalana respectively. Further, C Squadron is deployed at the Kerawalapitiya and provides security for the Petroleum Terminal at Kerawalapitiya. Furthermore, twelve BTR 80A AFVs have been deployed in Mali with the Combat Convoy Company deployed under the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

Among the units belonging to the Sri Lanka Armed Forces, the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment is constantly preparing for the security of the urban areas and Colombo suburbs as the unit that has been assigned more responsibilities related to urban security. Squadron Commanders, Troop Leaders, and Tank Crews are always ready to be deployed in emergency duties according to the

instructions of the Army Headquarters, Armoured Brigade, and the Regimental Centre. The unit is always ready for immediate actions for the security of the President's Office, Prime Minister's Office, Parliament Complex, Bandaranaike International Airport, and other Vulnerable Places.

With the mass protests that occurred against the government in March 2022, the unit has been tasked to conduct Show of Force Operations in the heart of Colombo and its suburbs. In that, A and B Squadrons deployed their BTR 80A and WMZ 551 AFVs to conduct extensive patrolling in the streets of Colombo.

Having the intention of establishing and improving the capabilities of officers and soldiers in their respective roles, training has been conducted at the unit level, especially every Wednesday. Further, despite the heavy workload assigned to the unit, the officers and other ranks are being participated to the maximum extent in the courses offered by the Armoured Corps Training Center, Army Training Schools as well as the overseas courses

offered by the Directorate of Training.

Maintaining the age-old customs and traditions as well as the pride of the regiment, Presidential Standards, and the Regimental Standards marched on the Ferret Scout Car during the 74th Independence Day celebration parade held on 04 February 2022. Moreover, the regiment celebrated its 67th anniversary on October 2022. The celebrations included Buddhist, Hindu, and Christian as well as Islam religious activities, a Ceremonial Parade for the Commanding Officer followed by an All Ranks Lunch.

Finally, the Commanding Officer and All Ranks of the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment Sri Lanka Armoured Corps would prefer to extend our warm wishes for all the officers and soldiers of the 1st Queens Dragoon Guards who are presently in active service, the retired officers and soldiers, and each and every member of their families, courage, strength and fortune to accomplish the goals set for the year 2023. May you have a New Year filled with peace, happiness, prosperity and good health!

Commanding Officer inspecting the 67th Anniversary Day Parade on 10 October 2022



1st Reconnaissance Regiments' WMZ 551 AFVs at Show of Force Operations





Porthmadog visit team picture



Porthmadog Jackal visit (with neighbouring cadets)



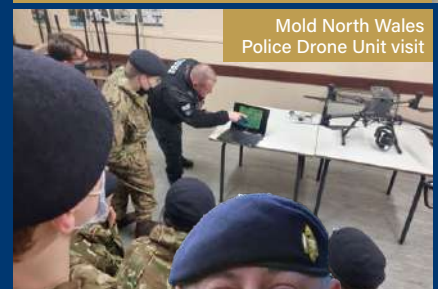
Porthmadog visit hands on



Mold Remembrance Sunday



Porthmadog Remembrance Sunday



Mold North Wales Police Drone Unit visit

Clwyd and Gwynedd ACF Report 2022

Clwyd and Gwynedd ACF have two detachments that are proudly affiliated with the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards – Mold and Porthmadog detachments.

The year has seen a very welcome return to cadet activities and both detachments are steadily increasing in numbers. The programme included a number of visits including the North Wales Police Drone Unit who were a big hit in Mold. We also managed an Easter camp and summer camp in Sennybridge.

The Regimental Engagement Team managed two visits to Porthmadog in March and July. In March Sgt Scott Grills, who arranged the visit, was delighted to present certificates to cadets who had recently completed their basic training. In July Porthmadog had the pleasure of the Regimental Sergeant Major joining for a chat as well as Sgt Grills with his team who brought along a Jackal vehicle with weapons to demonstrate.

Sergeant Instructor John Magrath has taken over at Detachment Commander in Mold from CSM Barrie Reid who following Commissioning earlier in the year has now moved as 2IC of Crecy Company the Senior Cadet Training Company.

Mold Detachments Matteo Molica-Franco has had a rewarding year. As a member of the Corps of Drums he undertook the role of sculptors' model of a Regimental Goat Major for a memorial statue which is to be erected outside Wrexham's Hightown Barracks. Matteo was also awarded The Jim Hewitt Trophy for Excellence for 2021 recognising his significant contribution to the ACF. To finish the year having successfully completing the arduous Master Cadet Course he was promoted to Cadet Company Sergeant Major for Cambrai Company.

Mold's Cadet Cpl Lewis Smith represented Clwyd and Gwynedd at the national Senior Cadet Conference making an excellent presentation to the Commandant and senior cadets on his experiences. Having successfully completing the Senior Cadet Instructors Course Harvey Magrath was promoted to Cadet Sergeant Major.

Both detachments took part in Remembrance Sunday parades and Mold was delighted to welcome several QDG veterans.

JVB



Cadets First Aid training



Matteo Franco receiving the Jim Hewitt Award from Mrs Sandra Hewitt



2Lt Barrie Reid

E Squadron

Dyfed and Glamorgan Army Cadet Force



As 2022 draws to an end I reflect back on what has been achieved by both CFAVs (Cadet Force Adult Volunteers) and Cadets alike – its been nothing short of amazing and an event-packed year like no other! A small selection of some of the opportunities we have participated in consist of: National Rock-Climbing Competition at Boulders Cardiff, National Shooting Competition Bisley, First Aid Competition, Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Expedition and Nav on The Gower, Exercise Rolling Thunder CIS Competition (Communication and Information Systems) at Blandford where E Sqn alone represented Dyfed and Glamorgan ACF and was placed 6th Nationally (and had the second best Signaller award! Well done Cdt Cpl Ptachno!), Gold Duke of Edinburgh Expedition (CFAVs) on the Northumberland



Can I take this opportunity to thank the CFAVs, Cadets, Parents and Guardians as well as the 1st Queens Dragoon



National Park, Narberth Civic Week Fair, Wings Over Carew, Kidwelly Carnival, Armed Forces Day, World Coastal Rowing Championship support at Saundersfoot, Annual Camp 2022 at Sennybridge with fantastic support from the QDG CET (Cadet Engagement Team) and a visit from the Farrier Major with L/ Cpl Jones the Regimental Mascot, Poppy Selling at a plethora of locations and of course the Acts Of Remembrance themselves all over Pembrokeshire, FTX weekends (Fieldcraft Training Exercises) at Sennybridge and Templeton, and many more that kept both CFAVs and Cadets on our toes and busy like no other year I have ever seen in my time in the ACF!

In addition to all the above we had events where our dedicated and loyal CFAVs completed required courses,

governance, and refresher training, and at long last the lions share of these have been physical rather than on the world of Zoom as per 2021! Promotions of both Cadets and CFAVs, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal has been presented as well as commissions but unfortunately far too many to individually list!

Our final event this year was a bitter-sweet weekend being 'Exercise Merrion Christmas' based out of Castlemartin Camp where we had E (QDG) Squadron training alongside with G (Royal Welsh) Company which culminated with the farewell of our OC, Major Jeff Protheroe, as he has now completed his 4 years with ourselves and moves on to pastures new with B Company in the Neath area – good luck! You will be sorely missed!

Can I take this opportunity to thank the CFAVs, Cadets, Parents and Guardians as well as 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards for your brilliant assistance and efforts in ensuring these events are successful. Without all your help, none of this would happen!

MM



Regimental Comrades Association

President: Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier AS Richmond OBE
Chairman: Mr C T Gibbons

Welcome everyone to this year's journal. As ever much has been happening throughout the year and I'm pleased to report that the Regimental Comrades Association has been very busy.

We were all saddened to hear the death of Her Majesty who sadly passed away on 8 September 2022 at the age of 96, ending her 70-year reign. A message of condolence was sent to the King on behalf of the Regimental Comrades Association.

The Branches have been very active over the year starting in March with Herefordshire and Forest of Dean having their inaugural dinner. June saw the usual gatherings in Wolfenbüttel TankFest and Wessex Branch BBQ. July was very busy with the Oswestry Dinner where we said our goodbyes and thanks to Dave "Scouse" Maltby and handing over the reins to Dave "Ratty" Edwards.

The remainder of July we saw many freedom parades and



**Membership
is slowing
creeping up**



I'm pleased to report that the RCA's attendance was noticeable throughout. To finish off the year another very successful Reunion Dinner at the Masonic Hall Cardiff.

Work is still ongoing at opening a Branch in Southwest Wales. If we can establish ourselves in the area, it would complete our aim by having Branches throughout Wales.

Membership is slowing creeping up, but we are no way near the numbers we should be. Could I therefore urge non-members to join as your contributions will make the RCA a much stronger and more established Association.

So once again I thank you all for your continued support in keeping the Regimental Comrades Association firmly on the map but more importantly maintaining a link in looking after our veterans wherever they may be.

CTG

German Branch

Over the Year we have held three very successful "Gatherings", the first one in March for those living in Germany was held over the weekend 2nd March. 12 ex Dragoons attended with a prompt fashion show to show the locals our QDG Jumpers and Cardigans, a great time was had.

The Annual Waterloo Gathering was held over the weekend 17th to 18th June with the theme being Hawaiian shirts, a competition was held to find the best shirt with 1st prize being a bottle of Penderyn Whisky, this was a very close run affair between Simon Reed and Scouse Lewis, with Simon eventually winning but only with the aid of his

secret weapon.....the "Eyes", the local were in stitches and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

A Regimental Plaque was presented to the Stadtkeller and now hangs proudly for all to see.

The first ever Woofer's Christmas Market Gathering was held over the weekend 9th Dec, and it can be safely said it was a huge success, the Friday evenings theme was Ugly Christmas Jumpers with some pretty horrendous examples on display much to the amusement of the



**Friday's theme
was Ugly
Christmas
Jumpers**



locals – much singing and dancing was done with the Stadtkeller not closing much before two in the morning on all three days – QDG Bar Runners are now in place and are a big talking point for all who enter, with the regulars proudly telling everyone they're from our friends the QDG.

Three events are planned again for next year, a German Gathering, Waterloo and another Christmas Market.

MR



Germany Branch modelling the latest Urban MTP

Herefordshire and Forest of Dean Branch

As the COVID restrictions were lifted, and after many false starts we finally managed to have our inaugural dinner and dance, a St David's black tie affair at Hereford Rowing Club. Water, alcohol and soldiers a dodgy and possibly dangerous combination, luckily on this occasion no major mishaps and the evening was a complete success with close on fifty people gathered together to break bread and two lucky "volunteers" having a munch on raw leek. We look forward to many more gatherings and are happy to take on board any other suggestions to keep the Dragoon spirit alive and kicking in "The Shire and Forest".

RC



A Gog, eating a leek, celebrating St David.....in Hereford!



Wessex Branch Tank Fest BBQ

Wessex Branch

It has been an eventful 2022 as COVID restrictions were finally fully lifted and we could once again get together. As both the Wessex Branch Secretary and RCA Banner Carrier, I had the honour to represent the RCA at several funerals and memorial services. We were all able to march at the Cavalry Memorial service at Hyde Park. There was the Freedom Parade in Cardiff, the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey and the Remembrance Parade in Cardiff, as well as supporting other Branches events.

Once again Sally and I had the pleasure of hosting our RCA Wessex Branch "Tankfest" BBQ on the 25th of June at our home in Bovington. With 40 plus guests it was great to see so many of our regulars but this year to have so many new faces attending, some of whom have not attended any reunions since finishing their service in the Regiment in the 1980's. It was good to see for the first time at the event, Tony and Diane Evans, Phil and Anne Marie Allan, Tony Hillman, Graham "Harry the Dog" Harrison, Jamie James and Claire and Glyn "Twiggy" Thomas and Jane and Jane, Jeff "H" Crane's wife on her first visit and Col Christopher and Lynne MacKenzie-Beevor. It was also great to have some of the serving Regiment present in Lt Col Jerome Tyson and Sgt Ross Retallack. We also had the pleasure of the company of the Bovington GSM Jason Bain KRH and his wife Carrie who were taken aback at how our RCA is so active and well supported.

Once again, the event was supported by Mr Jorg Braese aka "The Sausage Man UK Ltd" www.sausageman.co.uk who supplies us with the Bratwurst and VW Factory Currywurst which always go down well. Jorg kindly donated £200 of vouchers to our raffle. This year we had a great range of prizes in the raffle and my thanks go to those who kindly donated prizes and who purchased tickets even if they were not attending. We were able to raise in total on the evening £615.00.

Buying more tickets as we know increases the chances of a win and Harry Cragg who supported us remotely was the winner of the most prizes which were duly handed over at the Cardiff Reunion weekend and the winners of the Bratty Vouchers were £50 to Stephen "Sully" Sullivan, £50 to Christopher MacKenzie-Beevor and for the second time the £100 voucher went to Johnny and Jenny O'Brien.

All in all, everyone had a great time, old friends reunited, and some new friends made. A special thanks go out to Tony Hillman, Graham Harrison and Sully for helping with the post event clearing up in the morning.

We will be holding our BBQ again in 2023 on Saturday 24th June if you want to attend, please email me at qdgca.wessex@btinternet.com or ask to join our QDG Wessex Branch RCA Facebook page. Numbers are limited to 60 so first come served.

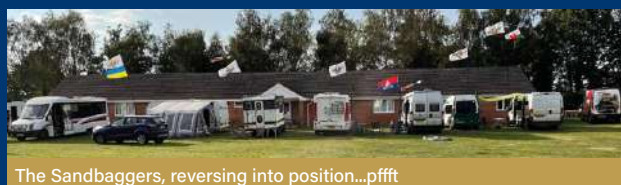
DW

The Sandbaggers

2022 started quietly with everyone catching up on family events as we came out of COVID restrictions. We managed to gather a few times, joined in with the Oswestry dinner, filling the car park with our usual mix of vans, caravans and tents on the fields. 2023 plans are to join in with the Oswestry dinner once again in July, and to support the Hereford St David's day dinner. Derby, Bovington and others are also on the cards so keep an eye on the RCA website for dates, we will try to get around so more people can join us even if only for a day. We are looking at heading to Wolfenbüttel for the Waterloo weekend with a scenic route planned via WW1 and WW2 memorials and battlefields, early days but possibly via D Day beaches, Ypres and other memorials and museums or

we could just give an officer the map and have a lucky dip. More details to follow in the New Year. So, if you fancy pulling up a sandbag, swinging a lamp, having brew of your choice and a natter then watch out for our mobile branch, coming to a site near you soon.

NB



The Sandbaggers, reversing into position...pffft

London and Home Counties Branch

The slow tactical withdrawal from COVID, coupled with all the other chaos going on worldwide made 2022 a difficult year for the Branch to get together. However, as always, the Branch was out on the ground flying the QDG flag within its large geographical area.

Branch Members individually or in small groups attended the following events in 2022; Her Majesty's State Funeral, Cav Mem, D-Day Commemorations 5/6th June in Normandy, Violette Szabo GC-SOE remembrance garden party at Bulth Wells in June, British Torch of Remembrance service in Westminster Abbey, Remembrance Day all over our area and sadly our most important role honouring members of the Regimental family on their final parade.

We look forward to getting together in 2023 properly and already we have 2 dates to put in our Calendars please: Cav Mem 14th May 2023 and a huge

push for the 15th October 2023 at the Royal Hospital Chelsea for a Church Service and lunch.

The Branch Secretary kindly asks any members of the Regimental family

who live or who have moved into the area recently, to just drop him an email to check their details or add them to the existing list.

ADB



Andy and the Brigade Commander, Frisbee finalists

The Duke of York's Royal Military School

This short article is about a School where over the years, a number of the Regimental Families children have and continue to proudly wear the QDG cap badge.

The Duke of York's Royal Military School was formed over 200 years ago by the then Duke of York for orphaned children of Soldiers from the rank and file killed in the Battle of Waterloo. Originally it was sited alongside the Royal Hospital Chelsea in London, but in 1905 it moved to its current site behind Dover Castle in Kent.

For many years it was the school for boys from military families when the postings were accompanied worldwide, giving them a stable education. Today it is a very diverse co-educational State Academy boarding School, including sixth form with a military ethos and not a boot camp for naughty kids as some locals think!

In recent years there has been a large contingent of QDG heritage students attending, in fact the day Joanna was showed around School it was like a Regimental reunion for Lynn and me, which was very reassuring.

It is a very difficult decision to send your child to boarding School. However, the Duke's delivers an excellent curriculum with small class sizes, superb sports facilities & weekly team match fixtures, adventure training/DoE/skiing/expeditions, clubs galore, CCF, high grade accommodation with caring staff and of course a second to none military ethos with traditional values set for today that will assist them in the modern world.

The highlight of the school year is its 'Grand Day' a Trooping the Colour (the only School to have one) parade completely run by the students. If you visit the school website, you can watch the parade it is absolutely fantastic and in a time where the 'youth' receive a lot of bad press it is truly inspiring.

To finish, as you can see the students wear their parents Regimental Badge on the right side of their uniform, it is called their Heart Badge and I can assure you it does bring a tear to your eye when you see them proudly wearing it.

ADB



The next generation, Miss Bowtell and Master Tyson

Regimental Home Headquarters

Mark Hawtin – Regimental Secretary • **Kate Cox** – Assistant Regimental Secretary
Sophie Poeton – Shop/Lottery/General Enquiries • **Mark Evans** – Regimental Curator
Hannah Searle – Regimental Assistant Curator

What a varied and busy 2022 here at HHQ with a few changes. With no lockdowns, curfews and with majority of us vaccinated all our Regimental events could go ahead, a myriad of Branch events throughout Wales and England, the Officers' Dinner and Cavalry Memorial, Regimental Marches throughout Wales and the Border Counties, the RCA Dinner and Reunion in Cardiff and the KDG luncheon were all held and well attended. 2023 will be an even more eventful with more Branch functions and Op TELIC reunions planned.

HHQ is now a lean team of three as we said farewell to Catherine this summer. Cath has served as our Admin Officer for over 31 years, keeping the office running smoothly. She has supported Major Ken McMillan, Major Alfie Corfield, Lieutenant Colonel Richard 'Basher' Brace and me over this time, loyally, with the utmost professionalism and with her wealth of experience and corporate knowledge will be sorely missed. Many of you would have chatted with her on the phone or over a cup of tea in the office, she could write a book with the things she's seen and stories she's heard over the years, let's just hope she changes some of the names! On behalf of us all I'd like to offer Cath, Anthony and James our best wishes for the future.

QDG and several other RAC regiments were extremely fortunate to be awarded a very generous grant of £35,000 from the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund and have digital App's produced. Our App will be called 'QDG Connect', developed for us by the firm '2Viz'. This will enable the

regiment to reach out to QDGs, serving and retired, especially those traditionally hard to contact; enabling both serving and retired regimental personnel to connect and renew friendships, pool their skills and help each other; and to extend the comradeship of regimental service to all. We expect to receive a preview of the App at the end of February 2023 followed by full roll out in mid March. Once we go live, please support and download the App and if you have any constructive criticism or ideas on how to improve it contact the team at HHQ and we'll pass your suggestions on to 2Viz. A big thank you to all those who supported the planning of the App with a special mention to Dave Way and Rob Coleridge for their expertise in ensuring that we receive a great product that fit for purpose.

I would once again like to thank all those of you who donate to our Regimental Benevolence Fund, via the 1 Days' Pay Scheme or through our 'Give as You Live' tab on the RCA website. All benevolence grants awarded, many of which are life changing, are gratefully received, HHQ has received many letters and phone calls of thanks on your behalf. This past year has seen the amount of grants pledged return to pre pandemic levels with 17 given, 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 for 2022 has been just over £18,000. We have also once again received great support from the

ABF, BLESMA, H4H, RBL, and SSAFA. I would also like to thank those of you who have personally assisted comrades or their immediate families who have found themselves struggling, whether it's a bag of shopping, household items, or a chat over a coffee.

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, mentally, financially, or physically please contact HHQ in the first instance, all information is treated in confidence and with discretion.

To finish I would once again like to thank all who have supported the HHQ team over this year, it has been greatly appreciated. If you have any queries or questions, please don't hesitate in contacting the team, or if you find yourself in Cardiff pop in for a cup of tea and a chat.

MH



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



Officers Regimental Dinner

The annual Regimental Officers Dinner took place at the Cavalry and Guards Club on Friday 6th May, attended by 89 officers both past and serving. The food was, as usual, quite outstanding and above all, the company was excellent. Loyal greetings were sent to our Colonel-in-Chief and his reply was read out by the Colonel of the Regiment. Those who attended are listed below: B Williams, H Sugden, M Botsford, C Ruggles-Brise, R Ward, S Stewart, J Cowan, G Jackson, Q Browell, E Owen, J Lough, O Larminie, E Grounds, J Beatson-Hird, T Wilson, A Campbell, A Roe, C Peacocke, S Farebrother, J Brooke, D Warner, R Robinson, W Groome, C Homewood, A Richmond, K O'Connor, C Shepherd-Barron, J Hacker Hughes, N Fenton, T Oakley, T Wills, D Thomas,

M Van Grutten, C Martel, S Maxwell, A Walsh, R Fulloway, S Upward, H Swales, Clarke, R Dennis, G Fearn, J Hoenich, B Matthews, M McKechnie, H Gates, J Davies, E Dillon, E Fetherstonhaugh, R Charlesworth, J Coleman, D Sheehan, P Benham-Crosswell, S Mayall, E Stenhouse, J Whelan, K McGinnity, P Andrews, N Garland, E Barham, M Thompson, A Dumont, C Kierstead, M Ashley-Miller, B Lewis, J Brockless, M Machale, J Stenhouse, M Hansen, J Banbury, M Hawtin, R Coleridge, Groves, R Chambers, C Poppleton, C Byrd, P Corfield, R Ferguson, H Pilcher, H Renshaw, H Chaplin, P Marques, D Owen, B Maltman, J de Quincey-Adams, W Asquith, J Carroll, F Maddison

Cardiff Reunion Dinner

Another cracking RCA Reunion Dinner was organised by the Committee and once again held at the Masonic Hall on Guildford Street in Cardiff. 89 Comrades and partners sat down to dine on Welsh Beef and Caerphilly Cheesy Leeks. As is now traditional many arrived on the Thursday, and it was great to see such a diverse crowd of comrades in the Old Arcade and many new, younger faces in the bar at the hall on the Saturday.

The Following Association members sat down for dinner: Brig Richmond OBE, Maj O Larminie, Col T Wilson, Mrs A Wilson, Maj Hoey, Maj R Mansel, WO1 Chant, Mr M Watson, Mr C Gibbons, Mrs P Gibbons, Mr G Walker, Mrs M Walker, Mr D Edwards, Mr S Sullivan, Mr C Williams, Mrs G Williams, Mr G Williams, Mrs S Williams, Mr D Way, Mrs S Way, Mr N Davies, Mrs A Davies, Mr Demmer, Mrs Demmer, G Humphreys, Elizabeth Lloyd, Anne-Marie Allen, Phil Allen, Mr A Yoxall, Lt Col S Burman, Mr K Dicken, Mr D Burgess, Mr Hallowell, Mr J Schumskij, Mr D Mead, Mr M Whitehead, Miss T Hopkins, Mr P Benham-Croswell, Mr J Crane, Mrs J Crane, Mr G Thomas, Lt Col B Bell, Mrs C Bell, Lt Col C Ions, Lt Col Thayer, Mrs Thayer, Mr Deacon, Mrs Deacon, Mr Babb, Mrs Babb, Maj Corfield, Lt Col Corfield, D Seddon, Mr D

Evans, Mrs S Evans, Mr G Jones, Mr P Sable, Mr C Lenderyou, Mr D Clare, Mrs Clare, Mr R Churchill, Mrs F Churchill, Mr G Morgan, Mr P Carter, Mr S Carter, Mr S Reed, Miss R Lloyd, Mr J Harding, Mr M Andrews, Mrs C Andrews, Mr T Hillman,

Mr P Morris, DJ Duruty de Lloyd, Mr C Morris, Mrs K Morris, Mr R Doe, Mrs P Doe, Mr S Apps, Mr M Hawtin, Mrs K Cox, Miss H Searle, Mrs S Poeton, Capt M Williams, Sgt Grills, WO2 Ruddy, SSgt Dale, WO2 Beal.



RCA Dinner, good company, food and wine

Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey



Field of Remembrance 2022, The Regimental Plot

On Thursday 10th November a small group of serving and retired members of the Regiment gathered for the 93rd Royal British Legion Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey. Her Majesty the Queen Consort laid the first wreath then toured the Regimental Plots. The Royal British Legion once again kindly planted our Regimental Rolls of Honour and wooden remembrance crosses bearing the names of those from the KDG, Bay's and QDG who have made the ultimate sacrifice and our wooden remembrance crosses. Due to the ongoing maintenance being carried out on the Sacristy, thus the field having to be smaller only three tickets were issued per plot, so a big thank you to the RTR who gave us a few spares enabling eight of us to attend.

Those in attendance were: The Colonel of the Regiment Brig AS Richmond OBE, Lt Col Brace MBE BEM, Maj C Beaver, Maj C Ruggles-Brise, Maj B Williams, Mr G Crane, Mr D Way and Mr M Hawtin. Next year we will hopefully have more tickets to issue, please contact HHQ if you wish to attend.

Combined Cavalry Memorial Parade and Service

After two years of holding a virtual Combined Cavalry Memorial Parade and Service due to the pandemic it was time to don walking out dress again. His Royal Highness, Prince Edward, Honorary Colonel of The Royal Wessex Yeomanry, took the salute on Sunday 8th May under blue sunny skies, 98 years on from the Memorial's unveiling. We were led on parade by the Colonel of the Regiment, with Mr David Way carrying the banner and Mr Chris Gibbons carrying and laying the regimental wreath. Thank you to Lt Col Stewart Burman, Mr John Pragnell, Mr Rob Chubb and Mr Andy Bowtell for representing the RCA on the CCOCA committee and ensuring that everyone was in the right place, at the right time on the day.

MLH



The Cavalry Memorial, St George defeating the Dragon

The QDG Regimental Trust

It is with great sadness that we have to record the sudden death on 15th January 2023 of the Chairman, Oliver Larminie. A full obituary for Ollie can be found elsewhere in this issue, detailing the tireless way in which he modernised the structure of the Trust and its procedures. Suffice it to say that he will be sorely missed by the Regimental family. Alex Roe has agreed to take over the Chairmanship for the time being. Tim Wilson was appointed a Trustee at the end of 2022.

2022 witnessed a post-Covid return to normality, which allowed the Regiment to participate in a programme of adventurous training, much of which was aided by the Trust when Army and personal funds were not fully available. A major contribu-

tion was also paid towards Exercise Eagle's Return, which successfully raised the profile of the Regiment in its major recruiting areas, and also for the fabrication of miniature silver Jackals as gifts. In addition to the regular financial support to the Commanding Officer, the Messes and to recruiting, the Trust will be paying for the upgrading of ceremonial uniforms, as well as new trumpets and trumpet banners.

With regard to benevolence, the principal point of contact is the Regimental Secretary, who coordinates our cases with other charities: these activities are covered

in his report and in future the Trust's benevolence will continue to be supervised by Patrick Andrews.



All bequests and donations to the Trust are most gratefully received



All bequests and donations to the Trust are most gratefully received. The full name of the charity is 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards Regimental Trust, Charity Commission number 274689. The Trustees normally apply gifts to the general benefit of the Trust, although there is also a restricted fund for benevolence should donors specifically wish to support that activity.

MH

The QDG Heritage Trust

C Squadron in Beirut

February to August 1983

By J Beatson-Hird, 4th Troop Leader

After two tremendous years at Lisanelly Barracks, C Squadron sailed from Belfast on December 17th, 1982. It was a fitting end of the tour as on board, there were some forty nurses from the Royal Victoria Hospital. I cannot recall why they were on the ferry, but the ferry literally rocked, not from the weather, but from the celebrations in the bar, the most crowded the disco had ever been, and probably a few other activities.

I arrived back at my parents on the evening of the 18th, in time for dinner. Afterwards, we settled down with a glass of whisky to watch the nine o'clock news. My mother commented that she used to be somewhat apprehensive watching it while we were on tour. She always wondered whether there would be news about the Regiment amongst the coverage of the hunger strikes. As the news came on, the headline showed fighting in the Lebanon and a horrific car bomb in Beirut.

"Thank God," my mother remarked, "that is one place you are not going to be sent to."

One week later, on Boxing Day, Sergeant Reed called from the Orderly Room to tell me that C Squadron's leave had been cancelled and that we were being recalled back to Wimbish for the 4th January. When questioned, all he said was:

"I can't say anymore, Sir, but you are going somewhere hot, beginning with L and full of Jews."

Arriving in Wimbish, Major Stewart, our Squadron Leader since Omagh, informed us that we were to be deployed to Beirut under Operation Hyperion, as part of a multi-national force. He had only received his very basic briefing on Christmas Eve and was not much more informed than we were. The Squadron had been enlarged to six troops and we were joined by Lieutenant Roe and Sergeant 'Bongo' Davies from A Squadron, plus Lieutenant Napolitano and Sergeant Malbon from the Close Observation Troop.

Whilst Major Stewart went on a recce to Cyprus and Beirut, our first task was to collect twenty-two Ferrets and twelve Land Rovers, all fitted with mine plates, from Ludgershall. Driven down in 4-tonners, we collected the ancient relics from storage. We had a somewhat inauspicious start as no pit stop had



SQMS Roberts and team with petrol resupply for author

been organised and there was a string of broken-down Ferrets on the road back to Wimbish, having run out of petrol. The vehicles had been stripped down before being mothballed and were in pretty basic shape. So, we couldn't even have a brew while we waited for SQMS Roberts to resupply us.

The departure date was imminent, but not known exactly. There was sufficient time for driver training and weapon handling on the .30 Brownings, the acquisition of all sorts of pieces of kit

such as mine detection equipment and of course, for a round of rather nasty injections. Two weeks later, we drove to Heysham, some two hundred miles from Wimbish (this time with plenty of fuel for the journey!) and loaded the vehicles on board the MV Fenchurch. We flew out to Cyprus on 21st January by Hercules from Brize Norton to Akrotiri.

We had been looking forward to troop training in Cyprus. In the event, it didn't happen. Two troops were immediately dispatched to the United



Vehicles being loaded onto MV Fenchurch



Preparing vehicles in Cyprus



Loading the Sol Phryne

Nations (UN) peace keeping force in Nicosia, 3rd Troop under Lieutenant De Spretter and Sergeant McWilliams and 6th Troop under Lieutenant Napolitano and Sergeant Malbon. The remainder of the Squadron stayed in Akrotiri and took delivery of our Ferrets, which arrived four days late as a result of a storm off Italy. This left us with only eight days to prepare the vehicles before we left. In the interim time, we focused on fitness and weapons training. When the ship finally arrived, the vehicles were still in a terrible shape. Not only were there no radios, but there was no infrastructure (loom) to actually connect and operate them. The final straw was that there was no paint for the vehicles, which looked as though they had not been touched since they were built in 1953. Some bright spark mixed oil with petrol and painted all the vehicles so that they gleamed – even the tyres. The following frantic days were spent getting the vehicles operational and we had the opportunity to have one day on the ranges, but no troop training whatsoever. It was a pretty intense scramble to sort the vehicles out and hold a 24/7 exercise. We received a visit from the British Ambassador to Lebanon who provided an in-depth briefing that left us totally confused about which faction stood for what. One thing that was clear is that they were all fighting each other: Christians vs Christians vs Muslims vs Israelis vs Syrians.

The Ambassador recounted a story about the arrival of the French Marines who, as we were about to do ourselves, landed in the port and formed up on the dockside. There was a burst of machine gun fire nearby and they all dived for cover, which caused much hilarity to all those present and who watched it on the television news. Less importantly, as it turned out, he told us our mission:

'To instil the confidence of the

Lebanese people in the government of Lebanon by showing British support for their President, Amin Gemayel' (who was the brother of the recently assassinated Bashir).

This would be achieved in two ways: Firstly, by patrolling and waving the flag and secondly by overtly supporting the Lebanese Army, which was the only legitimate force amongst the countless militias.

There were two respites, however, during our stay in Cyprus. One was a day's skiing in the Troodos Mountains and the other was an evening of entertainment provided courtesy of the

Blues and Royals, when their Squadron Leader reassuringly advised us that we should look at any casualty as 'just another body'.

During dinner in their Mess, there was excitement in the Turkish camp opposite. A sentry had been found asleep and the duty officer had shot him on the spot. Apparently, this action itself was not the problem. It was more that this officer had already shot two other soldiers that week! I was sitting next to a Captain from the Princess Patricia's Canadian

A sentry had been found asleep and the duty officer had shot him on the spot



On the ranges in Cyprus - Sergeants Ratcliffe, Davies and Pritchard

Light Infantry (PPCLI) which made up the Canadian contingent of the UN. He commented that the Turks were a rum lot. One of their soldiers had made a local Turkish girl pregnant and on reporting this to his Platoon Commander, had been shipped immediately back to Vancouver as they were very concerned about retribution from the family. By an extraordinary coincidence, I was posted twelve months later to Fort Lewis, in Washington State, with my Troop, for Exercise Trumpet Dance. We were attached to the Light Infantry as their recce troop. One of their sister regiments was the PPCLI and I was reunited with this Captain beside whom I had sat at the Blues and Royals dinner. He reminded me of the story about their soldier getting the Turkish girl pregnant. Apparently, he returned home to his mother and two days later, early in the morning, the doorbell rang. His mother answered and on the doorstep was a swarthy looking man in a long coat who asked whether her son was at home. Summoned out of bed by his mother, he came to the door where upon the visitor pulled a shotgun from under his coat and shot the soldier dead.

I digress. The only training we had time for was, bizarrely, a little drill. The idea was that we would arrive at the port in Beirut and would be met by our



First sight of Beirut



Parade on arrival at port du Liban

Ambassador, senior members of the Lebanese government, the press and no doubt curious members of the public. So, the attached government liaison officer and nominal force commander, Lieutenant Colonel Cochrane, from the Irish Rangers, requested that we put on some form of 'first parade' so we could be inspected. After a couple of hours our drill was more or less presentable, albeit rather limited in scope.

We sailed on MV Sol Phryne which was an old, Cypriot registered ferry of a very basic type. Once we had parked up on the boat, it became apparent that, as a result of the coating of oil and petrol, the Cypriot dust had covered the wheels and tyres and the vehicles really looked like the age they were. Knackered from so little sleep (and a few too many ouzos) we all crashed out, feeling rather depressed that our arrival wouldn't look as smart as we had all hoped. After a rather dismal night's sleep, we came down to the vehicles ahead of docking to discover that the night guard had 'appropriated' six large tins of black funnel paint from the ship's store and the vehicles were looking immaculate! We finally arrived at the port of Beirut which was ominously littered with half sunk and damaged vessels. Did we look smart! We disembarked to the call of Lieutenant Vestey's hunting horn and were ably led by Major Stewart. We pulled up in formation on the large car park in front of the ferry terminal. Getting out was always difficult as the vehicle commanders had SLRs which were almost impossible to extract as one unsaddled.

But no one dropped their weapon nor were any magazines knocked off and we would have shown up the Guards with our impressive form up. The vehicles gleamed. Lieutenant Colonel Cochrane had announced on the ferry that he was going to take the parade in place of Major Stewart, as the ranking officer. Unfortunately, it was Major Stewart who had taken all the rehearsals. Colonel Cochrane marched up in front of us with his impressive green feather sticking

out of his bonnet and gave the order to present arms. This was conducted with aplomb and he saluted the British Ambassador, Sir David Roberts, who had come to greet us. After the inspection, Colonel Cochrane and his feather turned to face the Squadron, bursting with pride. Whereupon he gave the order to shoulder arms. This was also conducted with aplomb. The problem then ensued when we were told to order arms. Unfortunately, this was beyond our repertoire and there was a performance of impromptu juggling which Sooty and Sweep would have been proud of. But, like on many occasions during our tour, we survived admirably. This was greatly aided by the fact that straight after this debacle, whilst still standing to attention, there was a burst of machine gun fire across to our front. Forewarned and forearmed, not one person blinked an eyelid! It transpired that a Lebanese soldier had shot the tyres of a truck which was attempting to drive across the front of the parade. The journalists were impressed and much to the French contingent's annoyance, the papers made much of the comparison between our arrival and theirs.

Lebanon is about half the size of Wales and borders Syria in the north and east,



Location of Beirut

Israel to the south and the Mediterranean Sea to the west. Beirut, the capital, is triangular shaped with the sea on two sides and the mountains on the third.

Damascus is two hours' drive away and Tel Aviv four hours' drive.

By way of background, the Allies defeated the Vichy French in Lebanon in 1943. It had been a French protectorate since 1920, when the Ottoman Empire had been broken up. The country became an independent Christian state and prospered as the financial and trading centre of the Middle East. After the establishment in 1948 of the State of Israel, a flow of refugees migrated

south to Jordan and north to Lebanon, where they were welcomed by the Jordanians and Lebanese respectively. In 1970, the Jordanians expelled the Palestinians as they were using Jordan as a base to launch attacks against Israel. This coincided with two Arab Israeli wars which led to the population of Palestinians in Lebanon increasing to one million. Soon, the demographics changed and the country was no longer a Christian majority. This caused intense friction and civil war broke out in 1975. The power of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) became so strong that the government of Lebanon could no longer control the city and the country. Beirut itself was split into two, with the Christians in East Beirut and the Muslims in the West. In 1982, as the PLO operations from Lebanon against Israel intensified, the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) launched a full-blown attack. Within weeks, Beirut was completely under the guns of Israel. Through the intervention of multiple world agencies and with global support, an agreement was struck for the PLO to leave Beirut and they were offered shelter by the Algerian government. On the 14th September, the popular Christian President Bashir Gemayel was

Colonel Cochrane and his feather turned to face the Squadron, bursting with pride

assassinated. There then followed the dreadful massacres of Sabra and Shatila. This resulted in the UN decision to send a 'peace-keeping' force to Lebanon. This was vetoed by the Russians, so the force ended up being multi-national instead of a UN one. Hence, C Squadron's deployment.

The journey from the port to our new home not only took us through all the areas that we would be patrolling but opened our eyes to the devastation that had befallen the city. This was contrasted by the people who seemed to be leading normal lives, going to work, shopping and, as we found on this first journey, traffic jams. There were hovels and destroyed buildings with brand new Mercedes parked outside, many with United Kingdom (UK) number plates. We later discovered that they were the produce of a huge trade in stolen vehicles. To our surprise, there was no shelling or gunfire to be heard. This was later explained by the fact that it was lunchtime! We were followed by the press throughout and Lieutenant Alex Roe's delivery of our first television interview resulted in a bollocking from the Squadron Leader.

"How can you talk about how shocking the devastation is whilst grinning away like that!"

Ironically, the lack of troop training turned to our advantage. The Squadron, without previous agreement, naturally adopted a Northern Ireland style foot patrol technique. The press immediately commented on this as the other contingencies (United States (US), France and Italy) conducted themselves far more casually. The only significant incident on the first journey was the fact that the Signals Officer, from the contingent of Royal Signals attached to us, couldn't stop calling in radio checks every minute or so. Finally, someone told him to shut

“To our surprise, there was no shelling or gunfire to be heard. This was later explained by the fact that it was lunchtime!”



Royal Engineers sent over from Cyprus, we redecorated. This included rocket screens in front of the building, anti-car bomb prevention and the building of walls in front of the entrances to the



Aerial view of Beirut

up over the air. This had two effects. He shut up and the Signals contingent never integrated with the Squadron throughout the tour. In fact, they ate and lived in their comms room.

We arrived at our new home, La Regie – the old tobacco factory – located in Hadath in the south-eastern tip of Beirut. It had been lived in by the PLO and then Syrian troops before us and the place was a mess – literally! I think that those first few days will be remembered for shit and sandbags. There was excrement all over the floors and walls with strips of newspaper stuck on top, not to cover it up, but because the strips had been used instead of loo paper. Over the next couple of weeks, with help from the



La Regie before rocket screens. Author's room can be seen on top floor – without the outside balcony wall!

balconies in all the sleeping quarters. Soon, we had sentry positions and a fully fortified camp. When the Engineers came to build the wall in our bedroom, we asked them to build it on the inside of the room, not the outside (as with all the other rooms) with a convenient gap so we could take a night cap whilst watching the night battles over the city. After a few weeks, we were so conditioned to the fighting we used to sleep through the shelling and small arms fire. We also erected mosquito nets, not just for the bugs, but to keep the camel spiders off us. These nasty things were



Cookhouse wall



Prime Minister Callaghan's visit



Hesford and Bloodworth helping prepare lunch



Sandbag filling

half spider, half scorpion which Sergeant Williams (871) became acquainted with when he didn't close down completely one night. He woke to find a portion of his leg had been eaten, leaving a nasty hole. The main stress came from the fact that, for the first two months, there were only two loos between all ninety-seven of us and four sinks with no hot or drinkable water. The other major downside of living in a disused tobacco processing plant was the pervading smell of tobacco – especially when doing the mandatory twice weekly five laps around the plant!

We decided upon two dining areas, which were a joint Officers' and Sergeants' Mess and a 'cookhouse.' When Prime Minister Callaghan visited, he commented on how marvellous it was to see the Officers and Sergeants living together. Sergeant Williams (871) replied instantly, commenting on what a terrible idea it was!! In reality and in the best Waterloo tradition, it was huge fun and the scene of much hilarity. Someone painted a scene to represent the valleys on the wall of the cookhouse, which also served as the general meeting room, and our pictures from Squadron Headquarters were on the walls of the Mess. So, daytime quarters were limited but acceptable in the circumstances. Initially, sleeping arrangements involved camp

beds but after a couple of weeks, we were sent proper beds and sheets. So gradually, we made the whole camp more like British Cavalry quarters than Syrian ones. The Americans paid their respects one evening and we entertained them in the Mess. They couldn't believe their eyes. They had been in Beirut for six months and were still under canvass. Meanwhile, we had two bars and proper food.

As a footnote to this, Prime Minister Callaghan was visiting just ahead of the 1983 election. He was also MP for Cardiff South. As he inspected the guard of honour, he stopped in front of one of the Troopers, (Bloodworth?) and said:

"I expect you will be voting for me, young man."

Whereupon the Trooper replied: "You must be joking...sir"

We devised a four-day cycle based around the four troops:

- Troop on patrol
- Troop on fatigues (and Orderly Officer/ Sergeant)
- Troop on patrol and night Quick Reaction Force
- Troop on guard (and watchkeeping)

The daily routine comprised of either general patrolling or specific tasks. Each Troop on patrol was tasked with two, three-hour patrols per day. The Guard

Troop was augmented by four men from the balance of the Squadron. This included a Gate Sentry and two people in the sangar on the roof.

The Fatigue Troop plus another four men helped prepare meals, keep the building clean and help the LAD maintain the vehicles.

The routes for the general patrols were not rigid, only the general area to be covered was designated. We would patrol with the Troop Corporal (upfront), Troop Leader, Troop Lance Corporal and the Troop Sergeant (at the rear). This meant that, in general, the arcs of fire to our front and back were covered by the front and rear vehicles, and the middle vehicles were covered by the left and right arcs. Sergeant Neil Williams hated his position at the rear as he said that it was so uncomfortable to always be facing backwards. If we came to a choke point or if there was a disturbance, we would hard target through the area using the leapfrog technique. It was pretty much the same as urban foot patrolling in Northern Ireland. We received lots of comments on this from the locals who told us that we looked so much more professional than the other contingents.

They particularly commented on the fact that they could



Corporal Mead in the roof sangar



The LAD

only see the tops of our heads in the turrets which contrasted to the lackadaisical approach of the other forces, who largely sprawled all over their vehicles. The weather was stifling; it was usually 75 degrees by 8am and in the 90s by midday. Added to the discomfort of being in the Ferrets was the Khamsin, which was an exceedingly hot wind. So, sunbathing was really out. But most importantly, the deck of the Ferrets became scorchingly hot.

There is no doubt that the routes were influenced by the locations of the popular eateries, patisseries, ice cream shops and cafés where the patrols would pull up for a break. There, the dusky ladies in tight jeans and red blouses were a welcome distraction. We were always aware that the ladies might be diverting our attention from an attack, made a little more complicated by the fact that the Irish Republican Army was believed to have had a presence there. But the threat never materialised.

The locals were all pretty friendly and we always greeted them with "Marhaba, kifak?" ("Hello, how are you?") The civilian population often spoke French and or English. The Lebanese Army and Police pretty much spoke only Arabic. Major Stewart used to deal with this the best and was patient trying to explain everything in English and seemed to have a sixth sense about what they were saying. We used to joke that it was because his French was terrible!

The situation in Beirut was confusing. Whilst the arrival of the IDF had pretty much halted the civil war between the Christians and the Muslims, they each



JBH on patrol

attacked the IDF with such frequency that the political will to remain in Lebanon was failing. Furthermore, the firefights between the Druzes and the Christians were gaining in frequency. The multi-national force was supposed to oversee the future withdrawal of the IDF and as the withdrawal approached, so the situation deteriorated further. There were so many different parties and militias that one never knew who they supported or why they were at loggerheads. It was a tug of war between the Christians (with their multiple militias, the largest being the Khatib), the Palestinians, Hezbollah, the Amal Movement, the Syrians, the Israelis, the Russians, the Americans and of course, the Lebanese Army. It was a mess. Furthermore, there was a real concern that the Syrians were about to unleash a campaign of heavy bombardment. They were under pressure to pull out of Lebanon if the Israelis did. And their Russian backers did not want that to happen as they would lose their valuable foothold. Pressure from the other Arab states prevented the shelling. Instead, the Syrians organised shootings and car bombings. As our tour progressed, the



About to leave on patrol

situation became substantially worse and for some time we had to shut down the two top floors of the building as the 120mm rockets regularly fell around us.

As operations demanded, there were



Corporal Pass leading 4th Troop from camp back gates



Patrol leaving from the front gates

specific tasks allocated on an ad hoc basis. One task carried out by 5th Troop was to accompany the British Ambassador into bandit country in the Chouf Mountains for a meeting with Walid Jumblatt, the head of the Druze militia. This was identified as a high-risk operation as the Druze had a fearsome reputation. There are about 800,000 Druzes in the Levant and their religion is an unusual mixture of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism. The Druze do not permit outsiders to convert to their religion and forbid marriage outside the Druze faith. Little is known about them as they keep themselves totally apart from outsiders. Walid Jumblatt was the leader of the most powerful Druze clan and head of their militia. We were not told why the Ambassador was meeting him and it was not clear as to whether the patrol was in danger of being kidnapped or not. So, when 5th Troop encountered the first checkpoint in the mountainous pass above Beirut, there was a certain nervousness felt all round. Yet as Lieutenant Roe stepped down to talk to them, the senior militiaman embraced him and declared that the British were their undying friends.

"You supplied us with arms in our time of need."

When the patrol returned intact that evening, the Intelligence Corps Sergeant sent Lieutenant Alex Roe's report back to the Ministry of Defence with a query about whether we were still supplying arms to the Druze, as this had come as a bit of a surprise. We received a signal by return informing us that the British had supplied arms once to the Druze in 1859 in their war against the Christian Maronites. With memories like that, it was not surprising that no one in the area could get on!

Towards the end of our tour, we were tasked to protect the British Embassy whilst they had a conference of various leaders there. It was significant enough for the Squadron Leader to join the Operation and I think the protective screen occupied most of the Squadron. Trying



Corporal Humphreys with Palestinian children outside the Sabra camp

to communicate with the police and army was frustrating and we left it to the Squadron Leader who did his best to try to diffuse the friction between them in his Pidgeon English. Eventually, an altercation broke out between the two groups and guns were being levelled. Just as we wondered where this was going, Major Stewart jumped up on to his Land Rover and started shouting and barking orders at them – in fluent Arabic! This brought the shocked Lebanese and C Squadron to a standstill as the Squadron Leader restored order.

"And?" I asked him.

"Need to know. Much better they don't know you can speak the lingo until you need them to know," he replied.

On the day after our arrival, 4th Troop and 1st Troop (Lieutenant Vestey & Sergeant Ratcliffe) were the two patrol troops. I was sent to the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. The events there had hit the newspapers back in the UK and we were very curious to see the camps for ourselves. On the 16th September, i.e. four months before we arrived, up to as many as 3,500 Palestinian civilians were massacred in two adjacent refugee camps.



Cpl Simpkins making friends



Patrolling into mountains through Wadi Beirut

It was not until two weeks after we arrived that a UN investigation released an analysis of the incident. In June 1982, The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) invaded Lebanon to remove the PLO who were using their base in Beirut to attack Israel. Following heavy fighting, culminating in a major battle in West Beirut, a truce was agreed with the UN whereby the Palestinian fighters would leave Beirut under escort by UN troops and relocate to Algeria. Whilst this provided a temporary solution, the Israelis were concerned that it was only a matter of time before the PLO fighters would return as their families remained in Beirut. On September 14th, the immensely popular President of Lebanon, Bashir Gemayel, was assassinated. This resulted in two dynamics: emotional turmoil amongst the Christian community and an opportunity 'to bury bad news.' The South Lebanon Army, a Christian Militia based in Marjayoun in the South, led by Colonel Haddad, entered the two refugee camps through the Israeli lines. Their way was illuminated by flares from the IDF who had blocked all the entry and exit points. It is not clear how many were killed but the UN report just claimed that the number was between 460 and 3,500 civilians, being predominantly the old, women and children. Interestingly, the Kayan Commission, established by the Israeli government, reported that this was a form of genocide for which the IDF and Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Defence Minister, were ultimately responsible as they had allowed the South Lebanese Army access, showing a lack of care as to what the likely results were going to be.

As we drove into the camps, we were overcome with a sense of desolation. The buildings had been raised to the ground and there were burial mounds strewn around the camp and little arms and legs were still visible sticking out of some of them. Corporal Humphreys was the lead vehicle. He stopped as a lady stood in front of his vehicle, barring the way. I pulled up beside him and got down. The lady grabbed my hand and pulled me towards a bin liner which was held as a type of roof by four sticks. I saw immediately that 'inside' there was a blanket, a tin, a primus stove and a mug - and pretty much nothing else. She was jabbering away in Arabic and was extremely animated. She started pumping up the stove, opened the tin, and I absolutely do not exaggerate, there was one teabag in it. She was clearly going to make me her only cup of tea. Fortunately, Trooper Hesford came forward with a steaming mug for her and some rations



**As we drove
into the camps,
we were
overcome with
a sense of
desolation**



Dragoon Guards (KDG) encountered them in North Africa in 1942/43 and gave them a hell of a beating.)

What a good man. Not only did he laugh, but he invited us to their camp that evening to see a show. A well-known Italian pop star was apparently performing. He gave me his card and said we could bring another Troop as well as ours. We parted company.

Meanwhile, 1st Troop had been dispatched off to the hills above our camp to Baabda where the Presidential Palace was located. Their secondary mission was a to locate some Champagne for the Mess from which Lieutenant Roe was going to pay the fine for his 'grinning' interview. When the patrol returned, there were two cases of



Major Stewart with Lebanese Liaison Officer, Fawzi

and we gave her what little we had with us. We came back a number of times over the next few months to bring her supplies, but the lady had disappeared.

On leaving the camps, we drove through the Italian area which was beside the refugee camps. We were stopped by an Italian Officer of the Bersaglieri Regiment of the 'Goito' Division and incidentally, Benito Mussolini's old Regiment. I jumped out of my Ferret and whopped up a salute. He greeted me in perfect English and I introduced myself, saying that we had indeed met before. He looked puzzled and apologised for his poor memory.

"Where?" he asked.

"In North Africa," I replied.

(The 3rd Brigade Mechanised Infantry 'Goito' was made up of mechanised Bersaglieri Regiments and was part of the Ariete Armoured Division (132nd) in North Africa. The King's

Veuve Clicquot strapped to the deck of Lieutenant Vestey's vehicle. These were proudly presented to Major Stewart who felt that we should immediately ensure that the quality was up to standard. It was, after all, lunchtime and as previously mentioned, the quietest time of the day. A bottle was duly produced, and the assembled members of the Mess waited in anticipation. As Lieutenant Vestey opened the bottle, there was surprise that the customary pop was lacking. Samples were poured and even Sergeant Ratcliffe looked shocked. This was not Veuve Clicquot, despite the label. A letter was written immediately to Veuve Clicquot in Reims informing them that we believed that a great fraud was being perpetrated. In the course of the next few weeks this was all but forgotten, until one day, a rather enraged Frenchman turned up at the camp gates. He was the Veuve Clicquot representative for the region, based in Cyprus. The label was inspected, the bottle was opened, the pop absent and the wine tasted. After much zute alors and sacre bleus, he announced that a major crime had been committed. He removed the remnants of the 'Champagne' and left without accepting our invitation to lunch. Just before the end of the tour, we received a package from Veuve Clicquot. The accompanying letter expressed the company's deepest thanks and said that our keen observation had led to the uncovering of a major racket of supplying fake Veuve Clicquot throughout the region which had caused the company untold loss of revenues. As a token of their appreciation, they gave us - two bottles! I have never drunk Veuve Clicquot since.

After the champagne tasting, we organised 1st Troop to join us that evening at the Italian camp. When we arrived, we discovered an enormous, big



The big top marquee located in the Italian camp

top marquee. We were shown inside and were seated amongst the Italian troops. Unfortunately, the first half of the show consisted of a comedian and given our lack of Italian, Lieutenant Vestey and I decided to slip out for a smoke. Conscious of the fact that the Italians received wine in their rations, we went into their lines and greeted a couple of Italian troops with the only Italian we knew:

"Ciao! Vino?"

Whereupon we received two bottles of (marginal) red wine. We walked towards the perimeter fence and sat down under a tree. Before we had consumed the wine (honestly) there was a small burst of machine gun fire across our bows which appeared to have come from our left. Immediately, there was a return of fire from our right, which led to a short but angry exchange. Then silence. Then a siren and a blue flashing light. We decided to leave our grandstand seats and make our way back to the big top where we met the friendly Bersaglieri Officer who had invited us. He looked flustered and explained that a terrible accident had occurred. A sentry had accidentally discharged his Submachine Gun (SMG) and had hit the sangar opposite, who had thought they were under attack and returned fire. Unfortunately, this resulted in two casualties - which I believe were not the only ones of their tour. (Some Italian soldiers were shot in the Palestinian quarter, allegedly for getting too close to the ladies.)

Unfortunately, a similar incident

occurred in our base when a Trooper, having come off guard, cleared his SMG in the unloading bay and turned round to face the Officers who were having dinner in the vehicle park. He fired a single shot, a negligent discharge, that went under the table and between our legs - no injuries, but much surprise! The Squadron Leader nearly dropped his fork.

C Squadron was one of four contingents that made up the multi-national force, which the locals called the 'multi-national farce'. We were closest to the Americans, who were made up of a Mobile Amphibious Unit (MAU) of the US Marine Corps (USMC) and who were based at the airport. They attached Liaison Officers to us in the form of Signals Sergeants who worked out of our Ops Room. Their call sign was 'Sunny Skies,' no doubt some form of joke about British weather. We used to get flagged down by their foot patrols, most frequently to be asked if we could show them where they were on the map. They used to invite the Squadron to their Troop entertainment but the fact that they were 'dry' was a big deterrent. However, they did ask us out to visit the USS New Jersey, their huge Iowa class battleship affectionately called the 'Big J' by the US Navy, which was stationed just off the coast. As the Israeli withdrawal started, the airport was



USMC outside the US embassy after it was bombed

heavily shelled by the Druze. This led to the first casualty for the USMC and some thirty casualties amongst the Lebanese Army. The Americans retaliated and we had grandstand seats from the roof of La Regie, watching Big J lob shells the size of Volkswagen Beetles into the mountains.

Occasionally, you would hear their F14s fly over, but they were so high up you couldn't see the plane. Forward Air Controller training was provided by the US Navy while our troops were on patrol. Unbeknown to us, every time a practice air strike was called to the US Navy offshore via the USMC Liaison Officer, a live response was carried out using a pair of F17 Tomcat Fighters, but on a 180-degree adjustment that took them out to sea, the objective being to keep the crews ready for a real emergency call. Major Stewart decided to test the RAF in Akrotiri who were supposed to provide air cover for us. He tasked them with a dummy run. The idea caused much hilarity as we



Replen at the airport

wondered whether their antiquated Phantoms would actually work. The RAF were already in our bad books because, unannounced, a group of WAGS of RAF Lyneham Officers turned up on a 'jolly' around Beirut, flown in on the all-important resupply Hercules. They caused much resentment, especially as we felt obliged to escort them everywhere they went. We assembled on the roof to spot the RAF Phantoms where we thought they would be – so high up but possibly just in sight. At the ordained hour, two Phantoms came screaming in from the sea at roof height. The noise was terrific and the buildings shook. The whole of Beirut scattered and on their second pass, someone fired at them. When it was reported in the press that it was the RAF, we gained huge respect.

The French, overall, did not look kindly upon us. They were indignant that the British were interfering in their old colonial empire, feeling it was their prerogative, not ours. Their contingent was comprised of the Foreign Legion and the Infanterie de Marines was based in the Christian quarter. Some bright French Staff Officer had billeted them next to the extreme right wing Christian militia group who really resented the fact that France had not stopped the Israeli advance into Lebanon. They were often sniped at either by the Falangists

or caught in crossfire directed by the Muslim militias at the Falangists. Despite this, we struck up a great relationship with the Marines, particularly their recce troop who were in Panhard recce vehicles – the French equivalent of a Scorpion. We did, however, come into contact with the Foreign Legion. 2nd Troop was patrolling along the main road which intersected Beirut when they came across a heated altercation between two Jeeps of French Foreign Legionnaires and an IDF patrol. As Lieutenant Renwick went to find out what was going on, he realised that amidst all the waving of SMGs, there was a great deal of German being shouted at the IDF soldiers, including some pretty offensive WW2 slogans! Fortunately, 2nd Troop's arrival diffused the scene – which was ironic as we were supposed to be keeping the peace between the Lebanese factions, not the multi-national force.

We had daily contact with the IDF. They set up camp opposite us, presumably using our position as a shield to deter attacks on their own position. We decided to run a telephone line to them from our Ops Room. SQMS Roberts was dispatched to engage with them and to install the phone. After the initial abuse from a couple of East Enders serving with the IDF, they agreed to having telephone contact with us. Needless to say, they

never answered the phone when we called! When they left some four months later, Corporal Bond was sent over to run a Northern Ireland style sweep of their position. This was watched closely by the locals who hadn't seen a clearance quite so thorough and professional. Photographs even appeared in the press. We were convinced he would find booby traps. As they started, the SQMS shouted: "Don't forget the telephone, it's on my books!" This probably wasn't foremost in Reg Bond's thoughts, but as it happened, the site was clean and there was no sign of our telephone.

Relations with the IDF were not great and they tended to be quite antagonistic towards us. Negative comments abounded, usually from their British members, such as:

"The British army spends its whole time on exercise and no time training. Good at building bashers, lousy on operations."

The IDF had a habit of complete disregard for the civilian population. I was Watchkeeping in the Ops Room when I received an urgent call from 3rd Troop requesting back up, stating that there was a dangerous altercation with an IDF armoured patrol. I requested to speak to the patrol commander, Sergeant Pritchard, but was told he was currently on top of a Merkava hitting the driver over the head with a pickaxe handle. 1st Troop was patrolling close by and was dispatched to the scene. They found a furious Sergeant Pritchard shouting at the commander of a Merkava and the driver standing back from the vehicle with his bone dome off and rubbing



The French, overall, did not look kindly upon us. They were indignant that the British were interfering in their old colonial empire



French contingent with 4th Troop



IDF position seen through the rocket screen during firefight



IDF armoured patrol driving past the camp

his head. The Merkava had its main armament pointing at one of the Ferrets and the three Centurion tanks accompanying it had their guns trained on the other Ferrets. All four Ferrets had their .30 Brownings trained rather optimistically on the tanks! It transpired that the Merkava had been indulging in the sport of driving over all the parked cars on the side of the road – parked legally, I would add. This had so incensed Sergeant Pritchard that he stopped his Ferret in front of the Merkava and climbed up on to the front plate and the rest was history. Clearly intimidated by eight Ferrets and their high tech equipment, all four tanks backed off, but not until they had driven over a few more cars.

As previously mentioned, we were not the only contingent to have run ins with the IDF. On one occasion, a USMC M60 tank confronted an IDF Centurion tank in a narrow lane and neither would back off. The USMC tank commander indicated to the Israeli to calm down in sign language, placing his first finger on his thumb – to the Israeli this apparently equated to the V sign so the tension increased; it was eased when some children started to play football between the tanks, diffusing the situation and eventually they both reversed away.

In addition to the USMC Liaison Sergeants, we had three Lebanese Army Captains attached as Liaison Officers. It was not clear exactly what their role was as they seldom came out on patrol. However, they were professional, and we enjoyed their company. One of them, Bassam, was particularly hospitable and a Maronite Christian. He kept promoting the virtues of Lebanon, the food and particularly the Lebanese girls. One day he confided in me that it was customary to receive a dowry if you married a Lebanese – sufficient to set you up for life. He proudly told me that he had been given L6m or the equivalent at the time of £1m!

"I bet that set you up well," I commented. "Yes," he replied, "I bought the most magnificent carpet."

Each to his own, I suppose. But he was excellent company and when he invited me to dinner in his house, I accepted. It was an elegant building on the coast road, and it looked pretty much untouched by the war. He opened the gates and I was confronted by a magnificently manicured garden with a large fountain in the middle. He ushered me in and asked me what I would like to drink.

"Forget the drink, Bassam, I would like to see your carpet."

"Ah," he replied, "unfortunately when the Syrians invaded, their soldiers took it away with them. And sadly, they never returned it."

I'm sure there is a moral behind this story.

As part of our contingent of ninety-seven, we had some attached personnel. These included three Liaison Officers from various regiments whose role it was to...well, it was never made clear exactly what their role was! We got on very well with them all bar a captain in the Argylls. He complained bitterly when Lt Vestey and I organised a 'thank you' drinks party for various Lebanese and ex-pats we had met, all of whom had entertained all ranks at their homes. He

objected to the fact that the Officers and Sergeants were drinking at a party whilst the other ranks continued with their night-time duties. Major Stewart cleverly diffused the situation by organising a party for all ranks except the Officers, who took over guard duty for the night. Despite this, the foresaid Argyll was still very disruptive and lodged an official complaint.

I mentioned the Royal Signals attachment previously. In addition, there was a detachment from the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (RAOC) under Major Southworth. Their role was to provide whatever was required to sustain the force – like an old-fashioned Commissariat. Talking in the Mess one day, we were discussing the intricacies of trying to bug out of a Ferret in a flak jacket and at the same time manoeuvring our SLRs out of the turret. Invariably, the magazine fell off and we had to try retrieve it which demanded a headfirst entry back into the turret. Not great if you were under fire, which fortunately we never directly were. We decided that what we needed was a smaller weapon with a longer range than an SMG. A week later, six MP5s appeared which the RAOC contingent



Offending invitation

used (exclusively) whenever they went out in their land rovers! Major Southworth was also tasked to find a decent barber; he produced just such a chap who, with great glee, waved around his 'chitty' which permitted his access to the camp – dated 1945 and stamped by the KDG Quartermaster!

It wasn't all work and no play. The local Lebanese and the British expatriates were kind. This materialised in differing forms. We would be offered gifts such as food and drink on patrol. One evening, 4th Troop and I were patrolling the local area of Hadath, around the camp. There was tremendous noise, music, shouting and gunfire. We cautiously moved forward to determine what was going on, only to discover it was a wedding party! The father insisted we join in and it would have been rude not to, as I explained later to the Squadron Leader. We were fed, watered and generally entertained. The problem was that we could not hear the radio calls from the Ops Room. The first we knew that there was some concern about our radio silence was when the Quick Reaction Force turned up. Of course, they weren't allowed to leave either – it would also have been rude. But this time, we put the radio operators and a sentry outside to maintain coms. The other notable form of entertainment was an unexpected and uninvited, but gratefully received, topless dance troupe who enlivened the vehicle park no end!

Individuals and whole Troops were also invited out. The first one to receive an invitation (to a restaurant) was Lieutenant Roe from a business colleague of his father, a Mr Safi. We were all slightly jealous as Lieutenant Roe wound us up saying that it was supposed to be 'the best restaurant in Lebanon.' We drew lots as to who would join him. Lieutenant Vestey drew the ticket and off they went. When they



Skiing at Farayeh

came back, they were looking slightly sheepish. It was indeed the best restaurant in Lebanon, but for traditional mountain specialities.

"The food in Lebanon is the best in the world," enthused Mr Safi.

The raw lamb was okay, but it was the raw liver, raw kidney, raw spinal cord and raw spleen that was the problem. With Mr Safi in raptures about how magnificent it all was, they could not do anything other than eat it. After all, he had kindly invited them.

The claim to the best restaurant was, however, won by Major Stewart who was taken to L'Orangerie by the Middle Eastern agent for Lloyds where the Moules had been flown in from France that morning.

The ex-pat community used to invite whole troops out for picnics on the beach or to their homes. One ex-pat family, the Gillybrands, were so kind that they even lent us their Mini for the duration. Eventually, we received two civilian Land Rovers, so we returned their car with grateful thanks. This enabled troop days out to the beach in Byblos, north of Beirut, where there was a fantastic beach in an area controlled by the Khataib

(Christian militia) and therefore, perfectly safe for us. We also had the opportunity to ski in the Chouf, but the second visit had to be abandoned as the Syrians started shelling the top of the slope. So, we naturally adjourned to the bar at the bottom for the day.

Not everything went smoothly and during one dinner party given by a couple of delightful Lebanese ladies, we were shelled with Katyusha rockets and spent the evening conducting our mission – instilling confidence. The kindness and appreciation of the local community was tremendous and we were entertained by a diverse group of people, from the Lebanese head of the British Bank of the Middle East to a gentleman who had served in the Africa Corps and had moved to Lebanon after the war. In addition, everyone had the opportunity to take R and R in Cyprus. We would be flown out by RAF Hercules with the most popular destination being Ayia Napa, where we would watch the Swedish girls lying on their sun beds, half asleep. They were completely unaware of the impending attacks by the pelicans who took great delight sneaking up quietly and biting their toes. The resulting shrieks never ceased to entertain us. My leave coincided with Captain Eliot, who was the Ops Officer, and Lieutenant Vestey. After an entertaining week, we arrived at Akrotiri to discover that the RAF had changed our flight time without telling us and had already left. This was not great as it meant that anyone waiting in Beirut to go on their leave would not be able to go. As we were demonstrating with the RAF, an Italian overheard us and told us that they had a Hercules leaving right that minute to fly to Beirut. He pointed to the plane which was being pushed back from the gate. We ran outside, waving frantically as the plane turned towards the runway and stuck our thumbs out. To our amazement, the plane stopped and the side door opened.

"Beirut?" shouted the loadmaster.

We held up all thumbs and a ladder was lowered. We climbed on board where upon we were given a glass of

The other notable form of entertainment was an unexpected and uninvited, but gratefully received, topless dance troupe



Sergeant Williams on the beach at Byblos



Night battle from our balcony

wine each. The pilot drove the plane like a car. No slow turns or waiting for complicated instructions. He raced it like a Ferrari. I confess that this didn't make us feel hugely confident. When we arrived at our destination, we could see the area around the airport was being heavily shelled. The pilot landed without fuss, roared around to our drop off point and without hanging around, zoomed off again. It was pretty impressive.

Amongst our visitors were politicians (notably Rt Hon Douglas Hurd MP and Lord Carrington), heads of all the various armies, ambassadors, the press, ITV, CBS and eventually, the BBC. They spent two weeks with us making a documentary. It aired while we were away and featured such scenes as Trooper Bayliss baring his bottom for a gamma globulin booster injection. Just before the BBC crew arrived, the Mess had a moustache growing competition. On the announcement that the BBC were coming, vanity seem to win the day and most people shaved theirs off. Sergeant 'Black' Williams ended up winning by a mile, which was a little unfair as he was already sporting a fine example before we arrived! (A copy of the documentary can be obtained from Home Headquarters). The Squadron Officers commissioned the renowned military artist Ken Howard to paint a pair of pictures, for the Officers' Mess, of the Squadron deployments to both the Multi-National Force Beirut and UN Cyprus. Ken was very sporting and seemed unperturbed by the backdrop to his painting and the shelling around him. Perhaps the most fun visitor was Sir Michael Sandberg, then Chairman of HSBC and Hong Kong Jockey Club (KDG 1949). He joined the Regiment directly after the war, but still had some tales to tell from the Regiment's time in North Africa.

The six months passed rapidly and we handed over to A Squadron on August 9th. It should be remembered that the

Squadron was sent on a three-month tour which was extended by three months, at short notice! There was a staggered changeover which enabled us to familiarise the new guys with the lie of the land. Then we departed, the bachelors somewhat sad that we were not staying on for another six months. But it was a successful tour and the Squadron gained the respect from the other contingents as well as the locals. All the other contingents had received casualties, especially the Americans. We witnessed the outcome of a suicide van bomb that killed sixty-three people in the US Embassy in Beirut, a number of the casualties being Middle East Central Intelligence Agency operatives who were there for a meeting. Thankfully, C Squadron survived intact and had no casualties. I would like to think that this was a mixture of our professionalism and the hearts and minds approach we showed to all parties.

That is not the end of QDG's time in Lebanon. The situation in Beirut continued to deteriorate as A Squadron's tour progressed. They had to deal with an extremely tough environment which included the deaths of over 250 USMC from one incident, the near kidnapping of a whole troop and the ambush of 2nd Troop by the Amal militia. But that is all another story for part two of this account.

When we returned, Field Marshall Lord Bramall, Chief of Defence Staff, wrote to Lt Col Ferguson, the Commanding Officer of QDG:

'I wish to convey to you my personal admiration of your Squadrons' exemplary performance. The professionalism, skill, hard work, diplomacy and dedication of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards has been in the best tradition of the British Army and an example to us all.'

Amen.



Endless rounds of visitors

C Squadron Orbat

C Squadron Leader
2 i/c
2nd Captain
SSM
SQMS

Major SMP Stewart
Captain MRM Eliot and Captain CA Hookey
Captain VT Dakin
WO2 MB Ord
SSgt J Roberts

1st Troop

Lt TRG Vestey
Sgt Ratcliffe
Cpl Bailey
Cpl Dicken
Tpr Bayliss
Tpr Huntley
Tpr Reed
Tpr Thomas 265

2nd Troop

Lt Al Renwick
Sgt B Pritchard
Cpl Bond
Cpl Mead
Tpr Bloodworth
Tpr Owen 060
Tpr Pritchard
Tpr Sudlow

4th Troop

Lt JD Beatson-Hird
Sgt Williams 469
Cpl Pass
Cpl Humphreys
Tpr Arnold
Tpr Hesford
Tpr Paddon
Tpr Stephens

5th Troop

Lt AFJ Roe
Sgt Davies 254
Cpl Roberts 325
Cpl Simpkins
Tpr Bannister
Tpr Davies 272
Tpr Morris 958
Tpr Ward 932

Sqn Office

Sgt Reed
Cpl Jones 980
Tpr Smyth
Tpr Driscoll

Pay Office

Sgt Freeborn (RAPC)

SQMS Staff

Cpl Poulson
Cpl Bellis
LCpl Keenan
LCpl Thomas 537
LCpl Williams
Tpr Ellis 138
Tpr Hampton
Tpr Parry

LAD

SSgt Anstey
Sgt Wiltshire
Cpl Cooke
Cpl Ford
Cpl Loftus
LCpl Dillon
LCpl Gamble
Cfn Lancaster
Cfn Parkes

MT Troop

Sgt Williams 871
LCpl Fisher 373
Tpr Adams 385
Tpr Gear
Tpr Swift 782
Tpr Swift 464
Tpr Wells
Tpr Whiteman

SHQ

Cpl Johnson
SSgt Thomas 845
Cpl Bell 341
LCpl Ridding
LCpl Rees-Jones
LCpl Greaney
Tpr James
Tpr Winsor

Ration store

LCpl Pace
Tpr Wright 225

Tech Store

Cpl Deakin
Tpr Brown
Pte Smith

ACC

Sgt Reagan
LCpl Bath



I would like to thank Lieutenant Colonel Simon Stewart for fact checking this narrative and my mother, for keeping all the letters I wrote from Beirut which have enabled me to fill in the gaps where my memory is somewhat less clear than it used to be. Also, apologies if I have got any names wrong, but I'm pretty certain that I haven't! If anyone reading this has any of their own anecdotes, please let me know. I intend to produce a fuller account at a later date.

4th Troop

Firing Line

Firing Line

The museum and its team have had a busy year yet again. We have seen a slow rise in visitor numbers from overseas and are hopeful that throughout 2023, footfall will continue to approach pre-pandemic levels.

The museum had to close for two weeks in early January 2023 for essential maintenance in the Castle, but our team made the most of this by beginning new exhibitions and ensuring the museum sparkled in time for re-opening!

Day-to-day, the front-of-house team continue to deliver a variety of talks on subjects such as the chronology of helmets, a history of swords and firearms, and – a recent addition – the heritage of flags! In defiance of its newness, the latter has been receiving spectacular reviews.

We hosted several military groups and educational visits in 2022, including the Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS). We also continue to deliver outreach visits to schools and local cadet and other youth organisations.

Two particularly out-of-the-usual events happened in 2022. In April, the museum hosted its first hybrid conference/family fun day. We were honoured

by the generosity of historian Gareth Glover who gave a brilliant Saturday afternoon lecture on the Peninsular War. And a special 'QDG' shoutout goes to the Colonel of the Regiment, Ian Moore, George Clegg, Martin Gardner, Rob Mansel and Jerome Tyson for leading fantastic seminars on the Cold War, the Gulf War and Iraq and Afghanistan.

Firing Line was then fortunate to receive grant funding for a family fun day and evening concert in August. This was a fantastic day in the height of summer, which ended with sparks and bangs thanks to the inclusion of a fire-eater and fireworks. Esteemed guests included Jane Hutt MS and the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Councillor Graham Hinchey.

During 2022, myself and Miss Hannah Searle, the Assistant Regimental Curator, visited the Regiment in March, July and November to carry out our audits of the collection held by the Regiment. Incorporated in the November visit was a Trustees' meeting and dinner. As always, the Regiment has continued to go out of its way to support us.

We continue to receive interesting donations to add to the ever-growing collection; if anyone has any artefacts



The day ended with a bang!

Photo Credit: Grant Searle

that will enhance the collection and that they would be willing to donate, please let us know.

Most of all, we are glad to strengthen relationship between the Regiment and the museum. The museum is free to serving QDGs and Regimental Comrades (please contact me in advance so I can arrange your entry). We are also always looking for volunteers to work in the museum!

Ongoing Items:

Modern Day Regiment Exhibition

This exhibition shows the modern-day equipment that the Regiment uses now and will stay in position for the foreseeable future.

Gulf War 1990/91 Digital Exhibition

Remembering the Gulf war and the Regiments involvement in 1990/91, this exhibition can be viewed online or in the museum.

Regimental Medals Digital Exhibition

This is 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 Exhibition

This is an exhibition of the modern-day Regiment; interviews were carried out on several Regimental personalities and will be another interactive exhibition. There are still interviews to be carried out.

Oral History Project

The Trust will be contacting veterans and their families to ask for their participation in our regimental oral history project. We want interesting people with interesting stories!



The Waterloo Exhibition mid-revamp, with some 'famous' faces making an appearance behind

Future Items:

Waterloo Exhibition (Updating of Cases)

The present Waterloo collection in the museum is in the process of being updated and new artefacts are being put on show. Incorporated into this exhibition will also be the way the Regiment continues to remember the Battle of Waterloo, and the yearly dinner and how it has changed and been celebrated over the years.

Chronology of Regimental Helmets Exhibition

We are updating our helmet exhibition and showing the chronology of the helmets worn by the Regiment(s) through the ages.

Queen's Bays at Nery 1914 Exhibition

This exhibition was set up to commemorate the Affair in Nery and the Bays involvement in this very important Battle to halt the German advance in the early stages of the war in 1914.

Franz Josef Exhibition

The museum has received a large Franz Joseph bust, which is to be the centre of an exhibition focusing on the Austrian link.

History of Lucknow

Hannah has received a publishing contract from Pen & Sword for a book on the Queen's Bays in India, 1857-59. The manuscript is to be finished in 2023, for publication in 2024.

ME



Floor Supervisor Iain Fife mid-talk



We were privileged to host the RCDS for their third annual visit to the museum



Obituaries

Lieutenant Colonel A G Gordon-Hall

Toby Gordon-Hall died on Tuesday 21st June 2022 aged 90. On leaving Sherborne he joined the 12th Royal Lancers in 1950 as a National Serviceman, during training he decided to become a regular and went to Sandhurst. He was commissioned into the King's Dragoon Guards in 1952. The Regiment were then stationed in Neumunster, North Germany.

From the start Toby was well regarded and played his full part in Regimental activities. Besides his four years as troop leader, he rode horses, played hockey, tennis and athletics for Regimental teams. His troop sergeant assessed him as "the fairest and fastest of them all"!

On the Regiment's move to Malaya in 1956, Toby was 2 i/c C Squadron and then MTO. After amalgamation in 1959 he was 2 i/c A Squadron and then PRI before posting to Bovington as a D & M Instructor.

Over the next 25 years he served several stints of Regimental Duty: 2i/c C Squadron, HQ Squadron Leader and 2 tours as Second-in-Command in Catterick and BAOR, including time in Northern Ireland during the



troubles. He also carried out staff jobs in England and Singapore.

On leaving the Regiment he took on several senior instructing and administrative jobs at Bovington and Lulworth. His final job was Camp Commandant at Shrivenham in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

On retiring in 1983 he continued at Bovington as a Retired Officer in administrative jobs. He also ran the centres rough shoot. He finally retired in 1996 to enjoy a very active life. Living in Askerswell in Dorset he was very involved in village and church affairs. His sporting interests

continued with golf, rough shooting and walking in the Lake District. He continued to be closely in touch with his Regimental contemporaries.

His wife Pat, died in 2018 and his increasing ailments made his life more difficult. A spell in a care home didn't suit him and he was happy to be back home in Poundbury. We pass on our heartfelt sympathy to Amanda and Jeremy and their families.

R.W.W./J.A.V de C

Major ORC Larminie

Major Oliver Larminie, Ollie, left us early. But... as Abraham Lincoln said: '...it is not the number of years by which a man's life is measured but the life in those years...' and in that context, Ollie's was a long life, lived to the maximum. Ollie followed his father, John, into the QDG in 1971 but spent the following three years completing what started as an engineering degree, but became a law degree at Cambridge, where, as well as working hard, he maximised the financial benefits of a university cadetship enabling him to enjoy racing, play polo, become Master of the Trinity Foot Beagles and relish a wide and enduring social life.

He made many close friends, who remained so all his life. One of Ollie's enduring characteristics was his ability to make friends from all generations and keep them,



always remembering small details, staying utterly loyal and ever ready to give help and support. After finishing his degree at Cambridge, he returned to the Regiment as a young officer when the QDG were based in Hohne, Germany. During this period of the 'Cold War' he became a highly effective and professional Troop Leader. Even while fulfilling his professional duties with considerable skill, he still savoured the extra-curricular activities that the peculiar seasonal rhythms of life of those days in an armoured regiment brought, as we waited for the Russian Hordes to come storming over the border. He continued to play polo

and, as well as for the Regiment itself, he played for an Army team that toured Kenya. During the Regiment's tour in Hohne, Ollie did a stint as a staff officer at Brecon

in Wales. He enjoyed this immensely, not least because it enabled him to learn more about the country from which so many soldiers in the Regiment are recruited. Ollie took over as Adjutant when the Regiment was stationed in Omagh during the times of 'the troubles' in N. Ireland. This was a demanding role in a difficult situation, which he fulfilled with compassion and huge competence. His extensive knowledge of the Regiment, the soldiers, and families enabled him to deal with all the nuances and challenges of Regimental life. Nevertheless, he continued to enjoy his wide social life, even in those difficult and restrictive times. Ollie continued as Adjutant when QDG moved to Wimbish and then became Squadron Leader of the Guided Weapons Squadron. At the time this was a new concept for an armoured regiment. He tackled the role with intelligence and great proficiency, at the same time looking after the men in his squadron and their careers with empathy and understanding... once again putting his detailed knowledge of the Regiment to good account. In Wimbish he was also able to pursue all his external interests, particularly field sports, and especially foxhunting, fishing and racing. Being close to Leicestershire, he was able to hunt with the Cottesmore, the Quorn and the Belvoir during what may have been the last of the great hunting there. A verse from a poem that he sometimes quoted summed up his love of foxhunting: ... 'Youth make the most of your day while it lasts — no sunset can equal the dawn! I'd barter 10 years of a peaceable life, for a day when I rode with the Quorn...' Ollie won a famous bet after an exceptionally raucous dinner night in the Officers' mess when he brought his brave hunter mare into the mess and jumped a large sofa. He loved shooting and was able to shoot on the Army shoot at Thetford, where Regimental Officers, serving and retired made up the Saturday syndicate. In recent years he took part in the QDG shooting days in Somerset. Fishing became a lifelong interest, with salmon fishing trips from Wimbish up to Scotland, which sometimes involved all night driving to fish for only a weekend. Sailing was another passion and Ollie took full advantage of the opportunities the Army had to offer, sailing in numerous regattas and gaining a host of qualifications as well. In the 1990s he was a regular on a boat, crewed by serving and ex-QDGs, that took part in the Royal Ocean Racing Club's cross-channel races. He also loved skiing and took part in many trips to the Alps with QDG friends, known as the 'Lemmings Club'. A common thread runs through all these activities. He would try his hand at anything and took part with skill and enthusiasm. But, as he often remarked, the real joy was to be doing something fun with good friends... and this could serve as his epitaph. Whilst in Wimbish, Ollie made the decision to relinquish a place at Staff College, which would have underpinned a successful army career. Instead, he left the Army to apply his intelligence, hard work, and enthusiasm to a new and rewarding life in the city. A wise move in more ways than one, for it was in London that he met his much-loved wife, Victoria, and became the



Ollie was always good company, always able to see the funny side of life and to share a joke



He would try his hand at anything and took part with skill and enthusiasm



proud father of Thomas, Charles and Sophie. Ollie joined Morgan Grenfell, subsequently Deutsche Bank Asset Management, in 1985, moving to Newton Investment Management in 2006. He was responsible for managing the portfolios and relationships of a number of large charities and other organisations such as livery companies. He was particularly proud of his longstanding relationship with the Falkland Islands Government: his client meetings allowed him to indulge in two of his passions, fly fishing and relating stories about the inadequacies of the RAF's transport arrangements. If the turbulence of financial markets was not exciting enough, he retained his sense of adventure. Fishing, sailing, holidays with an extensive network of long-standing friends, and even some work trips, took him to many out-of-the-way places. Just a few of these took him fishing for tigerfish on the Zambezi in Zimbabwe and catching the same whilst breakfasting on the banks of the Rufiji in Tanzania, for salmon in the Kola peninsula in Russia, sea trout in the Falklands, trout on Mt. Kenya, bonefish in the Bahamas, and sailfish and tuna in the Indian Ocean, as well as riding in Rajasthan, touring Iran in a minibus, hiking up the Ruwenzori in Uganda, sailing along the Croatian coast and cruising down the Nile. Although he finished his soldiering career with the Regiment, he never left the Regimental family. On leaving, Ollie joined the Regimental reserve of Officers, which entailed a two-week attachment back at the Regiment each year as well as the occasional training weekend. He continued to work tirelessly and unselfishly for the welfare of the Regiment. He became a trustee of the QDG Regimental Trust in 2016, shortly afterwards taking over as Chairman. He worked diligently to completely overhaul and modernise the Regiment's trust arrangements and combining the Regimental Comrades' Association and Benevolence activities under one roof. In addition, he oversaw the transfer of all Regimental property to the Trust, thus safeguarding the long-term ownership of the valuable pictures and silver held in the messes. He also established a workable framework for charitable donations to be made to the Regiment. For his hard work he was awarded the Regimental Medal in 2019. We and the living Regiment have much to thank him for, for his extraordinary contribution, which has put the Trust in such good order to the benefit of our Officers and soldiers both past and present. During his time in the Regiment, and subsequently, Ollie was always good company, always able to see the funny side of life and to share a joke. Above all, he demonstrated all the best characteristics of a human being, a deeply loyal, dependable, and kind friend who would forever look out for you and your family. He will leave a large hole in the lives of many, not least his own family. His was, truly, a life well lived.

Lieutenant I W Frazer

Ian Frazer died on Friday 10th June 2022, aged 89. Since leaving the Regiment after National Service he devoted enormous amount of his time in looking after the welfare and well-being of the Association and its members; all this despite his onerous responsibilities as a Chartered Accountant in the City. His unceasing loyalty and commitment were of inestimable value to the Regimental Family, he being the key figure in nearly all financial and associated matters.

After Framlingham College and qualifying as a Chartered Accountant Ian attended Mons OCS before joining The Queen's Bays in Sabratha in 1956. He was a troop leader in A Squadron and then MTO. After National Service he joined The Army Emergency Reserve retiring in 1965. On the amalgamation he and Ben Hutchings (KDG) merged the KDG and Bays Charitable Funds and both, with Jeremy Stephens (Bays), drew up the Regimental Trust deeds. It was a masterly document bringing about a widespread charter in the way funds could be used. He was the Administrator of the Draffen Harman Trust (1968-83), Trustee of the Regimental Trust (1977-2014) and Trustee of the Regimental Museum (1973-2014). All told his wise advice and counsel were regularly called upon – perhaps on occasions cautious and rightly principled but this ensured monies were distributed within the rules and without compromising the trustees.



Ian became a partner at Frazer Whiting and Co in 1957 and then a senior partner 1973-86 and at Littlejohn Frazer 1986-2014. He was mainly responsible for audit, corporate advice, personal taxation and trusts. He retired in 2014 after 60 years with this firm.

Ian was a pillar of the Cavalry and Guards Club since joining in 1957 and he was elected in 1975 as a member of the committee serving nearly 30 years until his appointment as a trustee in 2003. He advised successive chairmen on financial matters and strategies, and he was the financial expert behind the club's major projects which included the purchase of

the Club's freehold, the organisation of the Capital and Debenture schemes and the formation of 127 Piccadilly plc (the Club's own company). For his outstanding service he was made an Honorary Member in 2007.

He was a Governor of both St Mary's Wantage and of Morpeth Schools, Tower Hamlets from 1967-2011. He was Treasurer of both the Chelsea Society (1988-2003) and of the Chelsea Festival (1993-2004.) Despite deteriorating health Ian showed tremendous resolve in continuing as a Regimental Trustee for a while and attending Cavalry Memorial weekends.

Ian married Priscilla Daniell in 1964 and we extend our heartfelt sympathy to her and their family.

RWW

Sadly, the following deaths were notified to the Regimental Secretary throughout 2022.

Name	Regiment	Served	Dec'd	Age
Maj I S Hodgson	Bay/QDG	1948 - 1983		89
J N Elliott	QDG Band		Nov 21	
T M Pearson	BAYS	1952 - 1954	Jan 22	88
B W Heal	QDG	1958 - 1992	Feb 22	84
Sir A Buchan-Hepburn	KDG	1953 - 1956	Feb 22	90
J Hopkins	QDG	1973 - 1993	Feb 22	65
N Ratcliffe	QDG	1972 - 1995	Feb 22	76
D J Moore	QDG	1961 - 1967	Feb 22	78
B W Telfer	QDG	1975 - 1990	Feb 22	64
S C Edworthy	QDG	1967 - 1980	Mar 22	72
G R Jordan	Bay/QDG	1957 - 1972	Mar 22	83
P B Blackwell	KDG/QDG	1948 - 1960	May 22	94
I W Frazer	BAYS	1956 - 1957	June 22	89
Lt Col A Gordon-Hall	KDG/QDG	1952 - 1983	June 22	90
I L Walters	BAYS/QDG	1956 - 1965	June 22	83
P Thompson	QDG	1975 - 1997	Aug 22	68
D Scouler	KDG/QDG	1946 - 1968	Oct 22	94
D Williams	BAYS	1951 - 1953	Oct 22	89
J H Nunn	QDG		Nov 22	80
M H Bristow	QDG	1969 - 1981	Dec 22	78

Valetes

Brigadier Jasper de Quincey-Adams OBE

Jasper joined the Regiment in August 1991 as a young fresh-faced non-graduate officer whose potential had been identified at Sandhurst where he was a JUO. Arriving at the Officers' Mess just as a PO visit commenced he caused some consternation and surprise two days later when he did not leave with the others! He joined a Regiment and Army that was flush from the success of Gulf War 1, but now lacking its Cold War purpose and broke, unable to fund training or any real activity so he spent most of his first six months playing polo. Then, once the outcome of Options for Change was known and the Regiment reluctantly forced to convert to the Challenger Main Battle Tank (MBT), he was the first officer to attend the MBT Troop Leaders' course. As one of the few remaining non-graduate officers, he had the time as a Troop Leader to learn from those experienced soldiers around him, not least SSgts Bennett and McHale, who were largely responsible for turning him into a professional officer who could actually map read at pace – after a number of false starts!

The Balkan Wars of the 1990s kept him busy during his formative years and he completed five tours to Bosnia and Kosovo. Initially, in 1995, this was as a UN Sector Liaison Officer to the Warring Factions (accompanied by the prettiest interpreter in the country) running humanitarian aid into Sarajevo over Mount Igman. Returning in 1996 with NATO as B Squadron's Second-in-Command with a hybrid Squadron of QDG and Royal Green Jackets, he managed the daily culture clash between the infantry and cavalry and was then a hugely effective Battlegroup Operations Officer in Kosovo in 1999/2000. His final Balkan tour was in Bosnia with the Division in Banja-Luka.

Like so many Germany-based soldiers, Jasper was sent back to Staff College with the express task of finding a wife, which he did most successfully in the form of Jill, who subsequently acted as his rock for the remainder of his career, fully embraced military life and was a passionate supporter of the Regimental family – on the condition that a veritable menagerie of animals would accompany them from quarter to quarter.

As B Squadron Leader, Jasper deployed to Iraq twice with the Regiment, which included Op BRACKEN the UK contribution in support of the USMC assault on Fallujah. This involved integrating into the Black Watch Battlegroup and moving to Camp DOGWOOD in the so-called Triangle of Death. It was a very demanding and dangerous operation for which he was most deservedly awarded the QCVS. It was here that his mantra of 'Orders, Rehearsals and ROC Drills' was born, commanding a formation reconnaissance squadron doing exactly what it was designed for – operating in depth across the desert – and recognized as the best and fittest in the Division! A third Iraq tour almost immediately followed working for PJHQ in Basra, which was a rather pedestrian experience following the excitement of serving on operations with the Regiment.

On promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, Jasper deployed for a 9-month tour in Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 10/11 as the mentor to the Helmand Chief of Police. This tour was quite punchy, involving frequent contacts and fights alongside the Afghan Police and with an eclectic mentoring group largely consisting of Gurkhas and the US National Guard.

On assuming command of the Regiment in Dempsey Barracks Sennelager in April 2010, the Battlegroup deployed to BATUS Canada for three back-to-back exercises as the Opposition Force (OPFOR) and quietly took the remainder of the Brigade apart having developed 'swarm tactics', the success of which



relied on the exceptional prowess and initiative of the individual crew commanders who inevitably rose to the challenge. A passionate believer in the Welsh Cavalry concept, not the least as the key to avoiding amalgamation, he was outspoken in the media about the standard of the Welsh education system, much to the chagrin of Army! The Regiment deployed as the ISTAR Battlegroup to Helmand for Op HERRICK 15, for which he was appointed OBE in recognition of the momentum the Battlegroup generated in challenging the insurgents in their so-called safe havens. Three of his squadron leaders (Coombes, Bond, Stenhouse) subsequently became Commanding Officers, a statistic he was hugely proud of, and the Late Entry officers were widely recognised as the best in the Brigade – by some way.

Following Regimental Command and an enforced stint in the MoD, which convinced him of the disconnect with the ambitions of the Army and the resources available, he elected to focus on building a career within NATO. Initially he deployed to head up Task Force Ukraine immediately following the invasion of Crimea in 2014 and then followed by a tour in Brussels as Special Advisor to the Chairman of the Military Committee. After a brief return to UK for HCSC, he returned to Belgium as the head of strategic operations at SHAPE (Director CCOMC) for which he was awarded the NATO Meritorious Service Medal.

Finally, forced to return to the UK and by now firmly on a stellar trajectory, Jasper was posted to Army HQ for the first time in his career, as ACOS Operations, a role that quickly became dominated by the Army's response to COVID 19. He assumed command of 7 Infantry Brigade (The Desert Rats) in 2018 and during his tenure he worked the Brigade up for its commitment as the Joint Expeditionary Force Light Brigade. This he accomplished in his energetic way and forged the Brigade into a highly capable and effective formation. Following command, he retired from the Army and is now pursuing other opportunities. We thank him for his contribution to the Regiment and wish him, Jill and Arabella all the best for the future.



A passionate believer in the Welsh Cavalry concept



Brigadier Matthew Botsford OBE

Matthew "Botty" Botsford started his career as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1990 in Wolfenbüttel and ended it as a Brigadier at Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) at Abbey Wood in 2022. In itself this rise to One-Star would be impressive, but a two-year career break and a stroke make it truly remarkable.

Botty had an excellent foundation, spending more than three years as a Troop Leader and, unusually for Cold War cavalry officers, earned himself two campaign medals within his first 18 months. The first was for commanding a platoon from 6 UDR in Omagh, where he was lauded for the most significant find for a while, a GPMP and 200 rounds - discovered by one of his soldiers who happened to select that particular bush (and cache) to pee on. The second was for the Gulf where he spent most of the 1st Gulf War, sat in a Scorpion perched at a 45-degree angle on the back of a low-loader as part of the Battle Casualty Replacement organisation. Whilst in his crew's shelter one night, Botty felt something slimy in the bottom of his sleeping bag, leaping out he beat it to death with his SMG, and then discovered that it had been his jar of Nivea. Every night from then until the vehicles were loaded for home, there was a different item left at the bottom of Botty's bag (grenades, magazines etc) to ward off those killer snakes.

Next was Northern Ireland with 'Y' Squadron in 1991 When SHQ were forced to dig in with the rest of the Squadron. Botty selected a trench position just off a road junction with tremendous views and perfect for triggering a very quick VCP if required. After some hours of manual shovel work, the troop discovered the old road beneath and then preceded to pick its way through layers of rock and hardcore. Eventually, the last in the Squadron to complete the task, the Troop went around the cordon to view other positions, several of which had been dug by a helpful digger owner in just a few minutes.

A long deployment to Norway in 1992 with C Squadron (then the recce unit for NATO's Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land)) followed, which included one test of survival and resourcefulness when he missed the Squadron coach pick up (by falling asleep in the warmth of Trondheim bus station) and decided to walk the 150 km back to camp - fortunately some Norwegians came to his rescue before he became hypothermic. Then, converted to Challenger, he continued as Troop Leader of 1st Troop C Squadron in Sennelager and BATUS. During one range period at Hohne, he was on an overnight excursion to Hamburg and returned to his car at 5am to find it surrounded by an entire fish market and, after being harangued by irate German fishwives, only secured its release by handing over his remaining Deutsche Marks.

After a stint with the British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT) in Mozambique, Botty accomplished his finest achievement by marrying Maria in 1994, who has been the most loyal support throughout his career and produced a 'fire-team' of 4 boys who in due course would excel in setting up illegal vehicle check points on their married patch - woe betide those drivers they stopped who didn't know the password!

Following a tour with the Regiment as the G5 Officer in Bosnia, Botty left the

Army in 1996 to pursue his fortune outside. It was greatly to the benefit of the Regiment that he returned 2 years later, and he re-launched himself into all aspects of Regimental life (having already tried his hand at most things, including polo, bobsleigh, sailing and sky-diving). Playing catch-up after breaking your service for 2 years is a significant challenge but after a stint as an SO3 at the ARMCCEN D&M School, he had a lucky break and was able to take command of A Squadron, which was midway through a tour in Kosovo, where his leadership as an Acting Major shone through and contributed to his selection to a crunchy stint as SO3 O&D at 20 Arm'd Bde, which included a return to Kosovo (2000-01) and a well-deserved award of a QCVS. It was becoming clear that Botty was catching up fast.

He then had the fortune to command A Squadron (by now back in the recce role) all over again and lead it on operations in the 2nd Gulf War. Botty insisted on attending the 7 Brigade Orders Group without a cover on his helmet. At one point he was given a desert helmet cover by one of the brigade staff and on returning to the Sqn it was passed on to the troops. The following Orders Group Botty was asked quietly where his helmet cover was, his response was something along the lines of I will wear one when all my soldiers have them. It may not have sat well with the Bde staff but A Sqn did get an issue of desert kit soon after that. Few members of the Squadron will forget his motivational speech on the eve of the invasion that would rival Tim Collins but was not recorded for posterity. Nor will they forget the well-conceived, meticulously rehearsed and impressively controlled

(with Botty leading from the front) squadron dismounted attack across a canal against a key defensive position, which turned out to be long-since abandoned by the enemy. It was also noted at this time that he had an amazing ability to survive for days on end on a diet of cigarettes and Pringles.

After Staff College, Botty filled a key Commitments appointment in HQ Land for which he was awarded an MBE and then returned in 2007 as 2IC QDG which included acting as an exceptionally capable Battlegroup Chief of Staff in Garmsir, Helmand Province, Afghanistan 2008/09. Staff roles in Wilton and Warminster followed before he assumed command of the Royal Mercian Lancastrian Yeomanry (RMLY) 2012-14, which was a challenging time as Army Reserve restructuring required him to dismantle his command and raise a new Scottish and Northern Irish Yeomanry. Despite this turmoil, and suffering a stroke, his selfless leadership was rewarded by elevation to OBE.

With the exception of a tour commanding the British Military Advisory and Training Team in Nigeria, the latter part of Botty's career focussed on requirements and acquisition and he had three roles in DE&S which saw him rise to the Chief of Staff Land Domain as a Brigadier 2020-22. To see someone so humble, self-deprecating, and scruffy make it to senior rank is most refreshing.

Having developed expertise in procurement and some excellent contacts, Botty soon attracted offers of employment and he and Maria moved to Qatar to pursue new opportunities. We thank them both for such loyal service to QDG (and legendary hospitality) and wish them luck in their new adventure.



he had an amazing ability to survive for days on end on a diet of cigarettes and Pringles



WO2 Gavin Griffiths

Gavin Griffiths enlisted into the British Army in January 2000, at the very young age of 16. Initially, attending Phase One training in AFC Harrogate and then completing specific to arm training at Bovington. After many nights attempting to cut up the dance-floor in Rendezvous, Weymouth, and utilising his Recce skills to get into nightclubs underage, Tpr Griffiths found himself at Regimental Duty, where he joined B Sqn in Catterick.

Coming from North Wales, with a love for rugby, Gav fitted into the Regiment straight away and was a regular starter at the number 12 position. Whilst he was a keen rugby player and represented the Regiment and Corps on numerous occasions, it was not long until he was put to task on exercise and would then deploy on Op-TELIC 1. Now moving to 1st Troop, C Sqn, Gav was employed as the SSM's Driver, a job that saw him maintaining his vehicle and driving it in some arduous and unforgiving conditions.

In 2004 Gav would begin training to deploy to Northern Ireland and after a full training cycle, he was then turned around to deploy to Iraq, again, on TELIC 5. This time, he would be employed as 3rd Tp Leaders Gunner, a position of seniority and one that saw him very deservedly promote from. This promotion could be for a variety of reasons, but with Gav being caught writing his Tp Ldrs name on a round, by Rob Lockyer, it's clear to see there may have been some persuasion involved. With the successful completion of Op-TELIC 5, Gav completed his D&M Instructors course and deployed on a further tour to Iraq. On this tour he was employed within the Task Force Commanders Rover Group.

After three Operational tours, in February 2008 Gav was posted to ATR Bassingbourn as a Section Commander in Korea Troop. On returning from posting, he was employed in the Training Wing. A job where he was able to utilise his vast instructional ability to coach and mentor the younger members



of the Regiment. After a short period, Gav was then posted again. This time to 20 Cadet Training Team in Taunton, a job that would provide a good bit of respite before returning to RD.

After a successful couple of years, Gav returned and deployed to both Kenya as the PRT SQMS and then Sierra Leone as part of a STTT. Following this, he deployed to Nigeria on OP TURUS as the FP Commander. On return he was HQ SQMS which saw him soon promote to WO2, taking up the role of HQ Sqn SSM. No easy task when taking over "The Peoples WO".

Throughout his career, Gav has represented the Regiment and Corps in Rugby, attended the Army Snowboarding Championships and deployed on several diving expeditions. He will always be remembered for his unwavering honesty and the ability to always have an objective opinion which was always intended to find the best possible outcome. To everyone he worked with, he always saw the positive and took a personal interest in developing all those around him. A true mate in every shape and form and a regimental character that will be deeply missed. For the future, Gav will now look to civilian employment where I have no doubt he will continue to flourish and add value. Married to his wife Rachael and with two sons: Gethin and Osian, we wish Gav and his family all the very best for the future.

All the very best Gav and thank you for all the laughs along the way.

DC

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