



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



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

סמל מדינה





1ST THE QUEEN'S DRAGOON GUARDS

Colonel-in-Chief: HRH THE PRINCESS OF WALES
Colonel of the Regiment: BRIGADIER A S RICHMOND OBE
Commanding Officer: LIEUTENANT COLONEL C S KIERSTEAD

Affiliated Regiments

HMS CARDIFF

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

THE 11TH CAVALRY (FRONTIER FORCE) PAKISTAN ARMY

1ST/15TH ROYAL NEW SOUTH WALES LANCERS

PANZERGRENADIERBATAILLON 35 (AUSTRIAN ARMY)

1ST RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT (SRI LANKAN ARMoured CORPS)

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

SAVOIA CAVALLERIA

Paired Army Reserve Regiment

THE ROYAL YEOMANRY

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



Editor: Captain RW Fulloway

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Colonel of the Regiment's Foreword

As I reflect on 2023, it has been a significant year for 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. Highlights for me have been the Coronation of our then Colonel-in-Chief, with the Regiment well represented with a marching contingent and Standard Party that did us all proud, and subsequently welcoming Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales on her first visit. We look forward to a long and close relationship with Her Royal Highness and it is clear to me that she will add great value to our Regimental community.

For those serving at Regimental Duty I would think the year flashed by in a blur as they delivered so many outputs for Defence in California, Canada, Texas, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Kuwait and Poland. Most of these commitments have been at troop or squadron level and the Regiment will not be all together in one place for another 18 months.

So, 'join the Army and see the world' still seems to be a valid strapline and being an officer or soldier in QDG means it remains true that 'it is not just a job but an adventure' and it is pleasing to read how the Regiment has managed to preserve sport and adventurous training opportunities. So, the offer remains good, helped by a 9.7% pay increase for our most junior soldiers, plus subsidised food and accommodation – including a guaranteed home for families at a time when many in society struggle to secure a property – and what remains a best-in-class pension scheme. However, I am concerned about the effect of such a pace of life on families and how this will impact on what hitherto have been our impressive retention rates. The contribution made to fighting power by Service families and their sacrifices are often underappreciated and we need to remain mindful of the truism 'recruit the soldier, retain the family'. This is why securing the best long-term basing and accommodation solution for The Welsh Cavalry is such a key priority.

Recruiting is an increasingly dark cloud on the horizon. Whilst QDG is currently fully manned, the projection is dire due to a precipitous fall in inflow –



So, 'join the Army and see the world' still seems to be a valid strapline and being an officer or soldier in QDG means it remains true that 'it is not just a job but an adventure'



the consequence of force reductions, recent computer system failures, buoyant employment, and a rise in outflow. The wider QDG community can help fight the recruiting battle by encouraging youngsters into our ranks.

If anyone doubts the effect that our wider regimental community can have on our serving personnel, the RCA's Christmas Hamper appeal is a great example of how you all can impact retention and morale. Our soldiers and those from the attached arms deployed in Poland, and their families they left behind over Christmas, all felt remembered

and appreciated through the heartwarming generosity of all of those that contributed to the appeal. Furthermore, the Corps and Regiments of all of those that were deployed with QDG were humbled by the example of how a truly family regiment treats its people.

I am pleased to report some very positive developments across our regimental community this year. The move to a fully inclusive model for the Regimental Comrades' Association, whereby everyone who is serving or has served in QDG is automatically a member for free, will significantly enhance our connectedness – but this does require people to enrol, which merely involves providing Home HQ their contact details.

We have also launched VHub's 'QDG Connect' a smart phone app which enables you to connect with other members of the QDG community, acts as a communications hub for all Regimental news and events, and has useful links and tips.

Users can establish their own groups, re-establish comms with old mates and use it to facilitate reunions. I see it as a means of unlocking the networking potential of our community. Please download it from the App Store ('VHub for Armed Forces'), select QDG, create your own profile, use it and help us refine it.

A consequence of our better connectedness has been the plethora of bottom-up initiated reunions and 2023 saw Gulf War 2 20-year Squadron reunions, whilst Kosovo 25-year and Gulf War 1 35-year reunions are planned for 2024. Such events are an important way that a family regiment can continue to foster comradeship from cradle to grave.

Enjoy this year's journal and read about all the exploits and achievements of our people who help keep QDG First and Foremost!

Colonel Commandant Royal Armoured Corps

The world seems to find ever more ways to challenge us. The continued conflict in Ukraine and the threat posed to Eastern Europe by Russia and her allies remains at the forefront of UK Defence Policy and must sharpen the minds and hone the muscles of us all in the Royal Armoured Corps. The expansion of conflict in Gaza and the Red Sea also play a role in our deeper understanding of contemporary conflict and the challenges facing our nation. Our Army is rightly changing and reshaping to face the threats that confront us.

AJAX, after a long and frankly painful journey, is proving itself to be a hugely capable platform and is at the cutting edge of armoured vehicles. The next couple of years will see its delivery across three RAC regiments as well as early operational deployment. Challenger 3 is also firmly on the cards offering a step-change in our Armoured capability. With new equipment and capabilities coming online in the next few years the RAC remains an exciting proposition.

After the sadness and reflection of Queen Elizabeth II's funeral it was a great pleasure to see the RAC represented at King Charles' Coronation. In all, some 900 Household Cavalry and Royal Armoured Corps soldiers were on parade with their respective Guidons and Standards. While the weather was less than ideal, the preparation, precision, and flair on display reflected brilliantly on our Corps and its people.



We need to maintain our in-flow of talented, fit, steely and determined men and women who can follow in our footsteps and take the RAC into the future

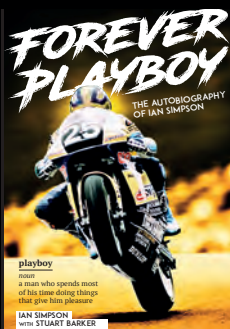
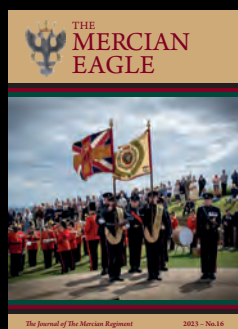


Looking forward into 2024 and 2025 the RAC is not without its challenges. Across Defence all services are facing a competitive employment market and getting people to commit to a life of service in the Armed Forces is difficult. The RAC is no different. Please could I ask that all of you, as our best representatives, act as Recruiting Sergeants for the Corps. We need to maintain our in-flow of talented, fit, steely and determined men and women who can follow in our footsteps and take the RAC into the future. The sell of the RAC is as strong as it has ever been offering a place at the very front of the battlefield, operating cutting-edge platforms and weapons, travel to foreign climes, sport, adventurous training, and all this is set against the varied and proud histories and traditions of all of our Regiments.

I would like to pay tribute and thanks to Brigadier Alex Potts who retired from the Army last year as Head of Arms & Services and Deputy Colonel Commandant for the RAC. He served us all tirelessly and did so with sage advice and wry wit. He has moved to bring his considerable talents to bear as Private Secretary to Their Royals Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh. Brigadier Adam Foden has been appointed Deputy Colonel Commandant.

Thank you to all of you for your continued hard graft and commitment set against the unrelenting demands of the Field Army for training and operations. Good luck for the year ahead.

This is what we do...



and who we are...



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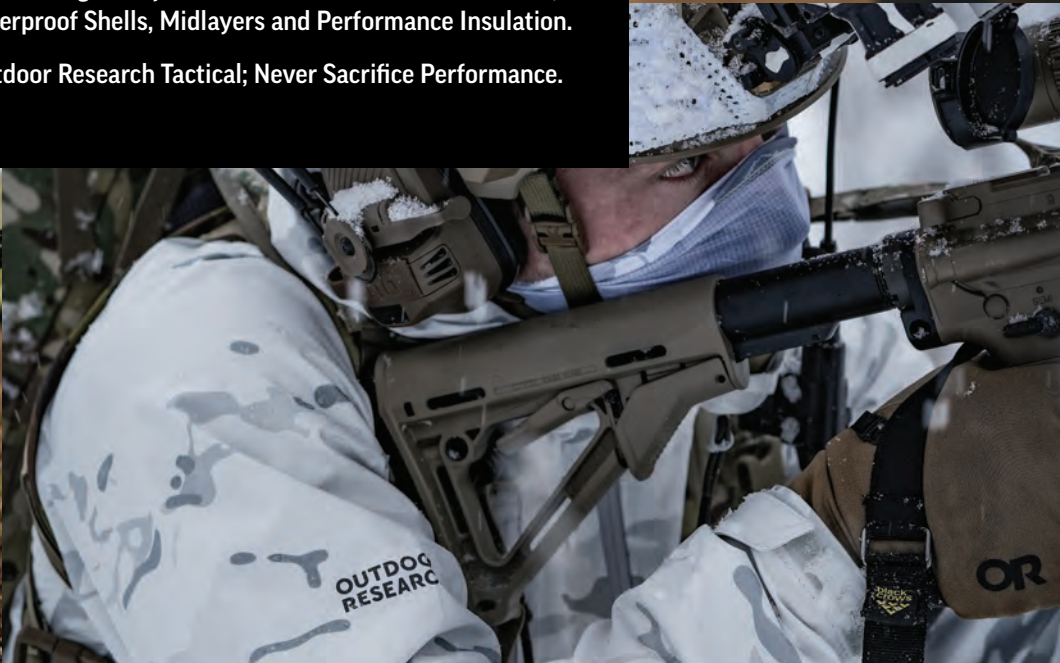
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Commanding Officer's Foreword

As the regimental year draws to a close, I confess that I've needed several reminders from the Editor to pen this short forward to his excellent annual journal. I'd been doing some research. And having trawled the annals of our regiment's 64 years, I was surprised to find that Commanding Officers were not invited to comment on the folio until the very late 1960s (by my reckoning John Lidsey was the first); and that even then, their billets doux ran to little more than a trio of terse paragraphs. My own two page spread in last year's edition seems bloated in comparison; or do I really have more to say than my illustrious predecessors? I should think not. Encouragingly, having read the forewords of all 24 former COs whose valiant editors cajoled pen to paper, I find that we share much common ground. It seems we QDG have always been busy; we have always been the only true purveyors of reconnaissance in the Army; that our formation headquarters never quite understand what to do with us; and that we're keen on sport and AT. It goes to follow then that to ensure both brevity and an appeal to those most eminent of the journal's readership, I'll stick to those furlongs of familiar ground so well-trodden over the years: 'busy ness,' reconnaissance, and sport.

2023 has been an extraordinarily busy year, packed with action from the very start. The efforts of those at RD, F Sqn and the RCA have yet again proven that the Regiment in all its guises is alive and kicking. I would highlight the exploits of Col Guy 'Beefy' Deacon navigating his way along the length of Africa as perhaps the most impressive of them all. QDG teams have been to Kuwait to aid the Kuwaiti Army in developing a reconnaissance regiment of their own; to Canada to train the 5th Canadian brigade headquarters before their deployment to Latvia with NATO; to Texas to fight as part of the 3rd UK Division in a computer based exercise; to California to battle across the Mojave desert with an American brigade combat team; to Kenya, the Gambia and Sierra Leone to continue our efforts in training and developing their excellent armed forces; to Denmark to compete in a long range patrols course in truly Baltic conditions; and to Grosseto in Tuscany to rekindle our long held relationship with the Italian Army's famous Savoie Cavalleria.

Additional to all this were the efforts of A Sqn, who as I write are in the third month of a six month tour in Eastern Poland on Operation CABRIT, based in Bemowo Piskie under the command of an American battlegroup and Polish



the Regiment remains in rude health, is deeply involved in the pick of the Army's missions and tasks, and continues to attract and retain incredible people.



Brigade. The nights have truly drawn-in for them, as they brave the cold and snow in support of NATO efforts to deter further Russian aggression. Their daily patrols take them to within sight of the famed Kaliningrad Oblast in the North, and the Belarusian border in the East. A key part in a multinational coalition, their mission is to maintain the integrity of the Suwalki Gap, a task not unfamiliar to many of our comrades who served during the Cold War. Rest assured they are in good spirits and looking forward to handing over to B Sqn in April 24, who will in turn hand over to C Sqn in October 24 to complete our regimental CABRIT 'hat trick'.

In all this, we continue to serve as one of the 3rd Division's three Deep

Recce Strike Battlegroups, alongside the Household Cavalry Regiment and The Royal Lancers. Our considerably lighter footprint (both HCR and RL are mounted in AJAX) and operational mobility has enabled us much variety in training, as well as the lion's share of operations for our Deep Recce Strike (DRS) Brigade Combat Team. BGHQ has spent much of the year proving, with other elements of the DRS, the validity of the Army's recce-strike concept; and our roulement of three squadrons through Poland has the enabled us to hone our warfighting skills and integrate with new attachments and kit. The essence of what we are building in the DRS is, in some ways, old wine in new bottles. Much of structure and doctrine looks very similar to an FR regiment circa 1990. But there are significant advances in our lethality, in our reach, and our ability to operate disaggregated from higher HQs. Much of this innovation is enabled by the bow-wave of tech being sent in our direction by the Army HQ, borne to a large degree by the impetus created by the war in Ukraine to resource the Army to 'fight tonight' within the very near term. All this, as you will read, is key to keeping us busy indeed.

Needless to say that we have managed, in the margins, to maintain our traditions of sport and adventurous training. We have skied in Verbier, Les Contamines, and Serre Chevalier, scuba dived in Turkey, sailed in Norway and canoed in

Montenegro. I would like to say that our regimental winter sports jumpers remain the pick of the bunch in St Moritz, but I'm not convinced we've had much success at the Cresta in the last few years.

Amongst these adventures and endeavours, the most moving, memorable and significant were His Majesty's Coronation in early May, and the inaugural visit to regimental duty by our new Colonel-in-Chief, the Princess of Wales, in November. I hope in the melee of regalia you had the chance to catch our white cross belts and shining Hapsburg eagles, as we led the Army Division in the military procession from Westminster to Buckingham Palace. Needless to say, while only a short visit, our new Colonel-in-Chief was hugely impressed by our soldiers and their families in Swanton Morley, and that HRH looks forward to meeting many more of you in the coming years.

In closing, I would hope that my message to you is a cogent one: the Regiment remains in rude health, is deeply involved in the pick of the Army's missions and tasks, and continues to attract and retain incredible people. Some of you will, I hope, draw succour from the fact that so little seems to have changed in our nature since our formation, nearly 65 years ago on a frosty parade ground in Perham Down. Moreover, that there remains much in the QDG of the behaviours and traditions of our forebears from much further back; the Gothic Line, Tobruk, the Somme, Waterloo and Oudenarde. The common thread of course is our people, those happy few who have chosen across the ages and in far-off places to hone their comradeship in the crucible of our sometimes dull, dirty and dangerous toil. We should, I think, be more conscious of our history and of those whose feats have shown recognisable heroism, grit, tact and diplomacy. Above all, I find the resilience of our forebears inspiring, and an aspect of our character as a regiment that I see reflected robustly in our current rank and file (despite the cries of social media gloomsters to the contrary). In my time in command I could have asked for little more from our people, they have surpassed expectations and continue to draw my praise for their selfless dedication, professional focus, and cheerfulness in adversity. I find it fitting then to end by echoing the words of Gen Sir Ricard McCreery, who commanded the KDG for the duration of the Italian campaign as part of the 8th Army: 'I always knew that whatever was asked of them, they would do their best, cheerfully and well.'

Pro Rege et Patria.

Captain and Editor

Please accept my most sincere apologies that the publication of this journal has been so markedly delayed. I will not rehash the perennial, and frankly tired, excuse that it is because "this has been another incredibly busy year." Although readers will appreciate, as they flip through the pages of this year's journal that it has indeed been incredibly busy.

Members of the regiment have been deployed on exercises and operations in Poland, Germany, Norway, Israel, Kenya, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the USA, Kuwait, Denmark, and Italy. Their accounts of those adventures are lovingly compiled on the pages within. As ever we have sought to gather contributions from across all ranks and to capture the full spectrum of regimental activity. My hope is that despite the unre-

lenting tempo of operations that all dragoons; past, present, and future will identify with the very special character of our regiment that does beam off these pages.

Before releasing you to begin your individual quests to find a photograph of yourself I would like to extend some quick thanks

to some key contributors. The first to Jayne at Crest Publications for her unfaltering patience with my numerous corrections and last-minute alterations. The second, and most important, is to everyone that has contributed time, effort, and articles, you truly have played a role in the preservation of our

history.

I hope you enjoy this year's edition and should I be the lucky editor for a second year running, I promise to hit the deadlines!

RFW

“
The tempo is
also highly
likely to
continue rising

”





Honours and Awards 2023

Joint Commanders' Commendation Capt Brockless
Joint Commanders' Commendation WO1 (RSM) Ruddy

Regimental Awards:

Queen Elizabeth Trophy – Sgt Humphreys
Leathersellers' Trophy – Cpl Jones 128
The Mann Trophy – LCpl Lilly

Long Service and Good Conduct

WO2 Davies
SSgt Parsons

Sgt Stafford
Cpl Tukana

Cpl Rees
Cpl Akerman

Diary of Events 2023

January

28th-onwards Ex WARFIGHTER RLS
29th-onwards Ex UNIFIED RESOLVE 23

February

1st-onwards Ex DESERT WARRIOR
14th-24th Ex BADGERS STRESS

March

6th-10th SERE-C Hunter Force
29th-onwards Ex WARFIGHTER 23

April

17th-28th Ex CABRIT EAGLE
26th-onwards Op GOLDEN ORB

May

6th Coronation of HM King Charles III
14th Cavalry Memorial Sunday
16th-18th Ex MARCHANT EAGLE

June

3rd-onwards Kenya STTT
7th-18th A Sqn DCC LFX
12th-16th SERE-C
16th Waterloo 207
29th-onwards Ex KANOT EAGLE

July

3rd-9th Ex ROCKY EAGLE
3rd-16th A Sqn MCC LFX
10th-14th Ex LOST EAGLE
10th-20th Ex BAVARIAN EAGLE

August

14th-20th Ex FJORD EAGLE
16th Luck Cup
28th-onwards Ex SABER JUNCTION

September

4th-11th DRS Patrol Competition
4th-15th Ex EMERALD EAGLE
11th-onwards Ex SCORPION CYCLONE

October

15th-onwards Op CABRIT(P) 14
16th-onwards Ex DIAMONDBACK
21st-22nd Regimental Reunion

November

8th First visit of HRH the Princess of Wales as Colonel-in-Chief
12th Remembrance Sunday
13th-17th Visit of the Savoia Regiment

December

4th St Eligius Day
13th Regimental Christmas Day

Our Colonel-in-Chief

The Regiment's close connection to the Royal Family has been principally maintained through the patronage of Colonels-in-Chief. We were blessed to have had a very long association with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother who had been appointed Colonel-in-Chief of The Queen's Bays in 1937 and remained in that role when amalgamation with 1st King's Dragoon Guards formed the current regiment in 1959 until her death in 2002. During her tenure, she witnessed her regiment's sadness at losing its Bay horses on mechanisation, mastery of armoured warfare and the trials and eventual triumph of wartime service. She was a comforting constant during amalgamation and a gracious and uplifting presence at so many major QDG events.

The loss of such a beloved patron was softened by the good fortune of having His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales appointed Colonel-in-Chief in 2003. For twenty years, including his first as King Charles III, he took a very close and personal interest in the exploits of the Regiment and the welfare of its serving personnel, veterans and families. Despite his busy schedule, he always found the time to be present at major Regimental events and boosted morale by meeting so many members of the Regimental family.

With our Colonel-in-Chief's succession to the throne, the Colonel of the Regiment was informed by the Equerry to the King that there was to be an announcement on 11th August 2023 on a reallocation of Royal-Regimental relationships as His Majesty had decided to handover the Colonelcy-in-Chief to the next generation. It was clear that His Majesty was very sad to have to say goodbye to his Regiment after so long and it was sad for us too as he had always taken such a close and personal interest in its people, wellbeing and achievements.

As our close relationship with His Majesty would endure as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, we were delighted to learn that Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales would succeed him as Colonel-in-Chief of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. This news was broadcast across the Regimental family in the following message from the Colonel of the Regiment:

"There will be an announcement tomorrow (Friday 11th August) of significant changes in Royal affiliations across Army Regiments as a result of the deaths of the late Queen, Prince Philip and His Majesty The King's accession to the



Yes ma'am all the paperwork is in order

throne. I have been informed by Buckingham Palace that the King has, with sadness, decided to hand the Colonelcy-in-Chief of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards to the next generation. Having taken over as our Colonel-in-Chief from his beloved Grandmother, and after 20 years in the role, His Majesty has been a huge support to the Regiment and has taken a very close personal interest in its wellbeing and achievements. Our close relationship with His Majesty will continue as we loyally serve him as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

I am delighted to inform you that Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales will be appointed as our new Colonel-in-Chief. I understand that Her Royal Highness is very excited at the prospect and that we will be her only Regular Cavalry Regiment. This close connection to the Princess of Wales has a certain historical symmetry. Our Regimental title reflects The Bays being named The Queen's Own Royal Regiment of Horse in 1727 in honour of George II's Queen Consort, Caroline of Ansbach. Prior to that, Caroline had been the Princess of Wales and between 1714 and 1727 the Regimental title was The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment of Horse. So, once again, we will have a close, long-lasting, relationship with a Princess of Wales and future Queen."

Pro Rege et Patria.

We were delighted to be able to welcome Her Royal Highness into the Regimental family on her first visit to her Regiment at Swanton Morley on 8th November 2023. Spending several hours with us, Her Royal Highness was briefed on the Regiment by the Colonel and Commanding Officer, viewed some key paintings and artefacts in the Officers' Mess, met members of

the Regiment and their families before changing into a combat jacket to drive a Jackal down to a tactical stand where the role of Light Cavalry was brought to life. Our Colonel-in-Chief proved to be a very capable drone operator as evidenced by press photographs that graced the front page of almost every newspaper the following day!

During the visit, the Colonel of the Regiment presented Her Royal Highness with the brooch that was originally given by the Regiment to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother in 1959 and we were all thrilled to see her wearing it at the Festival of Remembrance a few days later. Her final act before departure was to promote our mascot to full Corporal.

There was a great buzz around camp the day of her visit and it was wonderful to see how interested she was in learning about her new regiment and how engaged she was in all the briefings and conversations. It was not long after her visit that news of Her Royal Highness's illness became public and all the Regimental family wish her a full and speedy recovery and look forward to many happy interactions with her in the future.



Moments later Capt Wills was climbing a tree to retrieve his drone



Drill practice



Some find the slope arms easier than others



The Standard Party



Rehearsals night and day



Capturing a moment in history



Eeeeeyes Right!

Op Golden Orb

On the 26th of April 2023, the RAC descended upon the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to start their rehearsals. Apart from the standard parties which were accommodated in slightly less salubrious accommodation, the marching contingent was in Victory Building. For many these first few days took them straight back to the drill lessons of Phase 1, with screaming CSgts and uncoordinated limbs. After the initial bluster of lost rank slides, missed braces and smashed boots the training began in earnest. What followed were blistered feet and erratic weather as we marched up and down the square in scorching sun and shivering showers. By the left, QUICK MARCH!

The QDG, leading the RAC contingent as the Senior Cavalry Regiment of the Line, had nowhere to hide. leading the

RAC contingent. We quickly nailed the basic drill movements and moved on to the more complicated ones. A new drill movement was devised to counter the garden gate of Buckingham Palace being too small for 12 soldiers in open order. This baffled everyone involved, with senior officers having to learn to count again and the soldiers not standing on the spurs of the officers ahead. All RAC units persevered, to different standards! The QDG aced it and demonstrated to all the 12 to 6s movement.

The RAC officers' sword drill lesson was an occasion to remember. With different traditions, hooked or loose scabbards and a few trapped fingers we finally were in sync. Just in time to put all our hard work to the test at the first day time rehearsal at RAF Odiham. On the open expanse of airfield on a brisk and

misty day, all three Armed Forces came together for the first integrated rehearsal. All witnessed by the Guardsmen lining the runway with flags (emulating The Mall) as different units changed step and, as the RAC caught up with the RAF, they proceeded to conduct drill movement at half the pace as everyone else. All of this with the Marshalls (Senior Guards Officers) running around trying to corral us.

Following some remedial drill back at RMAS, the QDG and the remainder of the RAC contingent prepared uniform, boots and weapons (Swords and Rifles) for the London Night-time rehearsal. This was not just to finalise the drill, but the logistical movement of getting all component parts into central London by train in full uniform. It was an incredibly long night for all involved, departing Farn-



The Golden Orb marching party



Standard Party



The CoR with the QDG representation in the sovereigns body guard



Incorrectly dressed, and wearing a bear skin



Final rehearsals

borough station at 1730 and returning 0700. Marching with full band across Westminster Bridge, Parliament Square and the Mall in the middle of the night was a surreal experience. Following the navigating of chalk lines, locked palace gates, and full bladders, the rehearsal was over. The evening was topped off by Sgt Humphries receiving his Mention in Dispatches in the underground car park of Wellington Barracks from Brigadier Alan Richmond, Col QDG. On the return journey to RMAS the train was filled with some very smartly dressed zombies.

Following some final tweaking on drill movements and dress, the troops had some time to relax before the main event. Coronation Day started bright and early. With excitement, the troops lined up on Farnborough station to catch the train up to Waterloo. We were serenaded by

the band over the tannoy detailing the distance left, and the apprehension grew. Upon arrival, the streets were lined ten deep, and we marched to the beat of the drum from Waterloo to Wellington Barracks, and then on to our chalk mark on Whitehall. The loudspeakers dotted around the ground provided a live stream from Westminster Abbey, and the atmosphere continued to build. Marching to the beat of the drum under Admiralty Arch to the first sung lines of Zadok the Priest will never be forgotten!

The King is Crowned. God Save the King, Long Live the King, God Save the King.

The parade began, remarkably in sync! We were off, through Trafalgar Square and down the Mall lined with commonwealth



The parade began, remarkably in sync!



flags and a blur of bearskins. The worlds media had strategically placed themselves on the exact point that each contingent moved from 12 to 6s, capturing every miscount and wrong step! As we squeezed into Buckingham Palace past the Standard Bearers glistening in their helmets and plumes, we stood fast on our position and came to rest facing the balcony, with aching feet and tired arms!

Three cheers for His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen! Hoorah, Hoorah, Hoorah.

Waterloo Station was beckoning, and we marched back fighting fatigue and bloody feet. We were done! Nipped!

ZS

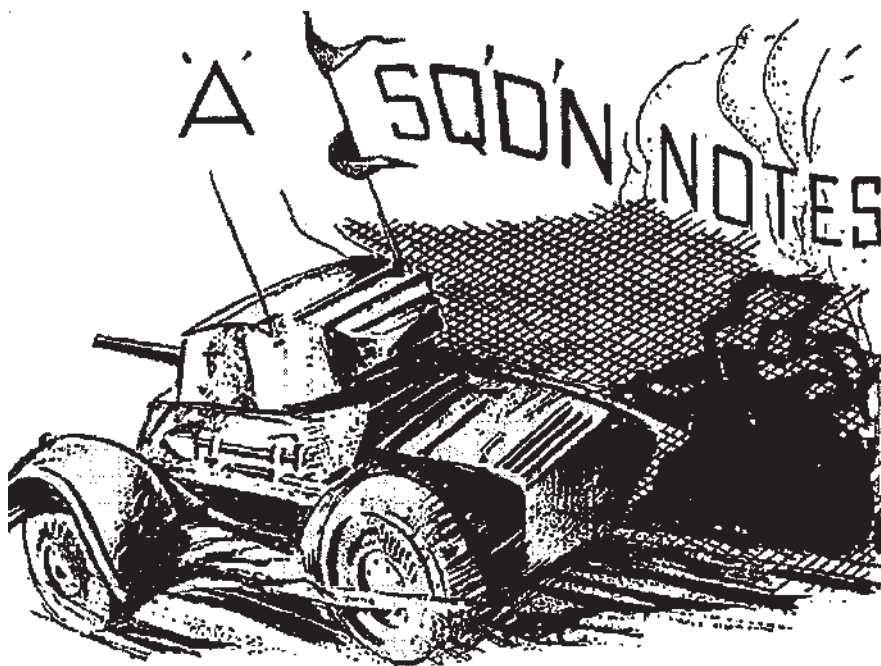
A Squadron

As is tradition, I will begin this article with the steady stream of platitudes to which the readers of this journal will have become accustomed. 2023 has indeed been a busy year and once again a memorable one for the first of the 'First and Foremost', A Squadron QDG. Readers will recall my predecessor's excellent article from 2022's edition, covering the Squadron's Saharan exploits as part of the UN's mission to Mali. Sitting as I do, looking out over the snowscapes of Eastern Poland, it could in many ways not feel more far removed from our adventures in the Sahelian dunes. Not only have we traded sand on our boots for frost on our jackets, but we also face a very different geopolitical context.

A Squadron entered the year with a schedule that was already filled to the rafters. Expecting to imminently spend six months training Ukrainians as part of Op INTERFLEX, the Squadron was poised to do its part to combat Russian aggression. A hectic period had preceded, with the Squadron having fought hard to qualify itself for the task. Unfortunately, the requirement was downscaled and so the Squadron was stood down at the last minute, with our antipodean cousins taking up the mantle instead. Naturally, this was a disappointment, but it proved fortuitous given the subsequent demand of pre-deployment activities.

Undeterred by the altered plans, A Squadron delved into the less glamorous aspects of training, notably G4, where the more mundane facets of army life took centre stage. The transfer of the BUF and the addition of loan vehicles, whilst not the most glamorous action, later proved invaluable during A Squadron's Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) process.

Amidst the tedium of BES and CES checks, a few fortunate individuals escaped the clutches of the UK for more favourable surroundings. Lt Asquith, at this juncture still reluctantly tethered to C Squadron, spent an arduous winter in Scandinavia, participating in the Nordic Skiing Championship. This is, of course, a far cry from the champagne lifestyle he is used to, which was instead being enjoyed by Tpr Firth in Verbier – an



example of social mobility that Dickens himself would be proud of.

In a reprise of the dark days of 2020, A Squadron was again called forward into the breach to address the public sector's failings. This time, industrial action on the part of ambulance drivers forced the government to call upon its insurance policy once again. LCpl Flood-McCann and Tprs Baker, Gray-Thomas, Clements and Dawson ventured forth and earned the nation's gratitude for their service.

As winter finally bid its farewell, A Squadron redirected its focus towards preparing for Op CABRIT, coordinated by the steady (if not slightly tired) hand of its Second-in-Command, Capt Holland. Under-strength since its return from NEWCOMBE, reinforcements were required to bring the Squadron up to its tour strength. Old faces, long seeking to get back to the premier sub-unit of the line, returned in strength. On the officer front, Troop Leaders Lts Webster and Gamman, fresh from Warminster's gentlemanly tactics course, joined the ranks, marking the debut of new leadership in the Squadron. Now of the appropriate constitution, A Squadron began training in earnest.

This new ensemble's first sojourn was to be a 'back to basics' exercise on Salisbury Plain, where the first step was, perversely, to 'unlearn' the experience of recent deployments. Lessons of the previous two years, COIN and peace-keeping in focus, had to be purged in

the face of a totally different threat and enemy in the guise of Putin's military. Shifting emphasis from Malian jihadis on motorbikes to Russian BTRs and T72s, mindsets were quickly readjusted in our first foray back to our traditional formation reconnaissance role.

Whilst A Squadron were preparing for its new warfighting role, the military as a whole was preparing for an equally important event. Op GOLDEN ORB was the name dedicated to the coronation of King Charles III, drawing in personnel from across the British Armed Forces. A Squadron's own representation came in the form of SSgt Chater and Lt Spicer. No doubt, they were quietly content with missing A Squadron's BCS exercise. That is, until they arrived at RMAS and quickly found that marching around a parade square is slightly more arduous than a few weeks on SPTA. Nevertheless, they took centre stage at an event that will no doubt remain in the public consciousness for many years to come.

With the King safely coronated thanks to our protection, A Squadron returned to more serious affairs. In an affirmation of the JNCO cohort's martial prowess, June saw the return of Cpls Brewster, Edmunds, Shepherd, Williams, and Hopkins, all freshly qualified as Crew Commanders. An excellent performance from this largely junior cohort, particularly as the Royal Armoured Corps re-focuses itself on the Golden Thread of this qualification.

Drawing on Sgts Howells and Lunness as its newly-qualified A Quals, A Squadron conducted its dismounted range package in late-Spring. To the credit of these individuals, all proceeded impeccably, with high quality training delivered to our soldiers. It seemed that the pre-deployment process would go without a hitch. Optimism sat palpably



The first glance of Hohenfels Camp quickly confirmed fears, as decrepit buildings entered sight and any and all phone signal dissipated.



in the air as spring turned to the most glorious early summer in recent memory. Indeed, too glorious as it would prove. A move to mounted ranges in Lulworth was preceded by an extended period of warm and dry weather. The effect was to reduce range time, much to the disdain of the 2IC whose excel sync matrix was suddenly torn to shreds. Despite the frictions imposed, there were some benefits. The lesser spotted 'white space' suddenly appeared in the calendar and the Squadron's soldiers managed to develop their sun tans and beach bodies ready for summer leave.

Amongst all this activity, a number of soldiers were selected to represent high levels in army sport. Sgt Stafford, our attached Engineer SNCO, departed to Boston (fortunately not the Lincolnshire variant) to partake in the Royal Engineers Squash tour. Meanwhile, LCpl Milton was selected to play Ice Hockey against the Royal Air Force.

By July, the Squadron had been run ragged. Fortunately, a welcome period of summer leave ensued. Upon our return in September, we said goodbye to Maj Duncan Wiggins as he departed A Squadron to pastures new. If I may be permitted to break from the flow of this article, I will take this opportunity to thank Duncan for his time at A Squadron. I am incredibly grateful for his leadership, astute management, and single-minded focus towards preparing the sub-unit throughout his tenure. I inherited a well-oiled machine that was completely prepared for its imminent deployment to Poland. Of the many success stories of the squadron throughout 2023, the vast majority are directly attributable to his command and presence.

Bringing ourselves back onto the timeline, A Squadron deployed on Ex SABER JUNCTION in late-August to shake out for the first time as a formed body. Of note, this exercise would achieve validation for our deployment on CABRIT, for the first time working alongside our American partners. Optimism abounded as all looked forward to a well-resourced and efficiently run exercise, drawing on the might of Uncle Sam's military machine. Perhaps, in hindsight, our arrival showed some signs of foreshadowing. As our coaches left the blue skies of the Bavarian lowlands and headed into the Oberpfalz, grey clouds loomed. The jovial Swabian folk of our journey were soon replaced by depressed American soldiers, languishing in the late-summer

Lt Danny Seales affectionately became known as 'Danny Dyer' due to his proclivity towards driving through minefields



Without me my machinegun is useless

sun. The first glance of Hohenfels Camp quickly confirmed fears, as decrepit buildings entered sight and any and all phone signal dissipated.

But our hosts were a cheerful bunch, in the way Americans are predisposed to be. Accepted with open arms, they quickly assimilated the command team into the planning process. This proved to be quite the shock of capture. Rehearsals were the item of the day, including rehearsals of the rehearsal for the rehearsal. Many iterations of the plan were proposed, briefed, then wholesale changed as the US team worked through their orders. The day of deployment itself saw a volte face, completely adapting a new plan. Understandably, this caused consternation at all levels in our contingent.

What followed, was, however, an immense demonstration of what a plucky reconnaissance squadron can do against an on-paper more superior force. Despite protestations from our US partners that



Please don't tell my mum

reconnaissance must be by fire, we demonstrated that stealth still has a part to play on the battlefield. Frequently, A Squadron was the last element standing, our American compatriots having been destroyed in the early hours of the multiple battles against the opposing force.

Despite this success, the mortality rate of our courageous junior officers drew comparisons to that of the Western Front circa 1915. Lt Danny Seales affectionately

became known as 'Danny Dyer' due to his proclivity towards driving through minefields, time and again testing HMTV's blast protection. Indeed, such was his commitment towards clearing them that he has now been offered work with the HALO Trust. Lt Gamman, evacuated for a minor exercise injury, awoke in the American morgue, surrounded by live personnel placed in body bags. Meanwhile, Lt Asquith advanced to find only to realise that everyone around him was wearing respirators and hastily decontaminating. His selfless commitment to confirming the use of nerve agents was brave in the strongest of senses.

With Troop Leaders dying at every juncture, it fell to the Squadron's SNCOs to carry out the tasks at hand. Of particular merit were Sgts Hugo and Couch, each of whom led a patrol deep behind enemy lines. These were the decisive actions of the exercise, placing us the furthest forward of all elements and observing a completely unaware enemy force. Nonetheless, the heroes of the Battle of Hohenfels were undoubtedly the lower ranks. Of note was Tpr McFall, who acted as a stag for 5 days whilst technically dead, until noticed by the US Observer mentors – an excellent demonstration that you will not die until

ordered to.

Throughout this period, we had been joined by a few of the many attachments that would deploy with us. Most notable were representatives from 5th Regiment Royal Artillery and from 3rd Royal Horse Artillery, representing our Fire Support Team and Mobile Surveillance Section respectively.

With the exercise complete and A Squadron suitably validated, the recovery to the UK began. Another mammoth road move across the European continent was the first hurdle. Thankfully, Capt Holland and SSgt Chater's exploitation of EU customs regulations meant we arrived back without an issue.

The Squadron immediately deployed onto two weeks of well-earned R+R, vital after the frenetic summer period. All too quickly, we found ourselves on flights to Poland, finally deploying to Op CABRIT. But nevertheless, we changed places with the Royal Lancers and the Squadron quickly adapted to life in

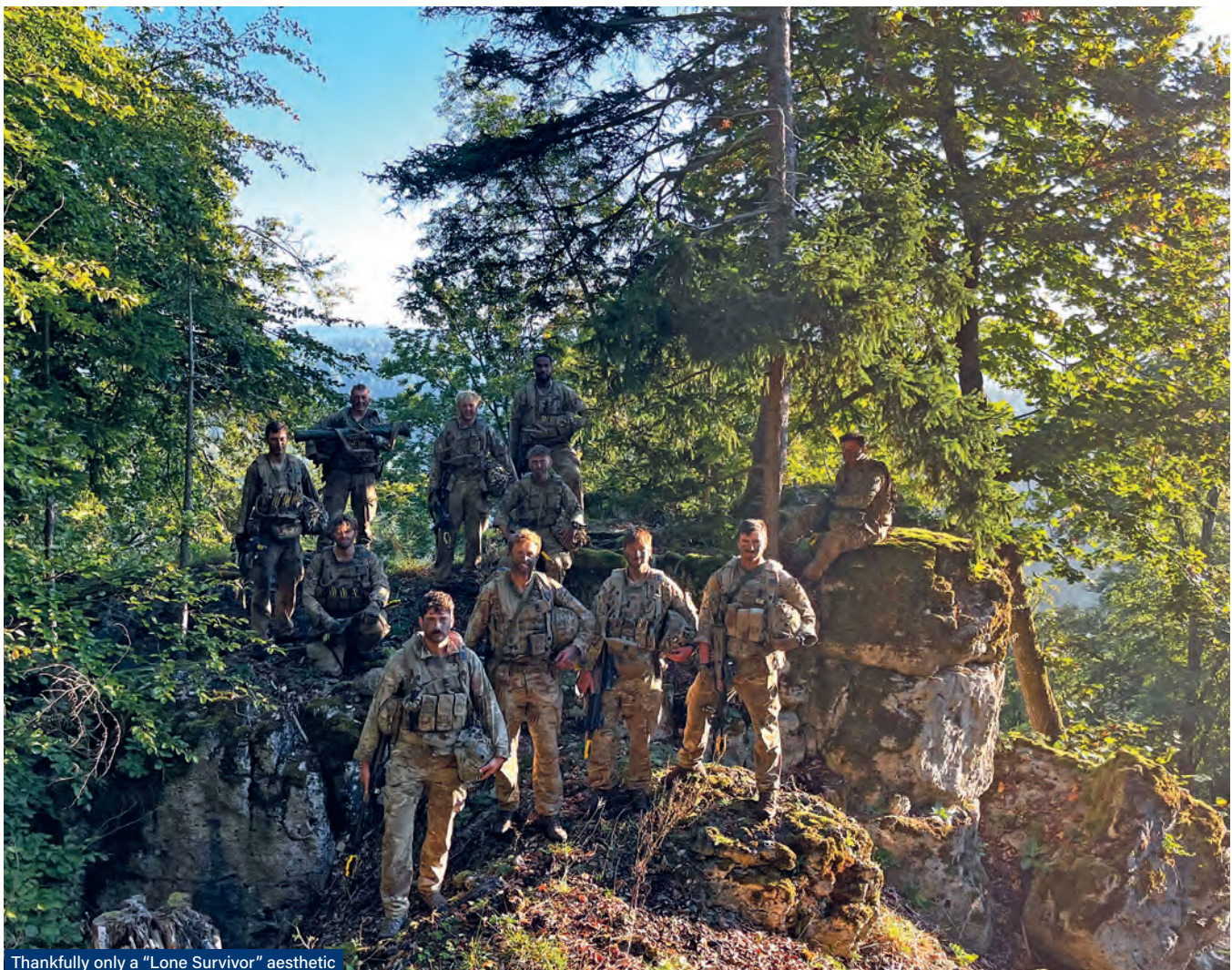
Eastern Europe.

A Squadron's last experience of Bemowo Piskie was five years ago. An austere ex-Prussian barracks, the Soviets had adorned it with brutalist architecture to beat down any sense of individualism. To call it Warsaw Pact-esque would give too many connotations of civilisation. In that sense, it is the perfect location to house soldiers.

Whilst deployed, we sit under a formidable US-led battlegroup from 2-69 Armour. Alongside contingents of Croatians and Romanians, we act as the battlegroup reconnaissance asset. It is an honour to play part in this grouping, albeit perhaps the lack of a common language – above all with our US partners – introduces some interesting frictions.

Our role out here is threefold. Firstly, we are to demonstrate that we are good partners. Chiefly, this has been accomplished by playing volleyball, primarily against local children. Sergeant Mwamulima, the team captain, maintains that

“Of note was Tpr McFall, who acted as a stag for 5 days whilst technically dead, until noticed by the US Observer mentors”



Thankfully only a "Lone Survivor" aesthetic

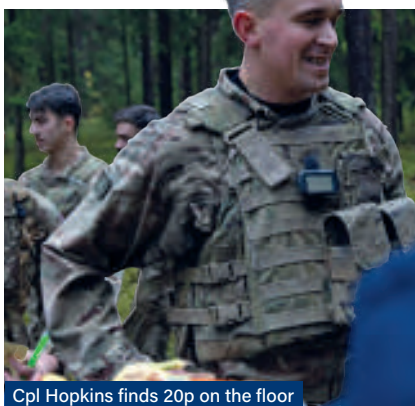


Capt Holland sets a pace he knows he can't maintain

he is doing his part for host nation relations by purposefully losing every game.

Secondly, and in the face of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we are to deter Putin from further aggression. Of note, the Wagner Group arrived in Belarus over the summer. Inspired by the perceived dilettantism of the Royal Lancers, they no doubt intended to seize the Suwalki Gap at the earliest opportunity. No such incursion has taken place under our watch. Intelligence is always a dark art and one should never assume, but we can make informed assessments. Careful analysis by LCpl Griffiths, our COIST, does seem to suggest that the lack of cross-border operations by Prigozhin's military is directly correlated to A Squadron's entry to the Area of Operations.

Finally, we are here to train and benefit from our deployment to Poland. Though,



Cpl Hopkins finds 20p on the floor

at the time of writing, we have only spent two months here, there has been a huge amount of valuable training ongoing. Drawing on our resident Arctic Warfare Instructors, Sgt Couch and Cpl Hopkins, the Squadron have been through the

travails of extreme cold weather training. Particularly interesting was the Cold Weather Operators' Course, delivered by Royal Marine instructors. The Squadron only recently completed an Urban Operations training week, run completely in-house by Sgt Lunness. In the New Year, we anticipate a great deal more work with our multinational partners, whilst also seeking time to get out and explore what wider Poland has to offer.

I began this article by saying that the environs of Bemowo Piskie left me feeling somewhat detached from our adventures in Mali. The truth is, despite our change in surroundings, there are immutable elements that remain the same. I have been hugely impressed by the soldiers and officers of A Squadron who continue to embody the values in the tradition of this fine sub-unit. As has ever been the case, they approach every scenario with vigour and determination, whatever the circumstances and I know that they will continue to do so into 2024. I would also like to thank those that support from afar. Friends, family, members of the regiment current and former. Your support is central to everything we do and our task would be unachievable without it. With 2024 now imminently upon us, we look forward to yet another 'busy year' in Poland and beyond, but particularly in returning to the UK.



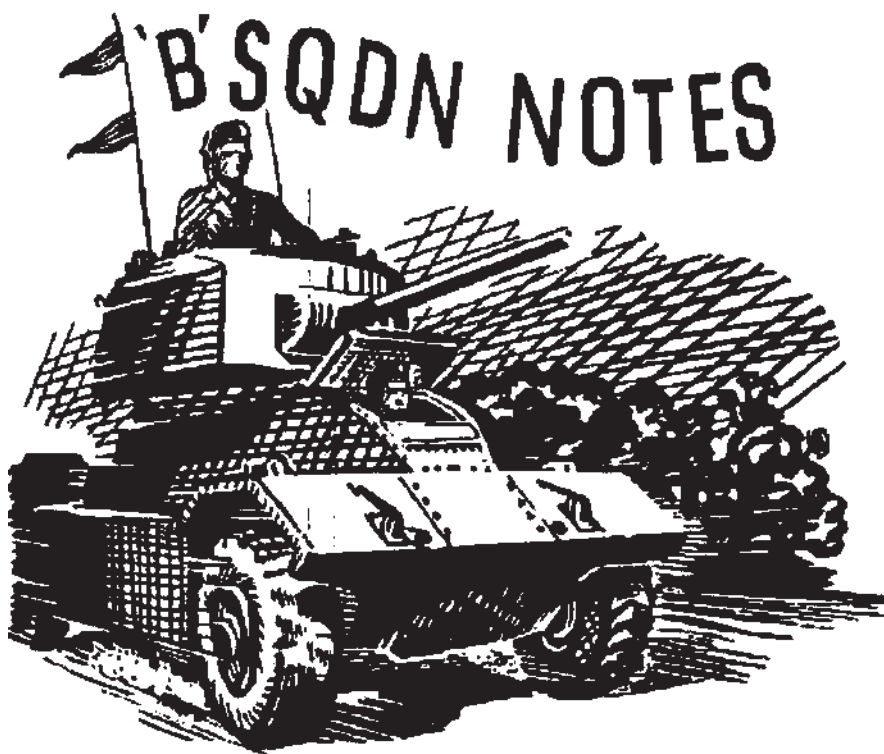
The winning team.

B Squadron

I have the privilege of commanding B Squadron 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, stepping into some big shoes left by a previous bonehead, Maj O'Shea; perhaps one day, I too will master the genteel art of sabraging champagne with a lance.

What was utterly clear from the beginning is that I inherited a great team who knew how to balance work and play. Indeed, so much so, that our first serial as a team was a week in which we had the inter-squadron athletics and a delightfully demanding Commanding Officer's PT challenge. We won both. We probably mastered this physical prowess from the miles and miles run in Kuwait on Ex DESERT WARRIOR for St David's Day in between teaching the Kuwaitis the nuances of armoured warfare. Armoured warfare being no substitute for close quarter urban battle... with water balloons. No-one is quite sure how it started, but we know how it ended – one wrecked minibus and 16 wet troopers. Perhaps some more rank-recognition would have been worthwhile as the Kuwaitis kept muddling the SSM's massive crown with the OC's very small one. The saluting stopped once the old adage of commission vs warrant was explained to them (you know it: you commission something but you warrant a service...).

Kenya on a short-term training team was a great opportunity to go on safari and explore Nairobi deliver some critical East African Defence Engagement to the Kenyan Armed Forces on the front-line with Al-Shabaab. Lt Clark and Sgt Humphreys managed to reduce their entire (Chinese procured) fleet availability to zero within a week – so just doing what they do in the UK but in a sunnier climate. How Lt Mower has not



been eaten by a lion is unknown. It also conveniently afforded Maj O'Shea a long recce as he heads out to be SO2 Safaris.

In between the strategic level Defence Engagement operations, a detachment for Op GOLDEN ORB was being assiduously guided in turnout and drill by WO2 McKinnon. Senior Regiment of the Line, QDG marched proudly at the head of the RAC contingent before our new monarch – the odd regiment with the long pointy things and flags seemed quite close to the back, but a successful rear guard always guarantees success. As if we couldn't have enough pomp and circumstance, B Sqn under Sgt Brown turned the dilapidated old air traffic control tower at Swanton Morley into the Eisenhower Tower and observed (never

celebrated) the mutiny by our transatlantic colleagues, hosting Brig General "Knuckles" Campo, the Lord-Lieutenant, Lady Dannatt and other dignitaries in the second best social event of 2023 (see: Waterloo 208).

Taking a break from defending democracy around the world we focussed on some retention positive exercises in the form of a canoeing trip in Sweden led by Lt Walsh and some Alpine activity in Austria under Lts Logan and Mower. Who knew Swedish mosquitoes could almost drive a man insane (ask LCpls Dempsey and Eyles). Hitting the ground running in September, we quickly converted to Humvee and deployed onto Ex DIAMONDBACK in the National Training Centre, California.

No-one is quite sure how it started, but we know how it ended – one wrecked minibus and 16 wet troopers



Day 220's first 6 Nations without a pint



Nothing in front but the enemy



Maj O'Shea opens his laptop



'And you think that capbadge is buffed?'

What an exercise. Working with the Americans was an eye-opener. At one point we stood atop a spur on a 4000ft mountain, the lead scouts of 2,500 soldiers from 3rd Armoured Brigade Combat Team looking out over an area of operations 50km by 50km. In the far distance, three armoured infantry battalions were conducting a break in to a town; to our left an armoured regiment was getting to grips with a minefield whilst another put down covering fire on a spoiling attack of T72s; meanwhile drones swarmed, radios failed, the recon got stuck in a CBRN attack and of the 15 fuel tankers to keep the brigade moving, only 2 survived from a devastating air attack on the logistics battalion. Truly, I do not think I will ever see such a chaotic and incredible scene again. Needless to say, B Sqn excelled themselves. Observation by Comd 3UKXX and Gen Catermole endorsed this; and an invitation to return to the 4-10 Cavalry Ball to a certain Troop Leader perhaps demonstrates the lengths to which we committed to the bilateral relationship. There was countless challenge and no matter how

humble they come across, I assure you everyone was tested. If it wasn't trying to make sense of nonsense; or persuade the RAF to let us onto the plane home (honestly); battling the heat, scorpions etc, then it was putting out fires on buses (honestly) or doing 8 hour round trips to deliver some quality adventurous training and sightseeing across 4 different states. My humble thanks – and I mean that – to all those (not just the Sabre Sqns – we see you HQ!) involved in delivering that extraordinary success.

Further well dones to Tpr Kirkman who deployed onto the gruelling Danish Patrols Competition; the B Sqn equestrian team coming back 2nd from the European Cavalry Endurance ride; and to all out there – there isn't space to commend everyone but you know who you are. As this journal goes to edit, B Sqn lead the RAC in Alpine racing

in Verbier; the first ever RAC Woman's Nordic Biathlon team heads to Ruhpolding for the Army Champs; and the Nordic Biathlon team nail first in the Brigade. Now: Operation CABRIT. A wise man once said "We're recce; you're only as good as the handover" and we will cement the great work done by A Sqn in Poland into a resounding Dragoon success for C Sqn to assume. The task hasn't changed much since our forebears of the KDG and Queen's Bays stood at vedette opposite the Russians (it is a bit further East now), but it is no less serious.

I thank all those who have made it such a pleasure and privilege for me to command these fine Dragoons and I look forward as we charge, sabres drawn – and with a Lance leading, into the fray of assuming Eagle Troop on Operation CABRIT.

AP 9/12L

“
Truly, I do not
think I will
ever see such
a chaotic and
incredible
scene again.”



I thought this was a beach trip...



I didn't realise we still did stuff like this



Still!



O'shea's answers to "How did you sleep on the flight?"

ما يقارب 100 جندي من الكتبة الخاصة بالجيش البريطاني إلى البلاد



It's quicker if you don't crawl



The face of the QDG?



Perhaps not...



Another swinger



Selfless commitment



The next person I pick up will be crawling



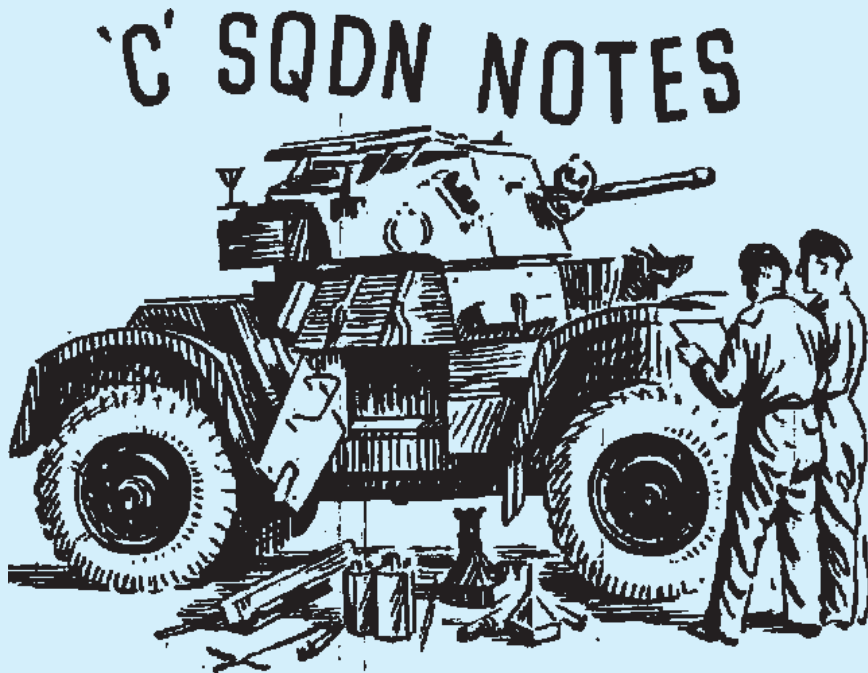
...crawling

C Squadron

C Sqn kicked off 2023 with a flying start, with the advanced party for Ex Warfighter 2023 departing for the states from Heathrow, including the SQMS and his team of helpers. It was to be the first of 5 flights heading stateside that would see 70 troops from C Sqn deployed to support 3UKXX conduct a headquarters exercise in Fort Hood, Texas. Not our normal bread and butter, the Sqn was tasked as RLS because the previous RLC subunit got it spectacularly wrong, so some cavalry pride and panache was drafted in.

Under the experienced and effortless leadership of Maj Mansel (OC RLS) the Sqn undertook all manner of novel tasks that phase 2 couldn't have prepared us for and a varied experience of highs and lows awaited us. Our home for the 4 months was to be Fort Hood in Texas, which was a great demonstration of the differences between the UK and US armies. In one tank park of many there were enough AFVs to outnumber the entire UK fleet of Warriors, ditto Challengers, Jackals etc. This rather set the tone for our time in Texas - Mass, Scale, Big, Bigger and Vast. On the topic of vast, the accommodation provided was contained in 6 enormous marquees that housed 120 bed spaces and rattled constantly (a slightly understated foreshadowing of what was to come...).

Nevertheless, morale was high on arrival and after the rest of the squadron arrived, including the actual OC Capt Barham after his skiing holiday, we got to work preparing an RSOI package to receive 1300 exercising troops with an average rank of Major. Driving shuttles and lectures were the main task and thankfully we had our Land Navigation



Instructor Sgt Griffiths on hand to not get lost on the way to the airport while there were 2-Star Generals waiting for him.

Most of the permanent accommodation was contained in a FIBUA village that had to be sterilised from bat excrement, (insert Covid related jokes here) so that they could be lived in for the duration of the exercising phase. The breeze blocks and open windows in the village didn't detract from the amazing scenery we were living in, and in typical QDG fashion it was turned into a comfortable home as much as it could be.

The 'mosque' (it wasn't a real mosque) was host to many rooftop parties until the exercise got underway and booze was banned and with plenty of opportunity to get out and about, there were many visits to the local town Killeen for rodeos, BBQs and line dancing. It

was soon discovered that dancing with another man is frowned upon out there. The saving grace of moving to our new breeze block village was the food. The US

Army do many things very well, but food just isn't one of them. Hyper processed and sugary rubbish took down several of the Squadron with food poisoning including the OC, until half of the UK's deployable chefs were drafted in and we soon had three field kitchens at full operating capacity feeding up to 1500 personnel a day. The UK kitchens were so good that the Americans would frequently invite themselves over and this remained one of the areas of the exercise where we

totally out-did the Americans. This however came with the inevitable pain of 'pan bashing' on shifts for 8 hours a day. Special thanks go to the 3XX Divisional Signals Regiment (DSR) for not lifting a

“It was soon discovered that dancing with another man is frowned upon out there.”



C Sqn CivPop



I don't know sir, why did the chicken cross the road?



Pick a spot on the wall...

finger and squaring themselves away so QDG had to pick up the slack, but the camaraderie of a small Regiment and close knit Squadron showed the QDG soldiers at their very best, gaining high praise for the cheerfulness and motivation of troops, especially after 7 hours of fairly liquid and a 2-star general asking boring questions.

The middle of Texas is well known for a lot of things, big cars, big people, big spaces, BBQs, but unfortunately, we came a cropper on one of the more infamous: big winds - tornados. In the preceding weeks we had warnings sent to us by the government early warning system on our phones that were typically 'amber wind warning' which usually resulted in a stiff breeze, so when a siren started playing across the camp and on our phones, accompanying the message 'extreme winds, danger to life, seek cover below ground immediately' we knew something serious was coming. It was decided to move all troops out of the giant marquees (rattling foreshadowing about to become somewhat relevant) and into hard cover before all hell broke loose. One marquee caught the wind broadside and was lifted along with several tonnes of concrete blocks over another marquee, before smashing back down into a third, completely destroying both in a pile of twisted metal, canvas, kit and cot beds. The following scene more resembled a disaster relief episode than a large portion of the UK Army deployed on exercise, and it doesn't bear thinking what might have happened if the troops weren't evacuated. After this little episode of near death and soaking kit, we weren't too fussed about having a breeze block room with no windows. A further task assigned to us by the ever-increasingly angled shoulder of the Divisional Signals Regiment was to create an electronics checkpoint at the entrance to the 3 Div headquarters. Never one to do anything



Texas is well known for a lot of things, big cars, big people, big spaces, BBQs



Four of them were in on the joke

by half measures, the SSM WO2 Roberts took it upon himself to rival GCHQ for security and the Div staff were mightily impressed with the efficiency, professionalism and turnout of the QDG troops.

A special mention goes to Tpr Day for turning away the DSR Ops Officer who didn't have the right paperwork for her laptop, and after a brief discussion ending with "I don't give a damn who you are, Miss". The QDG PED trap remained impenetrable and Div HQ uncompromised!

While it might seem obvious to a QDG, it wasn't immediately clear to the Americans that British cavalry officers don't all know how to ride a horse. So it was

with great surprise that Capt Barham and Lt Asquith received an invitation to ride in the opening ceremony of an international polo match between the UK and US in Palm Beach, Florida. Cue panic, fear,

emergency riding lessons, and finally realisation that an all-expenses paid trip to Palm Beach was definitely worth it for falling off a horse on international TV, and soon they were both at the national polo ground in Florida strutting their stuff in uniform on horseback. Only a couple of mishaps later and they had managed not to skewer a valuable pony with a drawn sword and had completed a great event that gained significant attention across the UK and US armed forces.

Our old friend the tornado was an unexpected ally when it came to closing down the exercise, and after yet another well-rehearsed scramble to get into hard cover, and yet another enormous hailstorm had blown over, we emerged only to find that one of the cookhouses comprising of 7 long green tents had been totally disassembled for us. What was a well organised and efficient cookhouse that could do several thousand meals a day had turned into a mass of broken spars and torn canvas, and all that was left was to bin the whole lot, rather than pack it neatly into containers,

which significantly reduced the tear down time for the exercise. The last boots off the ground were the QM, Maj Hansen, who had been in the USA for more than 6 months and returned in June to tie off a rather unusual exercise for C Sqn. Not a shot had been fired but many a pan had been bashed, staff officers frustrated, rodeos visited, bars frequented and tornados suffered, but a great experience was had by all. The GOC raised a special mention for the QDG section of the RLS and C Squadron received praise across the board from individuals who had experienced the previous attempts at RLS out there. While it wasn't our typical exercise, C Sqn showed once again that whatever situation we are placed in, only the best will suffice and this showed in spades in Texas. The Squadron had earned some leave on their return to the UK and upcoming activities organised by Capt Barham kept tongues wagging as to what he was going to produce over Ex Lost Eagle.

Ex Lost Eagle was an unusual exercise for several reasons, not least because it was an all singing all dancing navigation exercise aimed at getting our young soldiers through crew commanders, but also because it was hosted by the Barham family, comprising of two generations of QDG officers. Capt George Barham the OC and 2IC at the time who planned and organised it, and hosted on private land by Edward Barham, formerly QDG in 1988-90. It posed a great opportunity to blow away the cobwebs from Texas and get some green training done, and to conduct some 'retention positive activity' (read: activities that would have been switched off if they had been put on the risk assessment for approval by

RHQ). The first phase of navigation was led by Sgt Griffiths and each challenge increased daily and often caused some individuals to deliver more miles than navigation. The final phase focused on resilience and involved beach runs and tours of the military canal. On antiquated military equipment the highlight was when tenants of the Barham family allowed the Sqn Seniors to drive their restored CVR(T)s- bringing back great memories for the SSM.

In August the Sqn came back from Summer Leave and commenced training for Ex SCORPION CYCLONE, the 1 DRS Bde part of the wider 3 (UK) Div Ex IRON TITAN- for which C Sqn under QDG BGHQ would be the OPFOR. Sadly, due to numerous other commitments the Sqn had to deploy with no Tp Leaders, but thankfully the trio of Gilliam, Hutchings and Griffiths stood up to the task of being Tp Ldrs.

1 DRS Bde were using the exercise to conduct an experiment 'to prove the concepts that had delivered real success in WARFIGHTER ' but the Bde Commander was clear that this was to be a fair experiment. Our enemy - two Sqn of the Royal Lancers in Warrior APCs and a US Mech Inf subunit in Strikers looked quite formidable. Which is why on receiving our issue of non bowman-

ised FFR Land Rovers most of the Sqn started to check the dictionary definition of the words 'fair' and 'experiment'. After re-calibrating our understanding of the dictionary to the 'Post hoc Ergo Propter Hoc' experimentation approach of the army, the Sqn realised its place in the exercise and set about causing mischief.

We started the exercise with a Back-to-Basics Programme to complete standardised basic training, which in the magnificent extended summer of late September was wonderful. We then progressed to providing OPFOR for the RL CT2 Battle Lanes. All of this was conducted around the main event of the progress of Fiji and Wales in the Rugby World Cup. Afterwards the Sqn provided a non-thinking enemy for a RL BG Attack and then we commenced plotting against the Lancers.

The first RL movement, an advance West to East, did not allow for much plotting as in the interests of being 'fair' our Arty Support was removed, and the Sqn had to rely on the immense weaponry that a Land Rover can offer. After the Sqn managed to withdraw to the Eastern Area we were allowed some support back and hit into a stalemate. This period allowed for the Sqn to start some more 'out of the box thinking' from the left-hand arc of let's raid a Tp Hide through to the right of arc of spray tagging the US vehicles. Highlights included a Mad Max style advance into the centre of the RL Screen outriders

**“
Sadly, due to being in the screen for a long three days the RL failed to notice the entire Sqn and Sgt Griffiths had to be sent out Tank Hunting.”**



annnnnnnd sleep.



... and stare at it

on quads. Sadly, due to being in the screen for a long three days the RL failed to notice the entire Sqn and Sgt Griffiths had to be sent out Tank Hunting.

In the second phase the Sqn were given greater room to manoeuvre and honed skills in OPs (mounted and dismounted) along with conventional clearance operations. On the final attack the Sqn adopted stay behind OPs and conducted a series of ambushes, the success of which can be measured by Cpl Tomkins stealing the RL BGHQ map and forcing them to a four hour standstill as they changed the plan. In all a victory for the Land Rovers, it would seem.

Concurrent to Ex SC C Sqn personnel led the Regiment's effort on Ex Cambrian Patrol, managed by Sgts Casey and Pugh and under the leadership of Capt Dillon (manager) and Lt Seales (Team Ldr); the team took a Bronze medal. A marvellous achievement for a team only drawn from one Sqn of the regiment. Also, congratulations to the

team for being able to host the Kosovans and Canadian teams at the last minute.

On return to camp, the Sqn effort turned to the visit of the new Colonel-in-Chief. Relative to the other sqns we had the most soldiers on Camp (16) so C Sqn were tasked with organising the military stands. Under the supervision of Sgt Maj Wilkins, Cpl Donnachie helped organise a tour around a Tp Hide and Capt Wills had a career highlight in instructing HRH on how to use a drone. Concurrently the team from Cambrian deployed to support B Sqn on Ex DIAMONDBACK.

The year ended with the Recce and PNCO Cadres. December being known for its almost tropical temperature, the directing staff under Capt Dillon selected a training area that would be kind in terms of weather and terrain - Otterburn. Fortunately for all involved the Exercise took place during a wonderful cold snap and the assembled troops embraced the minus ten temperatures and snow on the



Sadly, Tpr Higgins felt the impact of the cold most, having fallen on the ice on the final task-dislocating his knee



Now a silly one

ground. Sadly, Tpr Higgins felt the impact of the cold most, having fallen on the ice on the final task- dislocating his knee in the process.

C Sqn finish the year on a high- with the knowledge that whilst we have not yet returned to our core role we still delivered on all of the varied challenges given to us. We are all looking forward to a training year (return to the USA) then a deployment with RY to Op CABRIT 16. Finally, a massive thanks go to Capt George Barham on his departure from the Army and Sgt Maj Wilkins on his move to HQ Sqn. Without these two the successes of the year would not have materialised.

TG



Is that a rugby ball?



See these two medals, mines the one in the middle.



"finger on the pulse"



Are you not retained?!



Have I still passed the course?



The human terrain mapping was going well.



How many rounds?



We're going on FYB for sure!



Club Tropicana



Can you kick me in the back of the head - for old times sake



If only there was a way of doing stuff like this outdoors



We promise to find the infamous 'top of bush thief'



"no the Bde Comd will love it, lets spray paint...."



If it ain't snowing...



Disregard everything outside the orange tape.



...we ain't going

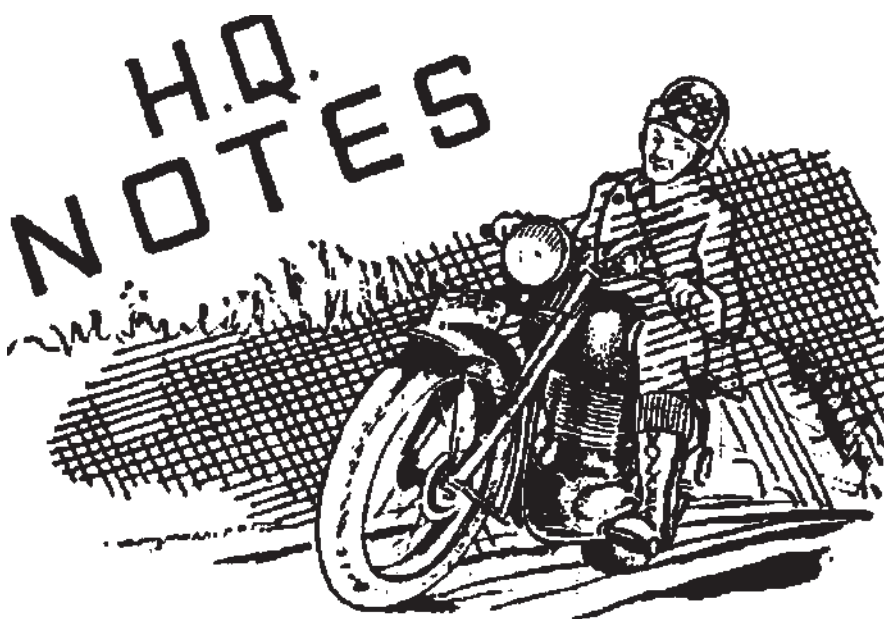
HQ Squadron

It is often said (by those in G4) that behind every great leader there is an even greater logistician. For the QDG, behind every great Sabre Squadron action in the last year has been quiet, diligent support from Headquarters Squadron. Whether it is the LAD's mechanics, the RLC's chefs, Command Troop's signals or RHQ's Good Ideas© HQ Sqn has been there to enable and support deployments around the world.

HQ Sqn during 2023 was a year of two very distinct halves. Firstly, from Jan to May HQ was split, both in terms of geography and focus. HQ Sqn Ldr, Maj Rob Mansel, QM, A/Maj Matt Hansen, MTO, Capt Ross Hopkins and a large element of the Sqn deployed to the US along with C Sqn and other elements across the Field Army to form the Divisional Support Unit for Ex WARFIGHTER 23.4. This left the remainder of the Squadron under the direction of the SSM, Mr Mike Beal and Captains Trev Homer and Dale Thomas to manage a ROG and the normal drum beat of wider support to the Regiment.

Secondly, from Aug to Dec the Sqn was focused on the preparations for and execution of Pre-Deployment Training and support to the deployment to Poland and Op CABRIT. The dividing point between the year was also marked by the change of Command of HQ Sqn, which, saw Major Rob Mansel hand over command to Major Steve Thomas in August. Major Mansel moves on to the Armoured Trials

HQ Sqn during 2023 was a year of two very distinct halves



and Development Unit in Bovington and the Squadron thank him for his time as Squadron Leader and wish him all the best in his new appointment.

In January the preparation for Ex WARFIGHTER had been completed, which included the packing of over 30 ISO shipping containers filled with stores for the exercise that had been collected from all over the Army. HQ elements had been deployed in Germany, across the UK and in the US, collecting stores, conducting reces, and attending planning meetings. The vehicles and ISO containers were transported from Robertson

Barracks to Marchwood Military Port to set sail for a port in southern Texas and onward rail journey to Fort Cavazos (formerly known as Fort Hood). Elements of HQ workforce also deployed in January to set up the Divisional Support Unit for the exercise. The deployment would see 1400 UK personnel from 3rd(UK) Division

deploy to the US in three different locations as part of a US Corps level event. The Divisional Support Unit, some 200 troops consisting of elements of HQ Squadron, C Squadron and augmentees from across the Field Army, under the command of HQ Squadron Leader, would provide the support for the Division.

During the month of February, the ROG swung into action ensuring the normal support to running of life in Robertson Barracks continued without hitch. This included support to B Sqn's STTT deployment to Kuwait, routine external inspections, and guard force. Additionally, a large element of HQ Sqn, including RHQ and Command Troop, deployed on Ex UNIFIED RESOLVE 23 in Ontario Canada.

During March the HQ element deployed in the US had been busy setting up the three locations in preparation to receive the exercising troops, which included RHQ QDG. The preparations had all gone extremely well and the troops had had a good balance of down time to experience Texan hospitality, a great AT package and travel around the state. However, at the eleventh hour they would be hit by one of three tornados that would plague the Ex. Although the accommodation was destroyed, some quick



The ferris wheel will fall when hit

The CO congratulates Mr Ruddy on his promotion to RSM.



I can't believe I'm the only one that didn't learn the words



The ROG Commanding Officer

thinking and command and control from the team got UK troops into hard cover with minutes to spare. It was then impressive to watch the US machine swing into action to support and rebuild our accommodation just in time for the arrival of the exercising troops.

April and May continued at pace for HQ, still split between either side of the Atlantic. Ex WARFIGHTER was in the execute phase and the ROG back in the UK were focused on supporting A Sqn start their Pre-Deployment training in the form of Ex CABRIT EAGLE. Additionally, HQ were supporting Op GOLDEN ORB, the Coronation of King Charles III. This entailed the logistic support to the QDG marching contingent and supplying some of the troops to the parade. As you can imagine the QMs and the Regimental Tailor were working overtime and the camp resembled a Guards Depot rather than a Cavalry one as the marching contingent were put through numerous inspections and drill practices. By the end of May all but a few HQ Sqn individuals were back from the US and after a spell of leave it was great to have the Sqn back in one place for a few months.

During June, HQ Sqn's support to A Sqn continued with range packages and deployment training, there were also

some changes in the Sqn personalities. We welcomed newly Commissioned Capt Chris Eade from the HCR as the Unit Welfare Officer, congratulated WO2 Ross Hopkins on his successful commissioning to Capt and the appointment 'formally' as MTO (a role he had been doing for six months already). Sadly, we said goodbye to Capt Trev Homer who had decided to take a career change. The Sqn wish him, Claire and the family all the very best in the future. A truly great innings over 25 years, including RSM and Commissioning.

The month of July saw the equipment return from the US requiring the collection, rehabilitation and redistribution to Loan Pool and Field Army Units. This would continue into September such was the vast amount of equipment. The Sqn also said farewell to Mr Mike Beal, HQ SSM, who moved on posting to the Royal Yeomanry as the Training Warrant Officer. The Sqn thank him for his steadfast guidance over last two years and wish him all the very best in the future. The new SSM, Mr Smith, was not due to arrive until Sep so the SQMS, SSgt Hazelwood, stood in to do a sterling job.

August started with a wonderful look at where our soldiers come from with a cultural awareness day, hosted by

Cpl Umerah AGC. The gymnasium was lined with stalls from The Gambia, Nepal, Nigeria, Fiji, England and, of course, Wales. Multiple servings of jollof rice (the jury is out on which country makes it best) gave way to performances – Cpl Thapa demonstrating Gurkha martial arts followed by a Fijian Male Voice Choir to close the event. In the background Command Troop and the LAD were preparing for a deployment of BGHQ on Ex SCORPION CYCLONE and A Squadron on Ex SABER JUNCTION.

September onwards was spent enabling sabre squadrons to deploy on Op CABRIT in Poland, Ex SCORPION CYCLONE on Salisbury Plain and Ex DIAMONDBACK in California – three big deployments in three very different environments.

Following B Sqn's successful return from Ex DIAMONDBACK (with all radios, batteries and assorted miscellaneous G6 equipment accounted for by the indomitable Sgt Maj Trudgill) HQ Squadron were able to sit back and relax until Christmas... IF they hadn't been conducting defence engagement with the Savoia Regiment in Italy, the Guards Hussars in Denmark and hosting our friends at Supacat. No matter where in the world the QDG are, elements of Headquarters Squadron will be found. Here's to another year of rest

and relaxation (and CABRIT and CABRIT and CABRIT and...)

ST



New tyres for the Regi 21C's Car.

QM Main Dept

The new tradition for the QMs is that the journal article is completed by one side. This is due to how disjointed the departments are and how rare it is for both QM(A) and QM(T) to be in Robertson Barracks at the same time. More of that as we move through the article.

The easiest place to start, is a bit of run down on who has left the departments in 2023 and who has come in. We start with the loss of Capt Trev Homer who has moved on to a new life outside the Army but is still very QDG and linking with the other QDGs who have gone before him into the defence industry. He can be found sporting his QDG tie at industry shows or wearing his signature baseball cap on ranges showing off the latest in JTAC and optics kit. He was succeeded by Capt Dale Thomas who came over from the RCMO role and started with a CABRIT(P) NSE Comd deployment to prep for. We then lost the RQ(T), WO2 Martyn Ruddy, who was selected to take over as RSM QDG, leaving at the end of Feb 23. We had a wait before his replacement arrived from the sun trap of Cyprus and with an RQ post already under his belt. WO2 Tom Hughes took on the role just before summer leave. He had a short stint at his desk before he deployed to Germany to support A Sqns MST as the RLS Comd. It was felt we had to ease him into his post back at QDG and Robertson Barrack so sent him abroad again. Next, we had WO2 Rhys Davies also selected for an RSM post departing in May 23. He has gone over to our partnered Army Reserve Unit as RSM RY. Hoping he had seen the back of the QM(A), he was disappointed in Nov to find the QM(A) would be following him to the RY in 2024. The team got WO2 Nav Navunisaravi to take over as RQ(A) from B Sqn and the Training Wing. This was a long HOTO of roles, with Nav deploying to Texas in Feb 23 as the WARFIGHTER RQMS for 4 months with the QM(A). Next, we lost the RLD Comd, SSgt Lila Gurung, who left QDG in July 23 to join 3 Ranger Bn within the Spec Ops Bde as 1LO Comd. We are still waiting on his replacement, but the role has been filled by Cpl Steve Thurston for now and will be until APC can fill the role. SSgt Joe Ewbank was promoted to WO2 and covered the RQ(T) role for a short time before moving to MT as the MTWO. From B Sqn, the post of JAMES SNCO was filled by SSgt 'Dav 220' Davies. As he came in, 220 was packing his bags for Poland and the role of NSE 2iC for Dale.



In that two weeks the QM(A) had to find \$12M of savings from the RLS budget...



The year started with the QM(A) in camp for one week before he headed across the Atlantic to the USA. Starting with a week in Ft Leavenworth where he tracked down Maj James Cowen for some signatures, before helping to develop the RLS plan for Ex WARFIGHTER with 3UKXX Staff. Next, he dropped the 3UKXX team at the airport heading back to the UK, before getting on a different flight to Ft Hood Texas. On his own, the QM(A) started to build the RLS for the 1500 UK Troops coming to Texas with the first lot heading over in two weeks. In that two weeks the QM(A) had to find \$12M of savings from the RLS budget before a contractor would put a spade in the ground to start the build. The budget was eventually sorted, but to make sure the contractors would start the build there was a \$7M funding gap to fill. Even in the modern banking world, it still takes weeks for the money to get over the water when it was needed in days. To fix the shortfall, the QM(A) was seen daily in the 3rd Armoured Copes HQ trying his best to charm a short-term loan off the Commander, Phantom 6. Anyone who knows the QM(A) will struggle to believe he achieve it, but he did. It may have been the offer to start cutting lawns for Ms Monique Mendoza, the IIIAC's Chief Accountant, that got the loan, but we'll never know. It could have easily



...before a contractor would put a spade in the ground to start the build.



been his GCSE grade maths certificate giving them the confidence to loan the money.

There will be more on Ex WARFIGHTER from C Sqn in the journal, but some of the G4 team's highlights were: the two tornados - with the first destroying three accommodation tents 48hrs before the first 3UKXX exercising troops turned up and the second that destroyed the main field kitchen 12hrs after Endex; the conversion of two US Army MOUTs (Military Operations in Urban Terrain - think OBUA Village) into accommodation thanks to Sgt Johnny Canning and his pre Army life as painter; and watching the last flight of Signals and Staff Officers leave Texas.

Concurrently, life back in Robertson Bks had Capt Homer

heading up an LEA with his signature eye for detail, whilst he was completing a short resettlement window before leaving the Army. The Regiment was still looking for vehicles for A Sqn to prepare for CABRIT(P), that Tech supported. The

Tech team were also looking around the Army for the drones and NVDs that the Sqns wanted to train with. The RQ(A) with the team were supporting the Ranges and getting B Sqn to Kuwait. With all the overseas tasks the Regiment has completed in 2023, Cpl Brad Moore has become one of the most travelled dangerous goods and ammo NCOs in the Division. SSgt Dean Speed was getting his teeth into his and the Regiments new role as the SHE SNCO, working with Capt Martyn Flitcroft to get on top of assurances and support the safety of the

A Year As An AFPA

It has been a busy year for the Regiment with all the training and deployments. At the start of the year there was a change in the direction on SHE, from the traditional G4 to the other G numbers. Particularly in the Training, Exercise and Operations Battle space. Why? Easy one really. This is where there is an increase in "occurrences" (new phrase for accident) taking place across Land.

We ALL chose a risk occupation, and what we do is/can be risky, so we have to push some of the boundaries during training and exercises and rightly so.

However, we still need to do this in a safe manner - I believe that

QDG embracing this. I am starting to be more involved in the training and exercise activities that QDG are doing. This includes deployments from Robertson Bks, which shows that "operation safety" is being considered. This is what the AFPA role is all about. Along with being available to give advice and guidance to reduce the risk to the Soldier.

I would like to thank you all for all the support that you give me, in what I know is not your favourite area. I would particularly like to thank the 2iC, Maj Ben Matthews for supporting me in supporting you.

MF

soldiers at QDG.

It's worth reflecting on how busy QDG are. The Regiment is as busy as it has been over the 24 years the QM(A) has known it. From when he was a Tpr turning up at the gates in Catterick in Jan 2000 when most of the Regiment were in Kosovo, followed by busy years with deployments all over the world – Bosnia, Turkey, Norway, Ireland, Canada, Germany, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kenya, Kuwait, Mali, Sierra Lion, Singapore, Poland, America to name those he can remember. How busy we are isn't new but how small we are compared to the early 2000s is. QDG has never been an 'in camp Regiment'. It's a unit that thrives on deployments. The QMs' departments and the wider HQ Sqn are here to support these tasks and the soldiers deploying on them.

The departments support all these tasks whilst maintaining the camp and working with DIO, ESS and VIVO team

to try and make living in Robertson Barracks comfortable. 2023 has seen: upgrades to accommodation blocks with water pressure and cookers in some kitchens; a new layout to the front of camp which has separated the SFA from working camp and SLA; upgrades to the old central heating main (even though it still isn't on in the JRM...); and upgrades to the power cabling around camp from the 1930s system; site wide free internet (thanks to the RSO and BSM). There is more in the pipeline for 2024 (hopefully heating in the JRM).

2024's look forward is more of the same. Just hopefully without any tornados and with the gaps for key roles filled.

MH

Light Support Detachment

A short note from the stand in RLD Comd Cpl Steve Thurston - 2023 has been a busy year for the LSD Department. With the departure of the previous LSD Commander SSgt Gurung on posting Cpl Thurston has seen this as an opportunity to fill the spot of the LSD Commander while managing the units spares account. Pte Limbu successfully deployed to Germany to support A Sqn on Exercise SABER JUNCTION. Throughout the year the LSD team have successfully supported all the unit deployments mainly from RBMSM. The year ended with a big congratulations to LCpl Gurung on the birth of his baby daughter, who was born the beginning of December.

ST

MT

As QDG MT emerges from a hectic 2022 it leaps directly into a frantic and relentless 2023!

January 2023 saw MT deploy once again, this time to the milder climes of Texas to support 3 Div on Exercise WARFIGHTER. This Divisional planning exercise saw Troops from C Sqn and HQ Sqn deploy as RLS partnered with 1 DSR.

MT managed the vast fleet of hire vehicles to enable multiple meetings, visits and PX runs for the divisional staff. All told the division utilised 60 civilian hire vehicles ranging from Chevrolet pickups to supercharged Dodge Rams! Expertly executed by Sgt Maj 'Sky' Korovulavula and Cpl Mather. In addition, the UST Operators kept 147 individual vehicles and generators topped up and in the fight.

Over the course of the 5-month deployment QDG MT procured, managed, and delivered 300,000 litres of fuel: all the while dealing with the Divisional Staff's mental vehicle requests. Despite the traditional demands of a deployed MT the biggest challenge posed was moving and installing a PT trailer, designed to make it as difficult as possible to move and lift; it still gives the MTO nightmares to this day.

Texas offered those deployed a chance to escape the confines of the camp and explore and enjoy the very best America has to offer...Texas BBQ. Several cows and chickens were eaten to keep MT going!

The return on the MT department was no less frenetic; a relentless round of inspections and audits faced the team. Thankfully, Sgt Powell had kept the home fires burning within the department and the inspections were passed and put to bed...for another 6 months at least!



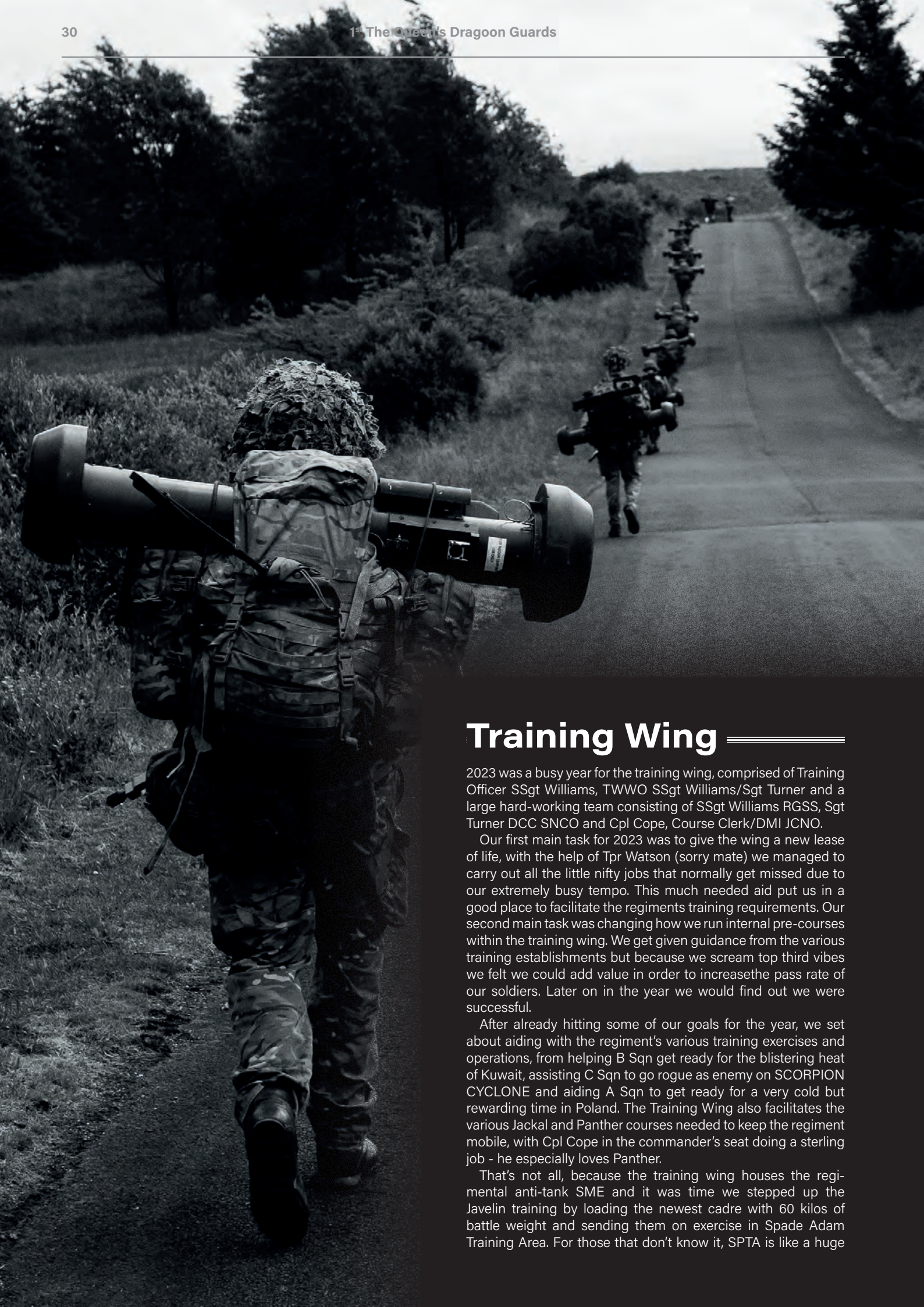
As ever the department's assistance was required to help the Sabre Squadrons' deployments throughout the globe: SCORPION CYCLONE in Salisbury, SABER JUNCTION in Germany, and DIAMONDBACK in the USA. From moving the Soldiers to freighting their equipment, QDG MT has played their part in projecting QDG around the world.

MT faces have changed throughout the year due to postings and leaving the services. MT has gained Mr Ewbank who has come in as MTWO to the utter delight of the MTO who can now finally enjoy a weekend of peace and quiet. SSgt Korovulavula promoted and is now the MT Sgt Major, keeping the new lads fully in check. LCpl Ian Owen remains an MT stalwart, deploying with A Sqn on Op CABRIT 14 as their UST operator. Cpl Mather has now taken up the helm as white fleet NCO. He has discovered the optimum red bull intake and continues to smoke like a 1940s Trooper.

Cpl Thomas has joined us from the Training Wing and continues to claim he is the hardest working man in NATO, despite sleeping 23 hours a day... An honourable mention to LCpl Murphy as he leaves the Army; his dedication to juggling the white fleet desk and not committing murder for late 1000s has been admirable. LCpl Scott has re-joined QDG after a stint on Civvy Street and a few dark years in the MPGS, he has seen the light and finally realised guard duty is grim. Tpr Hudson continues to terrify the Swanton Morley locals with his driving; he is now a pro a 125 point turns in the middle of the sleepy village.

2024 will no doubt provide sufficient headaches for MT and those who work behind the scenes to keep QDG moving and fighting.

RH



Training Wing

2023 was a busy year for the training wing, comprised of Training Officer SSgt Williams, TWWO SSgt Williams/Sgt Turner and a large hard-working team consisting of SSgt Williams RGSS, Sgt Turner DCC SNCO and Cpl Cope, Course Clerk/DMI JCNO.

Our first main task for 2023 was to give the wing a new lease of life, with the help of Tpr Watson (sorry mate) we managed to carry out all the little nifty jobs that normally get missed due to our extremely busy tempo. This much needed aid put us in a good place to facilitate the regiment's training requirements. Our second main task was changing how we run internal pre-courses within the training wing. We get given guidance from the various training establishments but because we scream top third vibes we felt we could add value in order to increase the pass rate of our soldiers. Later on in the year we would find out we were successful.

After already hitting some of our goals for the year, we set about aiding with the regiment's various training exercises and operations, from helping B Sqn get ready for the blistering heat of Kuwait, assisting C Sqn to go rogue as enemy on SCORPION CYCLONE and aiding A Sqn to get ready for a very cold but rewarding time in Poland. The Training Wing also facilitates the various Jackal and Panther courses needed to keep the regiment mobile, with Cpl Cope in the commander's seat doing a sterling job - he especially loves Panther.

That's not all, because the training wing houses the regimental anti-tank SME and it was time we stepped up the Javelin training by loading the newest cadre with 60 kilos of battle weight and sending them on exercise in Spade Adam Training Area. For those that don't know it, SPTA is like a huge



A least I'm not carrying a radio



This sucks

bog, covered in steep hills, plastered in midges, a near perfect training environment for our budding tank slayers. Don't let those zombie faces on return of the exercise fool you, they had a great time. That's not all the Training Wing does though, we LOVE chasing regimental ITRS, so if you're reading this don't forget about the Iron 8 and complete those pesky ITRS in good time for Christmas leave.

It's not all BAMS bookings and ITRs here at the Training Wing. Over Christmas, we had our very own TO/TWWO/RGSS SSgt Williams take part in Ex WHITE KNIGHT, where he was part of the team that came first in the Alpine RAC Championships - a great achievement! He also returned to his laptop after that exercise to find he had over 200 emails, lucky him.

It's a good life in the Training Wing. We get the opportunity to balance running G4 and G7 tasks whilst also getting cam cream on and training and mentoring our future commanders to a high standard. The job is rewarding, and team works hard. As a wing we are looking forward to what the next year brings.

AT

Welfare Office =

2023 has kept the welfare team on their toes. This saw another change of UWO (3 in 3 years!) with Capt John Davies moving to the RCMO role and Capt Christian Eade coming in as the new UWO. With most of the unit deployed in Texas this gave them time to HOTO.

Over the easter period a fun workshop for the families was held in the Den by our Community Support Development worker, Miss Sarah Coote, including making Easter bonnets followed by an Easter egg hunt around Robertson Barracks. Then we were in full swing for summer leave and activities for the families, thanks to a grant from the Armed Forces Covenant Trust (Norfolk) we were able to support Norwich City Football Club Community Support team delivering 2 days of training (unfortunately due to some miserable weather this was all in the gymnasium). We then had 4 days of theatre skills workshop, with some superb dance routine at the end performed by all those who had taken part.

Attention quickly turned to the deployment of A Sqn to Poland and ensuring that they were set up for a successful deployment. Sgt Young organised for the BFBS cinema truck to visit Robertson Barracks with 2 of the latest movies to be released being shown. Mrs Jo Kierstead also very kindly offered to help organise and run a Halloween event.

The Welfare team were then heavily involved in the visit of our new Colonel-in-Chief, HRH the Princess of Wales. This gave an opportunity for a number of families to meet and greet HRH sharing their experiences of what life is like with the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. HRH seemed very impressed with those she had met.

With the blink of an eye, we were looking towards Christmas, with the Christmas Panto a big hit again with the families as well as some of the local children and families from Swanton Morley who we invited to attend. Cpl Bernard was in full Christmas party mode setting up the children's Christmas party in the Sabre Club, including 2 real Christmas Trees kindly donated from the front of the Officers Mess. Miss Coote once again provided some great entertainment for all involved and I would like to take this time to thank the chefs for providing plenty of refreshments for all.

Unfortunately, the Café at the Dragons Den had to close this year, however the soft play area remains available for families. Noah's Ark Pre-School continues to provide superb early years care from all the team there.

We look forwards to 2024 and organising plenty more activities both at Robertson Barracks but also around the local area.

CJE

LAD

This has been another extremely busy year for the LAD. Supporting three multi-national exercises and two Op CABRIT(P) PDTs, fitting in anything other than work has been quite the challenge. As a team of 39 soldiers and one officer, there is no doubt that everyone has excelled in not only pulling their weight as individuals, but also as members of the team. There is no doubt that the QDG LAD is the best LAD in the 1 DRS BCT and perhaps the Army.

At the start of the year, the LAD went straight into enabling the QDG's deployment on Ex WARFIGHTER, where both C Sqn and elements of HQ Sqn Fitter Section acted as OPFOR and 3XX RLS. Concurrently, B Sqn Ftr Sect deployed on Ex DESERT WARRIOR - an STTT to Kuwait and led by (then) Cpl Quant, the team assisted in the successful training of the Kuwaiti armed forces. Around the same time, A Sqn Ftr Sect started PDT for ROTO 14 of Op CABRIT(P). Led by SSgt Ormston, members of the Ftr Sect joined in with driver training and mounted live firing, whilst always maintaining the necessary equipment availability. The PDT culminated in delivering effective Equipment Support (ES) on Ex SABER JUNCTION, with the A Sqn Ftr Sect managing to be its own best customer.

The LAD celebrated its upcoming



The LAD dinner night



None were technically taskworthy





rotations of Op CABRIT(P) by having a formal workshop dinner night. Part funded by Comd ES, and hosting the Regt, the LAD marked the last time everyone would be together until 2025. In the late summer, members of the LAD sprayed and supplied a 4X4 DMAX vehicle to Ukraine in less than 72 hours. C & HQ Sqns then deployed on Ex SCORPION CYCLONE, the 1 DRS BCT validation exercise. Here, the LAD enabled high-intensity-combat for one Sabre Sqn as well as low-intensity-combat for HQ Sqn: maintaining high equipment availability throughout. Concurrently, B



Cfn Brookes achieved a resounding success in her boxing bout



Sqn Ftr Sect deployed to the US on Ex DIAMONDBACK, with the LAD successfully enabling PDT for ROTO 15 of Op CABRIT(P).

In November the LAD visited SUPACAT, the home of HMTV. Hosted by Phil for the day, members of the LAD got to look around the SUPACAT factory, as well as see some of their newer projects. After a successful day, the team came away with lots of new ideas and hopeful trials for 2024, including deployed augmented reality repair.

The LAD also had the opportunity to visit Silverstone earlier in the year.

The LAD concluded the year with a

unique celebration on St Eligius Day, building petrol-powered go-karts from the smallest assemblies possible. This fantastic day not only showcased their engineering skills but also added a touch of excitement with the go-karts reaching speeds of approximately 20mph.

This year, the LAD also enjoyed a multi-discipline AT package in Scotland and Cfn Brookes achieved a resounding success in her boxing bout with the Bahraini Army. She was later selected for an international tour of Australia which she starts in 2024.

NT



That's what we meant when we asked for a wind shield



The LAD Dinner



Sports day



The Det



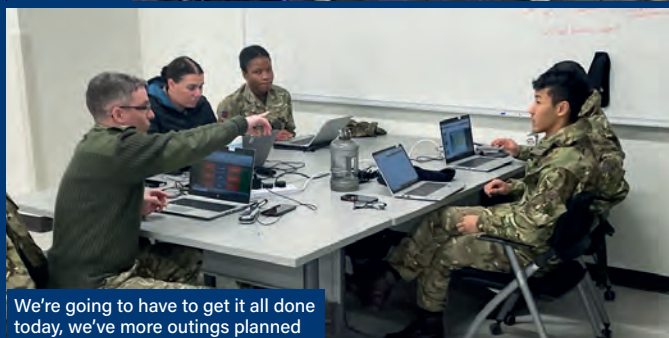
Getting out...



No ma'am nowhere near as spicy as my jacket



...and about



We're going to have to get it all done today, we've more outings planned

AGC SPS

As for all, it has been a busy year for the Detachment at 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. Several OTXs combined with Adventurous Training, success in the sporting arena and a number of team cohesion events have ensured that life at Robertson Barracks has been enjoyable to say the least.

Exceptional performances whilst deployed overseas, in camp, on exercise in the UK and on the sports field has seen the team receive recognition. This year we have had people in receipt of coins and commendations from GOC 3UKXX, Comd SPS 3UKXX, SPS Branch Col, SPS Branch SM and Director Army Sport.

With travels to the USA, Kosovo, and Poland the team have been presented some great opportunities this year. From bull riding in Texas, long distance marches in Poland and a weekend half marathon in Swanton Morley it has been a year of firsts for many of the team. The team participated in the Triple Crown Challenge, putting in a respectable performance in the military skills competition. They are now looking forward to entering the March and Shoot in 2024.

There has again been success in several sports this year, whether that be squash, athletics, boxing, basketball, wakeboarding, skiing, or triathlon. There

has been representation at unit level all the way up to Team GB Masters and everything in between.

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. Whether that be skiing in Austria, mountain biking in the local area, or quiz nights in Darby's, these opportunities have ensured the team have had an enjoyable year. It cannot also go without mentioning Estabulos, the all you can eat steak house in Norwich, which has slowly become a firm favourite for the team.

Catering Department

This year, 3rd (UK) Division tasked 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG) to provide the real-life support for the Exercise Warfighter in Texas, USA. The QDG Catering department was responsible for providing catering facilities for all personnel from 3rd (UK) Division involved in the exercise. This involved coordinating the operations field cooking system (OFCS) and deploying chefs from 3 Div.

A total of 22 complete sets of operational feeding catering systems were successfully transported to Texas. Additionally, we managed to gather 49 chefs from across the brigade. The chefs were divided into three locations within Texas: the Motor Pool and Boaz feeding 500 individuals each, and Elijah feeding 300 service personnel. This exercise was a remarkable achievement, thanks to the highly skilled chefs across the unit who supported it. In total, 12 coins were awarded to the chefs from various members from the Chain of Command.

Despite the challenges faced, the exercise provided a valuable opportunity for chefs to interact with their peers from various units. Knowledge sharing between the chefs and their juniors was encouraged, allowing for a rich learning experience. The exercise lasted almost three months, requiring the team to work 12-hour shifts every day. In addition to their kitchen duties, the chefs also had the chance to participate in adventurous training and explore the local area, enhancing their cultural understanding of the USA.

The chefs have proven that they are a valuable asset for the Army with their responsibilities also extending to providing support to contractors and



BOAZ Field Kitchen Blown away by Tornado.

fulfilling all commitments within the units. It was fortunate to have the opportunity to send chefs to various exercises and tours, such as Cpl Akerman's deployment to Germany for 4 weeks to support the Sandhurst cadre course. Pte Cooper has been deployed to Op CABRIT 13 for 6 months and is due to return on in

March 2024. LCpl Tice was deployed to Ex SCORPION CYCLONE, where he was awarded a Commanding Officer's Coin from 6 REME Battalion. He spent four weeks on the exercise, greatly enhancing his experience and skills.

TR



"No more pan bashing from tomorrow"



EX WARFIGHTER Catering troops

A Non-Stop Year for QDG RAP



Just a quick incision

2023 was another busy year for the QDG RAP (when isn't it?) with deployments and exercises sending us around the UK and overseas. We have a small, but extremely capable team. For each of us the year has been personally rewarding, and we're proud to have represented the regiment around the world.

To start with a special note, 2023 was

particularly rewarding for Sgt Lee Barter, RN, who received his Joint Commander's Certificate of Commendation, awarded for his contribution to Force Health Protection during OP NEWCOMBE 3. Huge congratulations! This was thoroughly deserved.

The year started with the 6-month large-scale, international, Ex WARFIGHTER in Texas, USA, where I and other elements of the RAP integrated with 3DSR to provide med cover for the largest WARFIGHTER exercise the British Army has been involved in for 30 years.

Cpl Carradus and B Sqn deployed on Ex DESERT WARRIOR in the challenging Kuwaiti desert environment, where they trained alongside 1 Royal Anglian in a number of mounted and dismounted fighting skills and medical training. Later in the year Cpl Carradus also deployed on an STTT in Kenya, with his focus on providing medical training to the Kenyan Defence Force.

In September I deployed on Ex SCORPION CYCLONE/IRON TITAN in Salisbury Plain with C Sqn. I thoroughly enjoyed spending time in the field with the Sqn, practicing our green "back to basics" skills as a Sqn, and then having the opportunity to test

these as we provided OPFOR against the rest of the Bde.

LCpl Higgins and Cpl Mascall both deployed on Op INTERFLEX where they provided medical care to both UK and international troops. Their medical skills were thoroughly put to the test with a high number and wide variety of medical presentations coming through their doors day in, day out.

LCpl Jon Hiscocks has deployed on Op CABRIT 14 with A Sqn and we look forward to welcoming him back in 2024.

The year ended with Ex DIAMOND-BACK. Cpl Carradus and Sgt Henry had the privilege of working alongside our American colleagues to test and streamline our MEDEVAC chains with several excellent learning points taken away to inform and implement in the future.

We've had to say farewell to a few team members in 2023. Sgt Ryan Henry posted to DMS Whittington, Cpl Matthew Parsley successfully promoted to Sgt and posted to 16 Med Regt, and Sgt Lee Barter has completed his time in the Army. He now begins his new journey training as an electrician. We wish you all the best! We thus welcomed Sgt Krysti-Marie Hanslow to the team in 2023, with whom we all look forward to working with. I will be posting to HQ Sqn in 2024. I appreciate the support and trust that C Sqn granted me, and I look forward to new adventures with HQ Sqn.

RP



Sgt Barter awarded the Joint Commander's Commendation

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Gymnasium

Introduction

2023 has been another very successful and busy year for the gymnasium. As a department we have had a big influence in various areas such as sport, physical development, major regimental deployments, and event organisation for the unit and brigade.

Sport Prowess

The sporting success continued in 2023, with Capt Cooper representing the unit in RAC Champs in Boxing and walking away with a win. This was an incredible fight to watch. All of the hard work Capt Cooper put in prior to the fight, having been coached by SSgt Parsons and Capt Phillpott, paid off. It's all fun and games till you get punched in the face.

Cpl Marais represented the Regiment in London at the Battle Cancer Event; this is a civilian competition. The competition consisted of four workouts testing all aspects of fitness. Competition was fierce, competing against 100 plus competitors. Impressively, he managed to take 15th place overall.

SSgt Parsons has delivered a Level 1 Boxing Coaching course, that was open to the wider Army for any individuals interested to become a boxing coach. This was very successful course, and he



On the 12th take biceps were sufficiently flexed

qualified 15 new coaches. 8 of these new coaches are members of the QDG and will go on and train boxers to fight in the Regimental Boxing Night.

In addition to all the success we have had as a department, we've also hosted a Bde-level 7s rugby event, linked to SSgt Parsons' role as the Secretary for Midlands Rugby.

Regimental Exercises

The Regiment continued its busy year as A Squadron prepared for their deployment of Op CABRIT. The gymnasium conducted pre-deployment training ensuring that the squadron was in paramount condition to enable them to achieve what could be expected of them whilst on deployment.

End Note

It has been yet again another successful and rewarding year for the Gymnasium and the staff on a whole. Rolling into 2024 with pre-deployment training commencing early in the new year preparing B Squadron for their deployment to Op Cabrit.

GP



I have to stay dry, its in the risk assessment

Sgt Thomas: I only became a PTI because I couldn't spell Sargent

That's the warm up complete, dress over to your logs



It has been yet again another successful and rewarding year for the Gymnasium



Guardroom

Ah yes, stag. A soldier's delight. "Civvies pay thousands for this", as they did for this brand new, state of the art guard box with heating system fitted (ideal gonk box for a 10 minute snooze while it's not busy), a new state of the art gate with flashing lights, and a brand new fence line to give the pads an even bigger divide and line of defence against last minute stashings.

Here at the RBSM guardroom your safety is our main priority, and we continue to pride ourselves with a staggering 100% success rate in 2023 against any terrorist attack, drone swarm and infiltration.... although I can't say the same about an insider threat, especially after a few beers...

The old, trusted Gate Guardian is still doing a fine job at the gate, captured in Iraq during the first Gulf War. Afterall "one man's diffy is another man's buckshee".

Although we are peacetime soldiers (for now), there's a lot going on in the world, with new fronts popping up all over the globe. QDG are busier than ever. With more boots out the door and nearly every Sqn deployed simultaneously, manpower is strapped, especially for camp security. This is where the MPGS and Civil Guard Service step in. We thankfully now have only 2 QDG Troopers on the gate within a 24-hour period (backfilled by MPGS and CGS): one Guard Commander and a 2ic that man the guardroom itself, taking up a lot of the slack from the manning of the guard force to ensure the freedom for more troops to deploy when needed.

Daily clearance patrols are sent out to ensure the perimeter is checked and that camp is secure and it's no question that these assets are priceless to the ongoing, daily security that's needed to RBSM.

Onto the military discipline and general housekeeping side of Robertson Barracks, where the Regimental Duty Staff consists of one staff member - Cpl Jones, who has several roles with the QDG. These include the really FUN stuff, including general fire and gas safety ensuring relevant buildings are up to date with weekly fire checks, as well as gas tank readings. This, in addition to ensuring the right personnel are attending duties parade and guard mount on time, in the right kit, and that overall discipline and dress regulations are abided by across the regiment.

Finally the real punchy stuff, the sharp end of the blade. We're talking illegally parked cars, we're talking mullets, we're talking the constant battle that is areas and the odd fly tipping (pads)! Don't forget the odd trip to Colchester for the naughty boys and girls who got caught- "Rule number one... Don't get caught".

We hope 2024 is as prosperous as 2023, minus the trips to Colly... and the fly tipping (pads)... and the AGAIs.

RDS Joke Corner

Whats red and white and goes up and down?
The gate, Get on it!

Padre

My first year with QDG has flown by and I am really enjoying working with everyone at the regiment as we fly into my second year. 2023 started for me on retreat in North Wales – time for clergy to get together and focus on worship and prayer life and I was joined by my colleague Padre Adele from the Army Air Corps. On my return my main effort was to get the church on camp up and running and I commenced the first services in church for years.

In February the Army stopped again to take part in Op TEAMWORK and A Squadron used the church for their day's activities and the space worked really well.

I was awarded my first regimental leek on St David's Day by the RSM then took part in the day, the main event of course being the raw leek eating, which was disgusting! But a really good day. Later in March saw a visit to Sandown Park and a day at the races for the Gold Cup – Miss Spicer the biggest winner of the day! A busy month also saw the baptism of my first children on camp where the Rose family joined me at Swanton Morley church – it really was a beautiful day! Please do come see me if you want your children baptised, it's very special! I was joined on camp with Rev Kirsty Allan for a Mess Day which involved some shooting – she turned out to be the shot of the day, having had no previous Army training!

Easter on camp saw a service in the church for the children with an Easter

“
this was a
tough gig
with a tricky
audience



They walked into a bar and the barkeep said...

Egg hunt followed by an Easter Parade, our children showing off their Easter bonnets that they had made with their families and friends. Later in April I visited A Squadron on Salisbury Plain – getting stuck in London on the way!

In May, of course, our King and Queen were crowned and we had a church parade from camp and our very own street party held outside the Officers' Mess, which was a super afternoon.

In June the Rev Rachael Dines commenced in her role as Rector at Swanton Morley and we very much enjoy working together.

Probably the highlight of the year for me was in July when I brought SSgt Craig Ellis RAPTC (then QMSI) to confirmation. The Bishop of Lyn agreed to conduct the service at our own church on camp and Mr Ellis was joined by friends and family

as well as the Commanding Officer and his wife. It was a truly wonderful occasion and should anyone want to find out more about confirmation – please do come and see me.

Another exciting opportunity arose for me to represent the regiment when I was invited to preach at the Guards Chapel – however this was a tough gig with a tricky audience – I hope that box is now ticked!

In September I finally deployed and visited A Squadron in Germany – a busy but great few days and later that month returned to Salisbury Plain to visit C Squadron.

November saw of course the visit of the Princess of Wales – I have never met royalty before and this was truly exciting – then of course the sombreness of our Remembrance service and parade which led into the joy of Christmas.

QDG – what a year – always all in my prayers.

ACW (Padre)

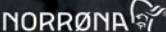


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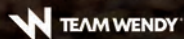
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Officers' Mess

As ever, much of the Officers' Mess found itself dislocated throughout 2023, with the first quarter of the year seeing C Sqn in Texas, B Sqn in Kuwait and RHQ in Canada. The highlight of the start of the year was the now annual Officers' Mess Shoot which was very generously held at Hoe Hall by Mr and Mrs Keith. Veterans of the sport and newbies alike enjoyed the day, with Captain Allington taking particular delight in blowing the head clean off one unsuspecting pheasant, a technique colloquially known as 'pillow casing'. Many of the birds that day seemed to be particularly lucky, leading many Mess members to wonder if they had been supplied with blank cartridges... The total bag was a respectable 72.

Capt E Cooper, T Wills, R Fulloway, S Upward and Lt H Swailes were lucky enough to 'deploy' to the Falkland Islands for a working weekend to visit Capt ZMAYH Al-Khamiri, who had very gamely put on a Waterloo Dinner Night in HQ BFSAL. We were lucky enough to



Three blondes don't make a right

deliver the Waterloo Speeches with equal parts pride, passion, and panache. It went down well, especially in the tri-service setting where the other two services seem to occasionally lack in those 3Ps. The team was also lucky enough to see all 5 species of Penguin in the Falkland Islands (strangely always beating us in rock, paper, scissors – devious little things) and to be taken on a tour of the

RAF's Quick Reaction Alert (although we were quick to remind them that of course the real top guns were the Voyager pilots – those guys do some serious flying).

The next social event of the year was Cavalry Memorial Weekend in May, which saw an excellent turnout of Officers. After the dinner on the Friday night, much of the mess descended into Embargo's and were met by a handful of other halves, who were told that 'a bunch of handsome men in black tie have just turned up girls, it's your lucky night' (or so the story goes). The Sunday Cavalry Memorial, a sombre and moving event, was followed by lunch in Boisdale's as is traditional for everyone up to and including the Adjutant.

In the Spring we received Arthur Purbrick RL (who? Never heard of them) as C Sqn Ldr, then B Sqn Ldr. The Officers' Mess Summer Ball, based on the theme of 'A Day at the Races' was quite the occasion, with the variety of outfits being quite astonishing. The event started with guests and mess members racing wheeled, unpowered vehicles around the island outside the mess,



Dickie plays rugby?



Matt.. We said no manspreading

unleashing hitherto unseen competitiveness from many. Capt B Maltman continued his tradition of never making it to the end of a night when his girlfriend Tess was viciously run over by a tricycle (the culprit has never revealed herself). The buffet dinner was excellent, and Cpl Gurung outdid himself as ever. The band also raised the roof – not quite as much as Captain and Adjutant E Cooper reciting his AI-generated anthem about Cavalry Officers ‘crushing beers together, toasting history, with a nod to Waterloo.’ We truly are living in a brave new world... The night continued with

The Officers’ Mess managed to sneak in Easy Jet Roulette this year for the first time in a while, ending up in Turin after excellent planning by Lt F Maddison. A raucous affair which started with Capt F Holland and Lt H Swailes missing the flight after an airport Guinness, and then turning up unannounced at midnight that



13 Dragoons, 4 attached arms, and some Lancers in a pear tree

night after the rest of us thought they’d sacked off the weekend. Turin locals were left wondering why the Norwich City Reserve Team did not turn up for their much-announced friendly with Turin FC on the Monday, despite much chat about having ‘a little scrimmage.’

The Autumn saw Maj T Graham SCOTS DG (a very junior regiment) arrive as OC C and PMC, and quickly attempt to stamp his Jacobitism onto the mess (Senior Subaltern note - fear not dear reader, it shan’t happen). With A Sqn deployed to Poland, B to California, and C to Salisbury Plain, social events took a back burner in the Autumn until the Partners’ dinner night in November, which saw a very healthy attendance, and the novel addition of a RAF Volunteer Band playing during dinner for perhaps the first and last time.

The traditional silly season saw F Sqn visit the Mess, at the same time as the

Bishop of Norwich who kindly blessed the Bible that the Padre has gifted the mess (The Rev Capt R Fulloway looking on and grumbling about stolen sandwiches or something). No jokes were made about the Bishop of Norwich passing the port –

maybe he snoozed through that part? The Commanding Officer invited the local great and good along for the Mess Cocktail Party, at which we are famed for not actually serving cocktails. A great event which judging by the thank you notes went down extremely well.

It’s been a busy year in the Officers’ Mess with social events taking place seemingly weekly, making the most of when Squadrons happen to be in camp together. Long

may it continue! A massive thank you must go to the mess staff – Jo the cleaner, Coralie, Hannah, Debbie, Ann-Marie, and all others overseen by the Mess Manager Jade, all as steadfast as ever.

TWW



Red card. The collar used to close once upon a time

No jokes were made about the Bishop of Norwich passing the port

Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess



Regtl Christmas day.

This year has been a quieter than usual year for the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess due to exercises and operations. The Mess has continued to celebrate key events including a pensioner's dine out, where the mess dined out Maj Mansel and has also supported A Sqn Mess Members to celebrate Christmas while deployed on Op CABRIT 14.

The start of the year saw the hand over take over of Regimental Sergeant Major from WO1 Chant to WO1 Ruddy. WO1 Chant moved to Sandhurst and assumed the role of the senior advisor for the Centre of Army Leadership (CAL). As a Mess we wish him all the best in a role he will certainly flourish in.

As a Mess, we continued to reinforce relations with the Officers' Mess and would usually try and fit a few events in the calendar to incorporate both Messes. This year, the Officers were hosted by the Mess for a clay pigeon shoot followed by a BBQ in the Mess. The weather had other plans and it was almost rained off, but as the age old saying goes "If it ain't raining, we ain't training". The shoot went ahead and Capt Carter (RSO) turned up giving Mess Members advice on the best



The HOTO of Regimental twitter account

methods to use, but was quickly put in his place when SSgt Wright took the lead and put Capt Carter firmly back in his box. We then moved back to the Mess and continued the afternoon with a BBQ.

Waterloo 208 was the next major event in the calendar. The evening was a great success, and this year was some of the best skits the mess has seen. This involves a lance serial that went embarrassingly wrong but was swiftly rectified by Maj O'Shea. This year is also the first time that the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess has won both the cricket and the rugby, placing both trophies where they rightly belong.

Towards the end of the year, the regiment



PMC's HOTO complete. Accounts intact

celebrated Regimental Christmas Day. The day was a great opportunity to get everyone together and calibrate as a Mess. Upon rehearsing the Christmas carol, we soon realised that SSgt Taylor had been hiding his ability to sing with pitch perfect precision. The Mess utilised this when we sang our carol to the Officers' Mess and Tails delivered an outstanding solo. After being hosted by the Officers' Mess, including an outstanding curry, we moved down to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess where the nails tournament began. I think it's safe to say that since Germany, both Messes have slight skill fade.

The year ended with some movement within the committee. The President of the Mess Committee (PMC), WO2 McKinnon, has handed over to WO2 Roberts prior to B Sqn deploying on Op CABRIT. Due to pre-deployment training, the only time Mr McKinnon and Mr Roberts could complete the hand over take over was in Las Vegas on the strip. Times are tough.

2024 will be another busier than usual year due to operational commitments, however the mess will continue to celebrate key events and support those deployed on operations.



Corporals' Mess



Let the Showdown begin.

It was a quiet start to 2023 for the Corporals' Club, with B and C Squadrons posted to various places around the world, chiefly Kuwait, Texas and Germany. With A Squadron beginning to prepare for their PDT cycle for Op CABRIT 14, it did not leave many people to keep the Mess engaged. However, with the Regiment back by the summer, it was all go. Tea and Toast was back open on a Wednesday, with Cpl Bernard delivering the equipment. A money saver meaning we did not have to spend any cash to get it going, which in my eyes as the PMC is a win. Tea and Toast is a great opportunity that enables JNCOs to catch up, have a moan and, most importantly, a medium to okay brew - but for 50p who's complaining. A chance to get out of work for 30 minutes and leave the Tprs in charge is well worth it.

The onset of summer brought about the organisation of the summer function for the Cpls' Club. An immense effort

was put in from all involved, balancing the fast-approaching leave period and choosing to do a contact sport in the form of Zorb fighting. You could imagine the headache when it came to the various health and safety hoops that we needed to jump through. You could imagine my panic to be told that morning, that the Risk Assessment was not quite adequate for fighting in giant inflatable zorbs, but after a bit of a rush about and sitting down with the right people we got the go ahead. With things finally going our way, despite a heat wave we had been in for several weeks, the clouds suddenly broke and a rainstorm followed. However, as with any typical British Soldier, we donned our slightly hideous Hawaiian shirts, got kitted out and all ganged up on Cpl Hutchings who, even after a valiant effort, was taken down for all his previous sins to the Cpls' Club. Running the Cpls' Mess means you are required to not just host

“
...a carol that
can only be
described as
unrepeatable
but hilarious



Cpl Duthie-Thomas taking a break from Mountain Biking.

an entertaining event but be responsible for the safety of all involved. It was at this point I looked away and wasn't leading from the front.

Rounding out the year, we like to finish with the Regimental Christmas Day. It is a good chance to eat the Christmas Dinner and then throw it at each other immediately after the RSM looks away. We had the pleasure to have Tpr Jude Brown sing a carol that can only be described as unrepeatable but hilarious. The games then began, JNCO vs the Tprs, involving classics such as Boat Racing, Doss Bag Racing and Toy Soldiers. Another poor show was put in by the Tprs, and as usual, they did not win a single event. There is always next year however, maybe the Corporals Club shall let them win one event to keep their Christmas spirits up.

LP



B Sqn Hero's... can tell by their sleeves.



Regimental Mascot

Corporal Emrys Forlan Jones

This year, Cpl Jones has had a busy year travelling the length of the country and attending many varied events, including greeting the new King and paying his respects after the passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The Regimental Mascot and the Farrier Major have been working hard to keep the Regiment's name well estab-

lished within Wales and the Marches by attending many military events and a large number of shows across Wales and the Border Counties. Towards the end of the year, Cpl Jones and the Farrier Major have been supporting Dreams & Wishes, a worthy charity that the Regiment have been supporting for years.

MH



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Ex DESERT WARRIOR

Ex DESERT WARRIOR was a deployment to Kuwait in Feb 23 during which B Sqn QDG delivered both Dismounted and Mounted Close Combat courses to the Kuwaiti Land Forces (KLF). The deployment was complemented by a small detachment from 1RANG Support Plt who ran Sharpshooter and Javelin cadres for QDG soldiers, making the most of the freedom that comes with using a Kuwaiti range.

The QDG has a strong history with Kuwait, playing a significant part in its liberation in 1991, and again, situating its forces in Kuwait prior to the 2003 Iraq invasion – something which Sgt Maj Davies 220, B Sqn SQMS, liked to remind our hosting partners. Working with the KLF provided its own unique nuances, and the Sqn had to adapt quickly to what was considered a slightly slower pace of life (no complaints from the troops) and an abstract rank structure which required some diplomatic efforts to navigate. Interestingly, the KLF is equipped primarily with American supplied equipment (Abrams, Apache etc), however also fields a massive fleet of BMPs which are still maintained by Russians mechanics – leading to an extensive rethink of security considerations (no eating breakfast with the Russians).

Both training teams completed their courses without issue, and the KLF showed particular interest in the reconnaissance tactics used on Op NEWCOMBE. Having experienced soldiers in both teams provided the KLF with valuable insights that could be used in their future deployments. The KLF reconnaissance platform is the Sherpa, a French made (unreliable) armoured vehicle that somewhat resembles a HMMVW, and as such, situational awareness is limited when compared with a platform such as Jackal. To fill this gap, the KLF use the most modern UAS systems, and our teams were able to show them best practices, that again were refined on Op NEWCOMBE.

B Sqn's time in Kuwait was a great experience, with all soldiers gaining a valuable understanding of defence engagement and the role we play within it.

ACW



Tubbs the terp



In Arab culture its offensive to show the soles of your feet' (ARB)



Are we in cover?



I haven't got a CLU how to use this thing



Which way is Baghdad?



Sorry Cassie



Lawrence of Arabia from Wish



I swear we had more than this



So how do we get this to fly?



The SSM said all the smokes have to go



Sgt Casey shows off his Christmas presents



This one time on TELIC



Providing we don't have any tornados we'll only have to do this once



Its just mine looks bigger than the others



If we stand here long enough someone will hog tie us



Gound game may only be taken with a bayonet



Sangar construction



SFA has really gone down hill



Sirs, ma'ams ladies and gents



Are we on expenses?

WFX 23.4 RLS

In late January, C Sqn & significant elements of HQ Sqn deployed to Fort Hood, Texas. Their mission was delightfully simple. Set conditions for the upcoming 3(UK) Divisional, 'Exercise Warfighter 23.4'. 'The Iron Division' would fight virtually alongside our multinational partners as part of a 10,000 strong deployment.

As always, the immediate priorities for the team were securing food and shelter. Unfortunately, before these could begin, the team were hit by their first Tornado, destroying two of the six marquees used to accommodate troops in Fort Hood. Brilliant.

Having re-established the temporary accommodation, the next challenge came in the form of preparation of two FIBUA villages which would serve as accommodation for the exercise. Regrettably, these villages were not weatherproofed and thus were infested with bats. Not only would the bats serve as an unwelcome cot bed companion, but they also produced a significant amount of toxic faeces. Nonetheless, troops donned the hazmat suits and got cracking.

Whilst the villages were being de-pooed (technical term), another small team were establishing a 'Glastonbury' style network of tents which would serve as the field kitchens, continuously assessing the tie down straps for Tornado-proofing.

In a matter of weeks conditions were set. All that was left to do was to don the marigolds, sharpen the potato peelers and produce the Guard rota.

Not seen as the most desirable of deployments, rest assured troops managed to utilise the limited stand down periods to explore the local area and embed themselves in Texan culture. The Division had managed to facilitate the use of a nearby lake, which would be used for Adventurous Training. Troops were able to go Horse Riding, Paintballing, play numerous sports and Texas being Texas, fish for Bass!

As the exercise ended, thoughts of the RLS team turned to close down and recovery of equipment. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on your position within the G4 chain), yet another tornado struck the area, destroying one of the 'Glastonbury' field kitchens but enabling a slightly speedier recovery than previously thought.

The statistics are hazy, however some rough estimates are as follows: during the exercise troops cleared 6.2 tons of bat faeces, installed 340 windows and doors, cleaned 1,234,500 pans, and took control of 3 different stag positions for a total of 6700 hrs. Approximately...

Needless to say, the troops did the QDG proud, whether it was providing the Ped Trap Daily Quiz or simply being a friendly face to those Divisional Staff in need of logistical support!

ED



Riding with the US Color Guard



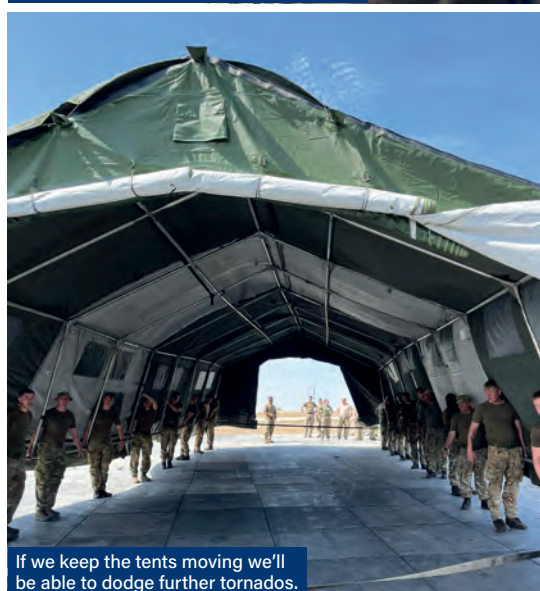
If you're the junior general on camp you're going to have to eat that leek



This should keep some of the sunlight out



Either the mascot has grown or...



If we keep the tents moving we'll be able to dodge further tornados.



Like I said, RLS for a virtual exercise, whats hard to understand?

Op ATLANTIC WATERLOO

Almost six months into his time as ADC to Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands, Captain Al-Khamiri was summoned to see his boss. He was informed that both the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force had hosted dinner nights for all those based in the Falklands, and now it was the British Army's turn. Having spent his whole time there telling anyone who would listen that the QDG throw the best parties, the Commander felt nobody was better placed to organise it than the man himself - Captain Zaki Misan Ali Yusuf Hassan Al-Khamiri.

Thus, Op ATLANTIC WATERLOO was born. With no time to spare Captains Cooper, Wills, Fulloway, and Upward and Lieutenant Swailes departed Brize Norton in support of their brother officer, for no QDG officer should dine alone. Travelling under the guise of a Battle-field Study (there was an official admin instruction, it counts), the intrepid quintet flew into the Falkland Islands.

The following seven days were filled with activity after activity - a poignant visit to Goose Green and the British and

Argentine War Cemeteries, delivering briefs on the QDG and DRS, a guest appearance on BFBS, the (accidental) illegal boarding of HMS Medway, a tour of the Typhoons and the launch of the Met Office's latest weather balloon. The Waterloo supper itself, described by some as the best party the Falklands has seen since the 14th June 1982, went off without a hitch. The QDG officers delivered the tale of Waterloo with pride, passion and panache. Being younger than the NAAFI, the RAF were taken completely by surprise that we used to fight the French in battle! Swords were waved, drinks were toasted and spirits were raised. As the night came to a close in the very early hours of the following day, the QDG officers were able to rest easy knowing they had once again succeeded in preserving our reputation.

I leave you with words from the good book(ish), "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his leave for another man's bluff."

RWF



It was not the first, not the last time that someone told him the RAF weren't even there



Fine specimens



The underwater knife fighting course finally bearing fruit



The Way of the Penguin



In the highest tradition



Up with the Partridge

Exercise LONGLOOK 22-23

In October 2022 Capt Maltman and LCpl Allen were fortunate enough to begin their working holiday visa programme: oops no, sorry, I mean a demanding interoperability and Defence Engagement exercise with the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF). Still relatively fresh back from Op NEWCOMBE 2 it provided an excellent opportunity to share recent operational experience with the NZDF, and to learn and experience new methods and skills from our colleagues 'down under'. The visit was kindly sponsored by The Queen Alexandra's Mounted Rifles (QAMR), the cavalry Regiment of the NZDF. Later in the exchange both LCpl Allen and Capt Maltman were hosted by the Reconnaissance and Sniper Platoon (R&S PI) of 1 Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (1 RNZIR). The exchange was centred on the main NZDF garrison location of Linton Camp, Palmerston North in the southern half of the North Island. However, there was also plenty of opportunity for travel to see and experience the beauty and welcome of the 'Land of the Long White Cloud' This was thanks in part to some careful planning to ensure that the deployment ran through into Feb 23 and thereby ensured that Christmas Leave (during the southern summer) was captured and taken while in theatre.

From Oct to Dec 22 the focus was on

mounted work with QAMR. This began with both QDGs each being individually on the receiving end of a Regimental level welcome Haka, a formidable experience that was taken with a traditional British wooden awkwardness. Military training began with familiarisation on the NZ LAV platform including a crash course in turret command and gunnery drills. The training was essential preparation for deployment on Ex PHANTOM MAJOR, the largest NZDF combined arms exercise post COVID and which was designed to test the next generation of Combat Arm sub-unit commanders. Training then progressed to Ex BEERSHEBA which was the Unit's mounted, tactical live fire training phase. During this period LCpl Allen also fostered a relationship with the Sniper Platoon of 1 RNZIR so that, post Christmas / summer leave and many a road trip later, both Dragoons' attention turned to embedding with 1 RNZIR R&S PI. This allowed for participation in multiple range packages focusing on long range shooting techniques.

LCpl Allen returned home in Feb 23 for courses but Capt Maltman with some quite open begging to both QDG RHQ and NZDF extended until the end of March 23. Remaining in country for the full six months allowed participation in further essential events including working with the Recce PI



Cadre, gaining an insight to operating in close country, assisting on the Sniper Selection Cadre and attending the Anti-Material rifle course. All of which just happened to coincide with the start of the stag rut and the stalking season and also gave more time for Capt Maltman to grow out a popular southern hemisphere hair style... During the exchange both QDGs were hosted fabulously well, attending regular Regimental and Army social events, but also made hugely welcome at a personal level by the Soldiers and Officers of the NZDF - creating many lasting friendships.

Chur brothers!

BM





Who fancies an early knock off?



Not that tight!



Can we practice with the fentanyl?



We need a flag to hide our shoes

Kenya STTT

On 5th June 2023 a Short-Term Training Team (STTT) deployed to Kenya to run a Convoy Escort Course for the Kenyan Defence Force (KDF) at the Kenyan School of Infantry (Sol). The STTT consisted of two officers and seven NCOs from B Squadron, with in-country support provided by British Peace Support Team (Africa) (BPST(A)). The course ran from 12 Jun– 06 Jul 23 with a student body of 18 KDF soldiers. The STTT was tasked to teach KDF soldiers how to conduct convoy escorts for use on operations in Somalia as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia

(AMISOM), and to enable them to subsequently instruct other members of the KDF on the subject.

Somalia is key to generating stability and peace in East Africa and further afield. The KDF are engaged in ongoing operations in Somalia as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). AMISOM seeks to support the Govt of Somalia in operations to counter terrorist activity from Al-Shabaab. The British Military have supported Kenya in this mission through the work of the British Peace Support Team (Africa) (BPST(A)), delivering, amongst other things, Short

Term Training Teams (STTTs) to the KDF. The KDF have recently identified their ability to conduct convoy escorts as a weakness in their capability, which was being exploited by Al-Shabaab using IEDs and "shoot and scoot" tactics. QDG was tasked to continue an STTT set up by HCR to deliver a four-week course to help fill this capability gap. The STTT was aligned to 3UKXX, offering a unique opportunity for soldiers in the Warfighting Division to improve their ability to instruct and adapt to a different working environment.

The accommodation was beautifully



So all IEDs are marked with orange mine tape?



Definitely working



Short Term Tanning Team



I think he might be stuck?

Ex BAVARIAN EAGLE

July 2023 saw members of B Sqn head out to Lodge Haus Magnus, the Joint Service Mountain Training Wing Bavaria for some well-earned Adventurous Training. Soldiers were offered the choice to gain their Rock-Climbing Single Pitch Foundation qualification, Summer Mountaineering Foundation qualification or go Mountain Biking without gaining a qualification. The Bavarian summer heat saw the troops up early making their packed sandwiches (remoulade was a novelty and a highly popular choice of spread), heading out to conduct their training for most of the day before often rewarding themselves with a swim in the infamous Alpsee and Schwansee Lakes providing breath-taking views of Neuschwanstein Castle.

Lt Logan's 25th Birthday came around whilst in Bavaria to which the troops felt it was necessary to provide her with 25 birthday shots and a night out down the local to foster team spirit and ethos. With some sore heads the following morning it was necessary to spend their one day off near water activities and ice cream.

It was a fantastic opportunity to develop teamwork, resilience and leadership whilst in a controlled risk environment amongst the troops. AT is vital to boost morale during the ever-more busying schedule of the Army and enhances the unit's operational effectiveness in the longer term. Bavaria is the perfect beginning from which to start pursuing AT qualifications with the hope to eventually produce leaders and instructors within the QDG.

FL

simple, each soldier had their own 9x9 tent with a desk and a bed. A handful of solar showers, a field kitchen, gym and importantly a bar made 4 weeks in the Kenyan bush very comfortable. The camp was shared with a platoon of Irish Guards and a platoon of Americans who didn't wear uniform and who armed themselves everywhere they went. Monday to Friday, lessons and serials were conducted in the local area, normally involving a convoy through the busy streets of Isiolo to a small village where we would hand out left over boxes of US MREs and cases of bottled water.

The Americans only drank bottled water flown in from the US so they gifted us an iso container full of bottled water. The water was well received by the locals and in return they would allow us to use their village for training. The weekends presented the perfect opportunity to explore the local game reserves, listen to The Ashes and relax in local lodges. The final night was spent in the famous Nairobi expat hang out The Talisman where the expat community were incredibly welcoming to see some new faces and were excellent hosts.

TJC

Ex KANOT EAGLE

With a brief gap in the busy Sqn FOE, B Sqn decided to decimate the grey space with AT. Ex Kanot Eagle was a 150km canoe expedition along the Harkan river system, paddling from Ulen, a remote lake system in Norway, to Lit, Sweden. The expedition was completed in 8 days by 12 soldiers of the QDG.

On arrival in Sweden any painful memories of the JSATFA process and pre-exercise administration were immediately lost. Landing at around 2100hrs, and arriving at the campsite in Lit roughly an hour later, the team were astonished to see the sun very much still up, with other groups sunbathing and swimming in the lake. The accommodation of choice was a group of small huts immediately next to the river system managed by a charismatic hippie type named Rasmus, whose iconic laugh has ingrained itself in our memories and completely put us at ease.

The next day, we immediately began prepping for the expedition, stockpiling the usual grub (noodles, canned hotdogs, etc) and checked over the canoes provided by Rasmus. Whilst certainly not the latest model of canoe, all holes were patched and the canoes did float, and in the words of Rasmus, 'what more could you want?'. Thankfully, we were not reliant on the somewhat ethereal Swede for safety equipment, having brought our own.

Launching into Lake Ulen in Breconesque rain was a bleak start to the exped, but after 36 hours of torrential rain and fierce headwinds, the weather finally got onside. From then on it was relatively plain canoeing, with an average of only one capsize per section of rapids. Each night, the team would establish a campsite in some of the most beautiful scenery I've ever witnessed, light a fire and enjoy the sunset and the following orange glow that would persist until sunrise roughly 2 hours later.

After 6 days of paddling, the team started to see the first signs of civilisation and were spurred on to finish the final 50km in 48 hours, leaving a 24-hour period in which the team could explore the city of Ostersund and its open-air night club, a fitting reward for 8 days hard paddling sustained primarily by Mi-goreng noodles.

The exercise was a complete success, and a great way to round off a busy first half of 2023. All of the team will have fond memories of the small town of Lit, its charismatic inhabitants and LCpl Dempseys attempt to take on some Grade II rapids backwards with a heavily swamped canoe.

ACW



all holes were patched and the canoes did float



Sunset at 0100



Do my arms look big in this?



Boss, how far is it?



I don't think this flag is regulation



I can't believe I'm missing the season for this



Why the long face?

Ex MUIR EAGLE

Having deployed to California for Ex DIAMONDBACK, B Sqn were in prime position to exploit their location and spend a week doing their favourite activity: Leave Adventurous Training. Initial concerns over the clash between AT dates and G4 closedown were quashed when our valiant seniors stepped up to do what they do best and allowed the Officers and 80 junior ranks to go galivanting off to the Grand Canyon National Park.

The AT consisted of rock climbing, mountain biking and hill walking. Unfortunately for the climbers, the Grand Canyon isn't suitable for such activity, so instead Lt Mower and his group of 6 had to settle for Red Rock Canyon, Nevada. Missing out on one of the greatest natural sights caused an initial dip in morale for the group, however this was swiftly remedied when the climbers realised they were climbing only 40 minutes away from the Las Vegas Strip.

After a significant road move and crossing timezones, the remainder of the Sqn arrived at their campsite at the Grand Canyon slightly after dark. Within only a few hours, temperatures at the campsite had dropped to below -10°C and any hesitation to share tents quickly went out of the window.

Having braced for what could have been a fairly arduous week of freezing temperatures and icy treks, the teams

were grateful to wake to a beautifully sunny day. As the bacon baps were prepped, some of the soldiers took great interest in the herds of elk that cohabited the campsite, not least Captain Carter (fortunately for the elk not equipped with his .308 and lurchers).

The following week consisted of challenging hikes and rides in and around the rim, followed by joyous evenings around the campfire. The natural beauty of the

canyon was consistently commented on, and some soldiers made extremely astute assessments, notably Cpl Moon – 'it's actually quite big isn't it'. In all, Ex MUIR EAGLE was a great expedition, with all participants developing their physical and mental resilience, gaining cultural enlightenment, and for those who frequented Vegas, valuable lessons in financial responsibility.

ACW

Severe lack of kebabs



Bournemouth 7s

What a weekend for QDG rugby: QDG's first ever involvement in one of the biggest 7s tournaments in the world. QDG is filled with young (and old) talent and have had an influx of around six or seven young, flying Fijians which is great news for the old generation as the majority of them are held together with tape most gamedays (but still manage a huge shift every week!)

With accommodation at Bovington Camp, Team Fiji (with a northerner and two ginger Welshmen attached) travelled down a day before, in time for a captains run the night before with a few beers, ready for the weekend ahead.

We knew from the off it would be a challenging weekend as the festival is absolutely filled with talent from the Elite Groups down to the Snakebite Cup. We had entered the Challenge Cup, one below the elite. We knew we had a strong team with a lot of experience and talent but not much playing time together. We would play 3 matches during the group stage, and needed to finish in the top 2 to progress through to finals. On the following day the quarters, semis and finals would be played.

We arrived on the first day with the sun beaming. Perfect 7s weather.

FIRST GAME: Shaky start with a 19 – 7 loss against The Sussex Raiders.

SECOND GAME: Back in with a respectable 27-19 win against a very good Smugglers 7s side.

THIRD GAME: Unbelievable Hammerhead 7s who beat us 35-1. They absolutely shredded everyone in the group convincingly. That's it, our weekend is finished, no finals day. Or so we thought...

Every other team had lost the same number of games as us (minus the Hammerheads) and we had the least number of points scored against us, which meant we went through on points and finished second in the group.

Few beers to cool off.



A decisive line break



Only one elected to play bare foot

FINALS DAY: Straight to the semis to play a strong Lonely Goats RFC on the stadium pitch. Half time finishes 12-12 and by full time the score stands at 24-24. A draw meant it was down to a golden try to win it in extra time. QDG RFC manage an outstanding try under the sticks to move us onto the final against Bournemouth Uni's Buffalo 7s.

The final match was a scorcher. QDG are up 24-19 with seconds to go, when Buffalo 7s score to make it 24-24. This, followed by a clinically executed conversion, secures their victory. A 26-24 loss at the death which brought an unbelievable weekend for QDG RFC to an end.

In true Fijian spirit, at the end of every

day, a Fijian hymn would be sung as a collective (before several beers were had to ease the strain of the singing.)

A big mention to Sgt James Casey who had a blinder of a weekend and earned our man of the tournament closely followed by Cpl Bobo who was also outstanding.

Injuries sustained	= 2
Hangovers	= 15
Oakleys lost	= 1
Flip flops lost	= 2
Beers consumed	= yes
Money spent	= yes

EJ



As ever team Fiji QDG did a lot of the heavy lifting



Mentioned in Despatches presentation

Mentioned in Despatches

Sergeant Humphreys was Troop Sergeant within C Squadron 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards during a United Nations' peacekeeping tour of Mali. C Squadron was the Light Cavalry subunit operating the High Mobility Truck Variant within the Long-Range Reconnaissance Group on Operation NEWCOMBE. The mission involved conducting desert patrols in eastern Mali to protect civilians and deter terrorist armed groups who threatened peace. Humphreys demonstrated exemplary gallantry in the face of the enemy on three separate occasions. Twice his actions resulted in the detention of armed men, and on another occasion, two insurgents who were engaging a patrol with machine gun fire, were killed. Humphreys' selfless and courageous actions saved the lives of two soldiers in his Troop.

On 17 and 28 Sep 21 whilst deployed on a long-range desert patrol in the Sorori Forest region of Mali (Operation MAKARA 2B), Humphreys' Troop twice interdicted individuals assessed to be affiliates of the Islamic State of the Greater Sahel (ISGS). On both occasions, the armed men extracted with their weapons and other items including ammunition, rocket propelled grenades and push-to-talk radios and hid in a river and dense vegetation. Knowing that they were so armed, Humphreys calmly

advanced towards them. Through use of an interpreter and his soldiers' posture, Humphreys convinced the armed men to put down their weapons. Humphreys was then able to detain them and process them rearwards through the United Nations' detention chain. Throughout Humphreys demonstrated supreme calmness and courageous restraint such that detentions that uphold the rule of law could be expedited without a shot fired.

On 20 Oct 21, whilst deployed on a subsequent desert patrol near Indelimane (Operation MAKARA 3) Humphreys' Troop was engaged by sustained and effective machine gun fire from a PKM.

Humphreys instantly identified the danger presented to two dismounted soldiers who were pinned down by the weight of fire less than ten metres from them. Despite the complex terrain, with limited visibility, and in the presence of a mortal threat, Humphreys seized the initiative by commanding his lightly protected vehicle directly towards the enemy firing position. Open to the enemy with minimal armour to protect him or his crew, Humphreys engaged with his General-Purpose Machine gun

to suppress the enemy and enable the two dismounted soldiers to extract. Now atop the enemy position and receiving close quarter small arms fire, Humphreys depressed his weapon and continued to suppress the enemy. Subsequently, to de-escalate the situation and showing his excellent knowledge of the rules of engagement, he ordered his vehicle to extract to try to bring about a detention of the armed men. Still under fire, Humphreys coordinated an appropriate escalation of force to convince the armed men to desist. In a final act of gallantry, once the small arms engagement had ceased, Humphreys supported a dismounted patrol forward into a raging bush fire to extract the enemy killed in action from the burning vegetation.

Humphreys' selfless courage, presence of mind and decisive acts in the face of enemy fire saved the lives of two British soldiers. His actions demonstrated the

resolve of United Nations' peacekeepers when engaged and served to strengthen the reputation of the Long-Range Reconnaissance Group in Mali. Humphreys' judgment, composure and understanding of the wider context of his actions were peerless and in the finest traditions of the British Army. For his outstanding bravery in the face of enemy fire and for saving the lives of his comrades, Humphreys was awarded a Mention in Despatches.

HMG



For his outstanding bravery in the face of enemy fire and for saving the lives of his comrades...



...Humphreys merits formal national recognition





Five chins and a token trooper

Ex MOUNTED DRAGOON

Members of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards Maj A. Purbrick, Capt R. Fulloway, Capt S. Upward, Lt H. Swailes, Lt F. Logan and Tpr L. Wellington were invited to compete at the Militaire Prestatietoet Te Paard (MPTTP) in the Netherlands.

The team competed against over 80 international military and police personnel on horseback, covering over 35km of the Harskamp training area and the Hoge Veluwe National Park; a unique experience usually off limits to horse riders. The team first started the event with a meet and greet Hawaiian themed BBQ and drinks where Capt Fulloway fully committed to the dress code with Hawaiian shirt, grass skirt and colourful Lei.

The main event consisted of multiple military challenges along the route where the team could put their knowledge to the test and earn points. Some challenges involved AFV recogni-



Orders of dress may vary

tion, sniper observation lanes, judging distances, taking bearings and a recce patrol reporting our findings. Some challenges tested personal horsemanship skills, during which Capt Upward had to persuade his horse to get up close with a very loud tank to deliver a message.

After 8 hours of riding and some



Dickie said he could ride... Dickie lied

sore legs, the team was delighted to be awarded 3rd place and has been invited back next year.

OAW



Hacking terrain



At the glue factory



CO: "So here we have a map"



CO: "It shows us what the ground would look like but smaller and it is flat"



2ic "I'm not sold on it's utility"

Ex UNIFIED RESOLVE

In February 2023, during one of the coldest snaps in recent history, QDG's expanded BGHQ landed in Toronto for Ex UNIFIED RESOLVE. The Canadian Army's version of Ex CERBERUS and WARFIGHTER, it exists to validate Canadian higher headquarters before they deploy; in this case it was the Canadian 5th Division who were preparing to deploy to Latvia the following year. The QDG were there

as the Division's eyes and ears on the ground, a role executed too effectively. Just as on Ex Cerberus the previous year, the decision was made to deliberately hobble the QDG as we had yet again proved too lethal, which risked reducing the opportunities afforded to the Primary Training Audience.

We settled into our regime of two-, four- and six-hour planning cycles to test BGHQ's ability to function under

pressure. Whilst BGHQ toiled away in their windowless room, Cpts Fullway and Cooper were busy with their US and Canadian counterparts sourcing invaluable intelligence. Outside of the planning cycles, there was little free time to explore Kingston itself. Ice hockey, live music and some impromptu "ice skating" on the rink in the centre of town gave BGHQ a taste of Canadian life.

RWF



The EME passes over his mobile number



Captain Kite moved his pawn to A8



Good to see dress standards of the subalterns have not changed much since 1944



General Francis Richard Dannatt, Baron Dannatt, GCB, CBE, MC, DL - outranked by his wife



In a nod to the standard of dress and transport of the time.



Maj Purbrick holds forth from atop the tower



Brigadier General 'Knuckles' Campo and some Lancer (double parked)



The American team on their return to Swanton Morley Airfield.

Raid 81

As we all enjoy Masters of the Air filmed just down the road from Swanton Morley it seems fitting that we recall an excellent party we held last summer on 11 July 2023 commemorating those same brave airmen. It may seem extraordinary for a Regiment with such a proud heritage at Waterloo to celebrating the 1776 French sponsored insurgency in our former American colonies. But by dint of living at Swanton Morley we have a very unusual, quite unique, and I think, privileged link to our Transatlantic Allies.

For it was in February 1942 that Eisenhower made it explicit to his armed forces (following the devastating surprise attack at Pearl Harbour that brought the

USA into WWII) that by Independence Day on the 4th of July 1942 that the US would enter the war. With that in mind, military chiefs scrambled to make a plan. Seven months to mobilise all three services and enter a war on the other side of both the Pacific and Atlantic was a significant ask. So, in May 1941, pilots from 15th Bomb Squad (light) USAAF arrived at Swanton Morley Airfield to commence training on the US manufactured A20 bomber, the 'Havoc', then in service with the AF 226 Sqn and named the 'Boston'.

**military chiefs
scrambled to
make a plan**

On 4 July 1942 British and American airmen took off from here as part of the first combined bombing raid of WW2 – and the first shots fired by the USA on Nazi occupied Europe. Both Winston Churchill and General Eisenhower were at RAF Swanton Morley for this mission watching atop the protected Art Deco Air Traffic Control tower having stayed the night at Dereham Castle, or Bylaugh Hall. The raid targeted 4 enemy airfields in Holland. A worthy story of mention is Capt Kegelmann and his crew attacking



The great, good, and wider friends on QDG



The Lady Dannatt, MBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk, representative of Her Majesty the Queen



Bunch of hats



Finest local sparkling



A succesful raid in 1942 - as it was 81 years later

the De Kooy airfield. They had a very lucky escape when one engine was hit, causing the propeller to fly off – indeed, they were so low, that one wingtip gouged the ground and the rear of the fuselage scraped the surface of the airfield. In a superb display of airmanship, Kegelman ‘caught’ the plane as it bounced back into the air and brought it back - a feat that saw him awarded the American DSC.

So 81 years ago, US and UK pilots flew a US built plane, operated by the RAF, from an airfield in Norfolk, in a US-UK operation – and 81 years later we see exactly the same with 617 Sqn at RAF Marham! It was an excellent excuse to have a party with US partners from Lakenheath,

Mildenhall and Marham and we were honoured to host the Lord Lieutenant, The Lady Pippa Dannatt MBE, and General Richard; Brig. Gen. Joseph “Knuckles” L. Campo, Commander of the 48th Fighter Wing at Royal Air Force Lakenheath and Royal Air Force Feltwell, England, and U.S. Country Representative (USCR) to the United Kingdom; Group Captain Fred Wigglesworth, Comd RAF Marham; Ben and Helen Budworth of Bylaugh Hall; James and Vicky Keith, whose grandfather owned the airfield before the compul-

sory purchase; and John Carrick, who can still remember those brave airmen flying back and forth from this extraordinary place of history.

It was an outstanding party, but it could not have happened without the help of the brilliant mess staff, QMs, Sgt Brown and his Troop (B Sqn), the officers hosting, and so many people to whom I am indebted to. What’s next?

Perhaps we resume flying? We will definitely run Raid 82!



**What’s next?
Perhaps we
resume flying?**



Ex SABER JUNCTION

Ex SABER JUNCTION saw A Sqn deploy to Hohenfels, Germany for a month long exercise working alongside the 2nd Cavalry Regiment as the Mission Rehearsal Exercise for our imminent deployment on Op CABRIT (P). Having thought this would be a fairly straightforward procedure A Sqn began the process of gaining diplomatic clearances, Goods Movement Reference numbers and NF302s. The SQMS Dept will be able to attest to the fact that this was anything but straightforward, but has at least set the SQMS in good stead for a future career in HM Revenue and Customs.

With the Jackals loaded on to HETs, and with a large sigh of relief, A Sqn boarded the coaches (and for the most unfortunate members of the Sqn climbed into their SVs) and desperately hoped that for once the French authorities would be reasonably cooperative as the Sqn attempted to gain access to Europe. Having navigated the world of customs and various check ins (which required no small amount of flashing MOD 90s), A Sqn boarded various ferries and trains to make their way to France.

Its french for "always get breakfast from Pret"





Pre-march kit checks



I've been hiding my tobacco in here

After a long and surprisingly uneventful journey the coaches rolled through the camp gates of Hohenfels and crested the hill to see the transit camp which we would call home for the next month. Rather predictably mobile signal and with it our connection to the outside world ceased to exist at this exact moment.

A Sqn immediately set to work unloading HETS and preparing to deploy into 'the box'; working long hours on the tank park to ensure the conditions were set for a successful exercise. Whilst the troops on the tank park were showcasing the efficiency and hard work so often displayed by A Sqn, SHQ found themselves attending the rehearsal for the rehearsal of the BG Rehearsal of Concept drill and attempting to demys-

tify the US orders process.

As the exercise itself drew closer A Sqn tackled the problems that arose with their usual fortitude, finding German forklift drivers to unload ISO containers, dousing the flames that sprang out of 12B's Coyote and generally trying to make sense of what the Battlegroup plan might be.

After not one, not two, but three BG ROC drills and their associated rehearsals (we were reliably informed this was a sure-fire guarantee of success) and the Bde plan being completely rewritten two days prior to

the exercise, A Sqn were finally ready.

On a cold September morning, A Sqn rolled smoothly out of the camp gates (apart from 11B who after an extended period at Harrogate had clearly forgotten how wheel chocks work), and quickly discovered that any form of communication was virtually unworkable due to the terrain. This issue quickly proved irrelevant as A Sqn took up positions in a 2x2km box and could communicate between hide locations and OPs with a loud whisper.

A Sqn proceeded to perplex the US BG by utilising the almost unheard-of

A Sqn tackled the problems that arose with their usual fortitude



A quick Arty Target refresher



along the corridor and....



Contender for a 90s album cover



The e-charging point could have been better selected



The SSM denies hiding cans in the smoke dischargers



Say again all after hello

concept of 'recce by stealth,' baffling US Commanders across the BG by not driving Jackals directly towards enemy T-72s with all guns blazing.

Having set an effective OP Matrix A Sqn proceeded to begin reporting enemy movements back to the US BG, only slightly hampered by our C Sqn augmentee Lt Danny Seales' compulsion to drive through mine fields and send smoke signals from his OP with his ever-present pack of Marlboro Reds.

Having operated effectively in the deep battlespace, sending invaluable reports up to 4-2CR HQ, the time for the final assault drew near. The OC, along with every single commander on the battlefield all closed in to one location for the final ROC drill, which surprisingly did not see massed fires destroying the entire Bde CoC. The only minor scare during this period was from 10A himself, who upon rounding the corner to the

ROC drill was confronted by a Troop of BMP-2s. Deciding that discretion was the better part of valour and having conducted a tactical withdrawal it was established that these were in fact friendly forces.

After a long insertion tab that saw intermittent HF comms established to forward OPs A Sqn found themselves observing the enemy setting up in the MDA. Gleaning what they could from conversations between OPFOR 20m from their OPs, A Sqn thought their work was done as US Strikers rolled past their OPs and began the assault.

The US thought otherwise, with orders (of sorts) to move rapidly into a screen

to the South. A Sqn dutifully stepped off, suddenly finding themselves surrounded by US soldiers in respirators who were very insistent that the area had been completely denied by chemical weapons. Not allowing this to slow us down (and with a rather marked lack of GSRs), A Sqn somehow survived the threat of gas, with Lt Will Asquith leading the charge towards our directed positions. Having been the only Tp Ldr to have survived the exercise unscathed (and having been extremely smug about this fact) fate finally caught up with 4th Tp as he took a leaf out of US doctrine and charged headlong towards a T-72 guns blazing. Unfortunately, the T-72 quickly put a stop to this and SHQ were hard pressed to keep up with the stream of MISTATs sent through by LCpl Flood-McCann.

“
the only real winners from Ex SJ were the vending machines



I 100% deployed with two legs



Hiding in plain sight



Last light radio orders



Quick I need a new profile photo for my MODNET



Taking the CO's pizza order

ENDEX was called with a sigh of relief across the Sqn, and the G4 war began. After a brief period in camp, with some time to visit the local towns, A Sqn gratefully boarded the coaches and made the long journey back to the UK.

Whilst the only real winners from Ex SJ were the vending machines, A Sqn came on leaps and bounds during this exercise, with the assistance of the American OC-Ts and OMs from QDG and Scots DG. Special mention must go out to Capt Fulloway, never a man to be caught short without his NVD or map.

I will leave you with the thought-provoking words of Lt Will Asquith, who after 9 days on exercise having not seen a single enemy was overheard to say 'I now understand why there are so many war poets.'

FH



Coyote Ugly



Breakfast is served



Without me my crutches are useless



Jules at ENDEX



The tree just fell over sir



Op CABRIT (P) 14

October 2023 saw A Squadron deploy on Operation CABRIT (P) 14, the Light Cavalry's contribution to NATO's Forward Land Forces on the Eastern Front. Led by Major James Brockless, the squadron enjoyed multiple exercises, from boot-necks teaching us how to survive in the wild with nothing more than 50 perfectly cut logs, 20 live chickens in a box and a lighter to start a fire; to joint nation reconnaissance exercises, where surviving the arctic conditions was hard enough, let alone actually finding the enemy. Outside of proving our pure military prowess, the squadron partook in multinational events such as the Norwegian Foot March, a 30km weighted TAB across the Polish savannah. Individuals such as Cpl Rees and Capt Spicer performed very well in their respective categories, whilst Lt

Maddison did superbly well to just get around the course. Lt Gamman organised a gruelling 24-hour charity work out and using her powers of persuasion (not rank) encouraged a good number of the squadron to complete the full 24 hours. The event raised over £3000 for the Poppy Appeal and was a huge success, despite significantly reducing A Squadron's combat effectiveness for a two-day stint following the final workout.

A Squadron and attached arms have made fantastic use of the American Army's United Service Organisation (USO), a space to craft international alliances and improve

interoperability through the medium of ping-pong and competitive popcorn

eating. So impressive was the British commitment to the USO, that we had to restrict interoperating to outside of working hours. The Polish winter proved to be a difficult environment to operate in on Jackals and Coyotes, so the junior soldiers within the squadron decided to leave the vehicles behind and prove their metal in a gruelling dismounted PNCO cadre. At the time of writing, this is yet to be completed and we look forward to seeing how the next generation of QDG potential JNCOs get on.

“
LCpl's Firth and Williams enjoyed becoming at one with their Polish steeds
”



Capability demo

Everyone wants to carry the GPMG, until its time to carry the GPMG





Despite the Polish winter's best efforts to confine the squadron indoors, locked into routine of vitamin D consumption and discovering the many forms that pork can be served by the Polish chefs, we did manage to send a small group from the squadron on an exciting four-day riding course. LCpl's Firth and Williams enjoyed becoming at one with their Polish steeds, whilst Tpr Lloyd maintained a beaming smile learning the art of becoming a fully-fledged horseman.

All in all, A Squadron has made the absolute most of its time on Op CABRIT, whilst maintaining that all important deterrent on the eastern flank of NATO's boundary. All members of the squadron should be proud of their contribution.

GJMW



Ex DIAMONDBACK

Much to MT's delight, B Sqn deployed to the National Training Centre (NTC), Fort Irwin in the same mid-October week as A Sqn's deployment to Poland. During a frustrating first week waiting for our counterparts (4/10 Cav) to de-derail some trains, B Sqn (plus Atts and Detts) AKA TF MUSTANG spent time acclimatising to the Mojave Desert, conducting low level dismounted skills, vehicle manoeuvre and learning more about NTC.

NTC is the proving ground for US war fighting Brigades. Eight times the size of Salisbury Plain this vast playground for armour is an expanse of wadi systems, desert plains and mountains. Blackhorse, the permanent and professional OPFOR, see multiple rotations a year. The two combined promised to provide the testing and realistic training environment one hopes for, a perfect environment to validate B Sqn for Op CABRIT 15. Unlike QDG's previous rotations on Ex DIAMONDBACK, this time we were to use HMMWV (Humvees), not Jackal. Shorter, wider and with a lower centre of mass the Humvees were well suited to the wadi systems and whilst the addition of a roof would be greatly appreciated on Salisbury Plain, those without air conditioning pined for some open architecture, not least to increase situational awareness.

Whilst we waited for the US Abrams and Bradleys to roll off the tank park and into the staging area, B Sqn tested the "new" wagons (and the American recovery process) with (actually) new communications equipment, which doubled up as Lt Clark's interview for future RSO. In true Light Cav spirit, both the opportunities and limitations of our new equipment were realised

and adjusted. TF Mustang was ready to deploy.

With 1st Tp still conducting driver training on the wrong side of Mt Tierfort (the dominating feature on the exercise) the rest of the Sqn was chosen as the vanguard for 4/10 Cav's entrance into the Valley of Death. A textbook yet uneventful clear was conducted by 2nd Tp, with overwatch and anti-tank provided by 3rd and 4th respectively.

The success of this first action set the standard for the remainder of the exercise. As Troops fought for the best OP locations and punchiest fire missions, it was 4th (Support) Troop who often found themselves "first and foremost" in the battlespace... and at Role 2 facilities. Valiant dismounted actions were fought by 1st (in 4 Romeo) and 2nd (The Battle of OP Ridge). 3rd Tp took the "firefight in your underwear turned defence engagement" award, and SHQ for the most helicopter kills. Lt Clark should consider transferring to become an FST after his fire mission onto an enemy gun line was cancelled, deemed too successful by the DS.

TF MUSTANG displayed an ability to adopt new tactics and SOPs to work with constantly changing circumstances and new equipment. Interoperability with our American counterparts, as always, could be optimised. But to go to NTC, and successfully use their vehicles, communications whilst working to an American battlegroup is an attestation to the nature of the reconnaissance soldier. A testament to all Dragoons, at all levels. And most importantly of all, it was only 2hr45min drive to Las Vegas..

HMM



Right, let's try not to die this time

PNCO/Recce Cadre



The future leaders of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Otterburn in December, the 'good ideas club' at its very best!

There are few areas of British Training Estate better placed to test the newest batch of the Welsh Cavalry's Junior Leaders. This winter's PNCO Cadre would be joined by a 'Recce Cadre'. Still in its infancy, the Recce Cadre aims bridge the gap in skills found between leaving Phase Two and the competency expected for a PNCO Cadre.

Students spent the first phase at RBSM, covering fundamental skills they would be required to demonstrate whilst on exercise. All the while, packing and repacking Bergans with additional warm kit in preparation for the cold weather expected on the Scottish Border.

The exercise phase quickly separated the wheat from the chaff, with impressive robustness demonstrated by many. All, including the Directing Staff, were transported back in time to those most basic drills taught at Phase One establishments.

The format of the respective cadres meant that the each operated independently for the majority, however, with several specific periods of convergence. Most notably, the final 24hrs of the exercise phase. This provided a tangible opportunity for all PNCO students to mentor and lead those junior to them.

Troops were tested day and night on all basic recce skills, consistently improving hour by hour. The final action

saw a combined operation with the top students each taking their section out to recce objectives, ultimately leading to a raid at first light.

Sadly - despite its hours of care and attention - the bayonet lane was not to be. A real time casualty on the final objective meant that Sgt Griffiths and his team were not able to execute their well-oiled machine.

Congratulations to the top students: PNCO Cadre - Tpr Cotton. RECCE Cadre - Tpr Hiscox.

ED



Admirable spacings



No it really was this big



Contact Drills



Sighting report

St David's Day

Staying in tune with so many previous years, 2023 has seen the Regiment deployed over various continents for St David's Day. Remote participation has been the norm for some time and connectivity allows us to share the day. B Sqn were deployed to Kuwait on EX DESERT WARRIOR assisting the Kuwaiti Land Forces (KLF) whilst C Sqn (and a good number from HQ) were deployed to Fort Hood in Texas supporting EX WARFIGHTER. Despite the distance all -sub-units participated, including those Dragoons at ERE (F Sqn) corralled by Maj David Hoey and WO2 Thomas Hamilton.

Fundraising for the Dreams and Wishes charity is well and truly embedded in our business as usual and the day started with the sub-units working towards completing 262.5 miles each to maximise charitable donations. This was swiftly followed by a 0800hrs parade for the CO to issue the rest. Challenges had been pre released to allow B & C Sqn to get a full 24 hrs in whilst avoiding extreme heat or hurricanes depending on which side of the globe they were on!

Usual shenanigans ensued, as is the nature of QDG all attached arms put in massive effort, the largest craft daffodil on the continent is just one example! B Sqn included a lot of local traditions, replacing the Welsh cake with the Kuwaiti equivalent. C Sqn just had to keep explaining to dumbfounded Americans their actions! Luckily all got into the spirit, and some joined in.

At the results parade C Sqn could just about participate through Maj Mansel's laptop and translations. All present were treated to a superb leak eating competition as is tradition. Seniors performed well enough to be crowned winners. C Sqn however won the overall St David's Day competition. The most interesting although unsurprising win was the best shout out on social media by a Welsh social media star, the most likes on any QDG post!

Happy St David's Day.

MAR



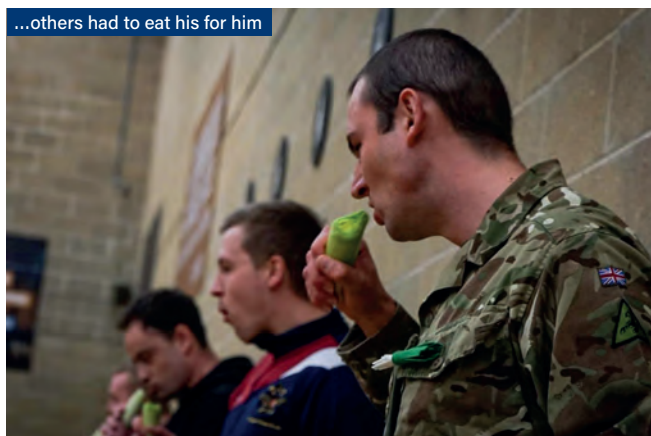
St Davids day daffodil competition



The general eventually refused to eat his leek...



Kuwaiti St Davids day



...others had to eat his for him

Regimental Christmas Day

Christmas week in the British Army is one of the lasting good events that no matter how busy, we make sure to take advantage and enjoy it. So why not dip ourselves in the North Sea in the middle of winter! That's how the week started by conducting Regimental PT at Holkham beach, earning the coming week's calories.

The day started with the traditional gunfire rations and breakfast baps delivered by Sqn staff, appreciation for the coffee and ketchup stains on bedding varied! The energy gained from the baps and brews were quickly tested by the PT staff. Chase the turkey was the aim of the game with prizes for the victors. Fancy dress efforts were excellent, it is the first time that Freddy Mercury ran around Swanton Morley Airfield and the impressive 4-man chain gang were the first to catch the turkey! Good effort. RHQ were the obvious targets for the flour and water bombs.

Prior to moving the church in Swanton Morley, the Regiment conducted a parade to recognise the individual's that have performed outstandingly throughout the year. Presenting the Regimental trophies



So why not dip ourselves in the North Sea in the middle of winter!



and sports colours. Although present Cpl Emrys 'long face' Jones did not escort us to the church as the foul weather pushed us onto transport. The Reverend Rachael Dines (Swanton Morley) took a fabulous carol service in which there was lots of competition. There

must have been a flu going round the Troopers as they all lost their voice and the Officer cohort managed to pip it.

Next up we conducted Regimental

cross briefs, giving the Sqns an opportunity to showcase what they have been up to whilst injecting a bit of humour. The QM took the opportunity to reiterate how busy HQ Sqn always are and the RAO department subversively rehearsed A Life of Brian. Dinner followed, with any misdemeanours (throwing of sprouts) becoming a source of practice for the newly qualified Drill Instructors! After dinner the hosting in the various messes continued long into the night. Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

MAR



Nothing says enjoy the day like a howling PT session

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Its coming home

Waterloo 208

The 18th June 1815 was a terrible day for the officers of the 1st King's Dragoon Guards. Leading charge after charge against French regiments of foot and horse left almost all dead, wounded or dismounted. It was for that reason that the Senior Non-Commissioned Officers of the day invited them to dine with them after the battle, an event unheard of in the class-dominated 19th century army. 208 years later, the officers again suffered an equally devastating loss. Despite some heroic charges during the rugby, and some defiant outfield manoeuvres during the cricket, the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess took home both trophies. In another cruel twist of fate, just as Lt Col Fuller was killed charging at Waterloo so one of the first casualties of the rugby was Lt Col Kierstead who fell victim to the (possibly French) referee thanks to a spirited (potentially high) tackle sending him to the sin bin.

The evening meal featured a similarly old rivalry as the incoming B Squadron Leader (late QRL) and the outgoing B Squadron Leader (late 9/12L) competed to see who could open a bottle of champagne with a lance. Settling the QRL vs 9/12L debate once and for all, Maj O'Shea walked away the undisputed champion to cement his and the 3/4 Lancers' reputation forever more. On the other side of the room, Capt Rowe fell victim to the wicked influence of Sergeants Major Trudgill and Taylor and was last seen propped up against a wall during his own skit..

The night progressed healthily afterwards as officer and senior alike marked another successful year without French dominance in Europe. Long may it continue!

RWF



The things you get away with as a PTI



The RSM has put some money behind the bar



Maj Purbrick wonders if they really are serving horse meat



Capt Hind just loves cricket



We merry few



We will play non-contact next year - give the officers a chance



140 to chase? Easy!



The RAC Ski Team

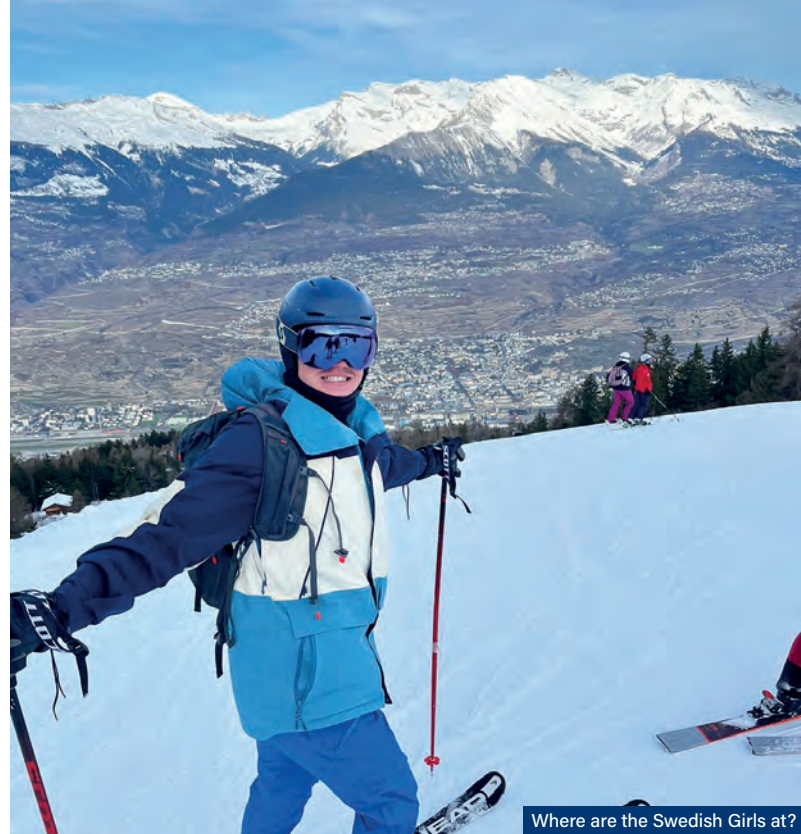
Alpine Skiing

The 40th year of Exercise White Knight saw 10 members of the QDG return to Verbier for the annual Royal Armoured Corps ski camp. The team was made up of an experienced A team and a novice B team which balanced the need to be competitive and introduce new members to the sport. The A team was the strongest the QDG has fielded in a long time and the team were eager to see QDG Alpine back at the top of Corps Skiing. Lts Seales and Swailes, both strong skiers but with no racing experience, worked hard during the gate training to go head-to-head with experienced ski racers. Tprs Lingwood and Foster, both novices, picked up the sport with ease and coupled it with an equally ferocious appetite for après ski. The annual Christmas Day party at La Chaux was a highlight that all those who attended enjoyed, even if they struggled to remember it afterwards. The QDG performed a stunt in the jumps competition which involved the B team lying down behind a jump and the A team jumping over them. The crowd was impressed but unfortunately, as we were also the judges, we couldn't award the prize to ourselves. The QDG were crowned RAC champions at the end of the race week, thus breaking an unbeaten run of form by the RTR.

TJC



A Christmas Jump-er!



Where are the Swedish Girls at?



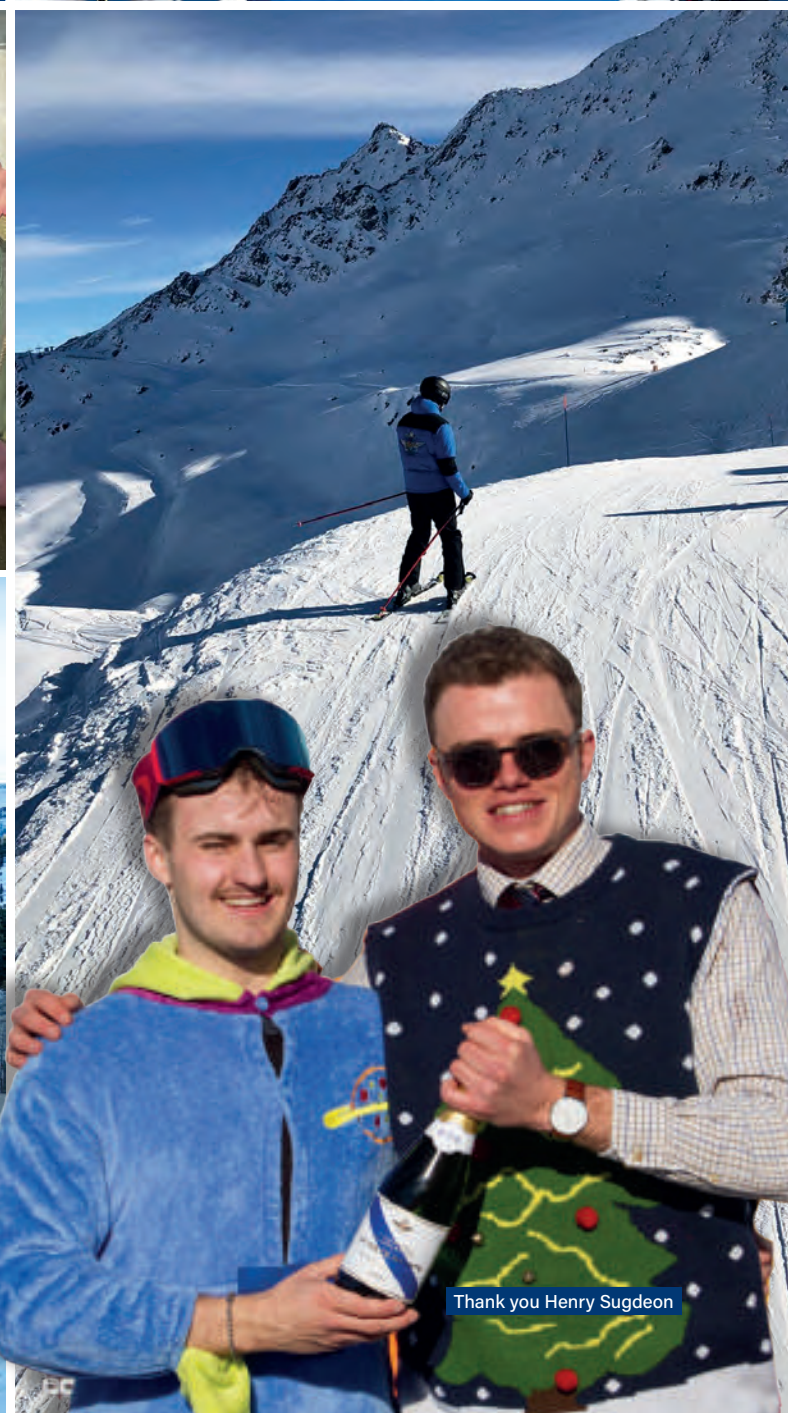
This year's stash



A good day on the birds



Does my bum look good in this?



Thank you Henry Sugdeon



I wish I was on Alpine



Surely we have to go downhill eventually



How did we get this far?



Gottem'

Nordic Skiing

The British Army Nordic Season came around in November. It saw the QDG Nordic Team head to Norway for their annual RAC Training Camp in Beitostolen, departing only 3 days after B Sqn returned from Ex DIAMONDBACK. Norway provided both breath-taking views and lung bursting phys, with temperatures dropping to as low as -20 degrees at times. With a predominantly novice team, the QDG were taught classic and skate disciplines before taking on the physically and mentally demanding Biathlon discipline. Biathlon demands two separate skill sets that must be switched between at a fast pace:

endurance, to complete a gruelling cross country ski and precision, target shooting with accuracy whilst stabilising the body and the individuals breathing from the high-aerobic intensity of the skiing segment. The troops did incredibly well to learn and develop on all the new skills being required of them and at times the thought of first day on skis to racing all within less than a month seemed daunting.

A quick turnaround over Christmas, saw the troops have 8 days

in the UK (after an unfortunate delay with Swedish customs), before heading out to France on New Years Day for RAC Championships. A lack of snow in France saw the first 10km XC race completed above 2500m, a lung burning race post-Christmas festivities, but good to get back into it. The men's team provided consistent results throughout the week, seeing them ready for Army Divisionals, Ex PIPEDOWN, and another two weeks of training and racing in France. Meanwhile, Lt Logan went on



The troops did incredibly well to learn





I'm glad I wore underwear today



Still wishing I was on Alpine



Uh oh.. New poles aren't expensive are they Ma'am?



Which target were you aiming at?

to Ex SPARTAN HIKE, the other Divisionals location to captain the first RAC women's team. The women's team put out a good fight for their first year, placing 4th at Divisionals and three members of the team were selected to compete as individuals at the Army Championships - an excellent starting point for promoting RAC women in Army sport.

Ex PIPEDOWN saw the beginning of race fatigue set in, but all things considered the men's team continued to perform well, only narrowly missing out to be selected as a team for Army Championships, Ex RUCKSACK. Notable performances must go to Tpr Lewis and

Lt Logan who were selected to compete as individuals at Army Championships for the 2024 season.

Ex RUCKSACK is held in the infamous Chiemgau Arena, Ruhpolding, Germany. Only a week before the arrival of troops into Ruhpolding, the annual BMW International Biathlon Union World Cup took place, hosting elite athletes. Renowned for its demanding course full of steep hills both up and down and tight turns. Tpr Lewis as a Junior and Lt Logan as a Novice have performed and repre-



Notable performances must go to Tpr Lewis and Lt Logan



sented the QDG incredibly well with both placing in the Top 20 of the British Nordic results for this year in their categories.

As the season on snow begins to come to a close, all is not over as we look towards a training programme in the summer to put out yet another competitive team for both the QDG Men and RAC Women for the 24/25 season, in the hope we continue to have troops representing at Army level for future years.

FRML

Athletics

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards held its Inter-Squadron athletics competition at Lynnsport in King's Lynn on the 28th of June 2023. It was a highly contested day, with something for everyone, from javelin to the elite trooper pentathlon.

Nothing exemplified better the benefits of working as a team as we worked out who could do what best. After 7 events back-to-back in the elite trooper competition, Trooper Njoya came out as champion, being awarded the elite trooper trophy as a reward for his efforts throughout the day. The event was hugely enjoyable and was won by B Sqn. QDG have shown much talent and should look to enter the Midlands Athletics Championships in 2024.

Off the back of the Inter-Squadron competition, Cpl Green has commenced training with City of Norwich Athletics Club after showing huge potential with throwing. This will stand him in good stead for upcoming Army competitions.

Cpl Cooper placed 6th in the National standing for 400m and now has the pleasure of representing GB going forward. He is looking forward to the European Championships being held in Poland in March 2024.

CLC



B Sqn - humble in (yet another) victory



'I believe I can fly..'



Next stop: Paris 2024



Lav being lapped



Fobsbury fopping



Football

Due to operational obligations, the football squad only participated in two Cavalry Cup games this year. Despite this, they put in a great deal of work covering a significant number of practice sessions and gaining new players.

The Welsh Cavalry faced the Royal Lancers at home in the Cavalry Cup semi-final at the beginning of the season. The Lancers took the lead early before LCpl Jones took a shot over 30 yards, hitting the back of the net and getting the home team level. The match ended with a last-minute goal from the Lancers, seeing the Regiment narrowly losing 2-1. The QDG played with great enthusiasm and determination all the way to the finish. It was good to see Sgt Joshua Howells back in the skipper position, leading the team after a 2-year stint at ATR Winchester.

The Cavalry Cup soon restarted, and the Regiment was up against the Royal Yeomanry at home in the first round. The QDG won 11-1 after putting in a great deal of effort on the training pitch to strengthen their previous areas of weakness. Goal scorers consisted of LCpl Allen, LCpl King, Tpr Njoya, Pte Limbu, and LCpl Sewell. The team demonstrated a great amount of resilience coming away with the victory against a tough Royal Yeomanry squad. The team's newest player, Tpr Wright, was named man of the match for his

outstanding play in defence, as he fought valiantly to prevent the opposition from scoring; an impressive debut and promising future for Tpr Wright within the Regimental team.

There are several talented players on the team that represent the RAC. Congratulations to Tpr Brown, Tpr Wright, and LCpl Jones for being chosen to attend the RAC development week. A particular mention goes out to Cpl Donnachie once more for his consistent performance for the Army

U23 squad. He is an incredibly bright player who will undoubtedly join the Army team soon.

LCpl Knuckey said goodbye to the team after his final game before leaving the Regiment to enter the civilian workforce. A very talented and experienced player who held a key role within the team and will be missed greatly. Knuckey spent more than 8 years playing for the QDG and the Welsh Cav family wishes him the very best in the civilian world.

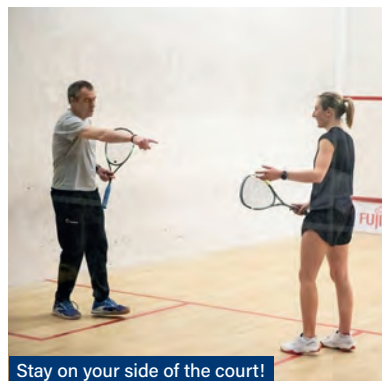
After winning the first game the squad is now expecting to make a strong run in the Cavalry Cup. Noting the team's continuous improvement and with new, enthusiastic players, the QDG should perform well. With a football trip planned for the near future, the squad will have the opportunity to continue to improve on that important team cohesion and individual development.

JH

“There are several talented players on the team”



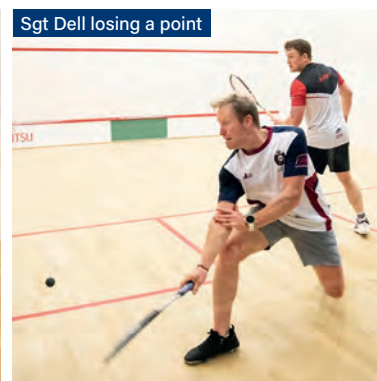
Mr Fisher had not got the memo



Stay on your side of the court!



RAC Champions 2023



Sgt Dell losing a point

Squash

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards squash team has come on leaps and bounds in recent years having established a strong foothold within the Army squash scene. Three individuals went to the Army Individual Squash Open earlier this year and all of them managed to return to the unit with an award.

Lt Spicer was awarded third place in the ladies' category. Sgt Dell was awarded third place in the Over 35 category and Cpl Cooper was awarded the directors coin from Maj Gen Darrell Amison CBE for contributions to Army Squash.

The team also recently had a friendly but competitive match against Fakenham Squash Club in Norfolk (see group photo).

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards and the British Army provides truly awesome opportunities for talented athletes. Two of our best players have just returned from a two-week squash tour of Boston, Massachusetts... civilians really would pay thousands for this!



Hitting any real work into next week!



Luckily the photo was taken before all of the QDG players lost!

The QDG Cricket vs The Old Contemptables



The Old Contemptibles are a Norfolk cricket team made up of ex British Army Officers who challenged the QDG to a cricket match in late August. The QDG won the toss and decided to bat first. Sgt Humphreys opened the batting with the Adjutant, Captain Cooper. General The Lord Dannatt's son opened the bowling for the OCs and managed to find some pace out of a weathered artificial wicket, the pace was successfully transferred onto the bat with the opening batters making the most of the recently cut outfield. The obstacle course became a target for the

unorthodox QDG batters, and many sixes were hit throughout the QDG innings. True to form, the QDG has always been weak at fielding decent bowlers and we apologise for the erratic bowling that could have so easily hospitalised our much older opposition. A particular highlight was Sgt Humphreys diving catch which caught General The Lord Dannatt in the first over, a hesitant howzat was called by the team and Lord Dannatt walked. We look forward to playing to OCs again in what we hope will become an annual fixture.

TJC

Volleyball

In early Feb 2023 the QDG volleyball team travelled to RAF Wattisham for what was their first fixture for many years. The UK Midlands Inter-Unit Volleyball Championship was comprised of 7 teams battling their way to the knockout stages. Over the prior months we had been training with our newly acquired volleyball net and balls which the team is very grateful for. Our first spike came when, 15mins out from Wattisham, the coach was halted by a rather low rail bridge. One 28 point turn later and with the firm assurance of no height restriction warnings we were back on our way leaving all the restriction signs to our rear. Upon arrival we got our first taste of the opposition's talent as they were warming up. Whilst practicing their

set plays, it quickly dawned on us that we would have to be on our A-game if we were to progress from the group stage. We were fielding our strongest 6 for what was the opening game of the championship against 4 AAC. Despite a quick warm up we settled into the game well and held our own in a close fought match with a particularly powerful set and spike play by Tpr Rokoua and Pte Limbu respectively. After the game reached 18-18 the AAC then ran away with it to win 25-21. Our next 2 group games didn't go any better and we sadly didn't progress to the knockouts but the team still learnt and developed a lot in defeat and are ready to go onto the coming fixtures.

HGS



Volleyball is serious business

Boxing: The Return of the Ring

This year saw the QDG return to combat, in the form of boxing. A sport that has been peppered throughout the QDG history has seen its return with boxers taking part in both the AGC and RAC championships of 2023.

The team focused on getting people ready to take part in their first bouts and starting their QDG boxing journey. The training was a hybrid approach noting the commitments of the individuals. All boxers were put through their paces and assessed throughout on their fitness, technical skills, and all the personal attributes associated with the sport.

The AGC Championships was first on our list of competitions this year and saw Pte Suraj Limbu from the QDG AGC detachment take to the ring. A fit and dedicated individual progressed through the training program with ease, and this saw him and his skills develop into a promising athlete of the future. He came runner up in the final and gained valuable experience so is one to look out for in the future!

The RAC Championships saw two members of the QDG compete in the finals. Captain and Adjutant Charles Edward Crawford Cooper went up first at 70kg. This was a hard-hitting bout of grit and determination, slog after slog of powerful shots came from the Officer that ended with the referee stopping the contest and declaring Captain Cooper the winner. Trooper Lawson was up next at 74kg. This was another blow for blow bout and was very exciting to watch. He rocked his opponent several times with precision, only being pipped for the loss in the last round to come runner up.

The end of the year saw the QDG host a level 1 Coaching Course where 11 QDG personnel were successful and ready to start their coaching journeys. Their development over the next year and the build of momentum will see the sport grow back to its former success.

BJP



Has there ever been a more retention positive photograph?

Ex FJORD EAGLE

In the middle of August, an unlikely crew embarked on Exercise Fjord Eagle, a sailing adventure that would transform a group of novices into competent sailors, all under the expert guidance of Corporal Sims, the skipper. Cpl Sims led Corporal Fletcher, Trooper Williams, Trooper Woolley and Trooper Flood-McCann on a memorable journey through the cold and vibrant Norwegian waters, spanning from Stavanger to Nedstrand, Jorpeland, and Sandnes aboard a Hallberg-Rassy 310 kindly chartered to 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards from the NATO Joint Warfare Sailing Club in Stavanger.

As the crew set sail on this picturesque voyage, camaraderie and laughter were as abundant as the stunning Norwegian landscapes. One of the most humorous moments came when Tpr Flood-McCann decided to take a spontaneous dip in the waters off Nedstrand's harbour in front of a crowd of locals eagerly watching on. It didn't take long for him to realize that, despite Norway's summer charm, the North Sea was still a bit too chilly for comfort. His rapid retreat from the water left the crew in stitches, a hilarious memory that would be recounted throughout the journey.

As if the voyage wasn't adventurous enough, the crew encountered some challenges along the way. Sailing away from an ominous fog bank was a heart-pounding moment which led to the crew



Convincing Tpr Flood-McCann to jump in

having to take refuge on the nearest island they could find. The unplanned stopover only added to the excitement and made for another memorable chapter in the journey.

The Norwegian coastline presented a mix of challenges and rewards. Navigating the sometimes-harsh weathers and picturesque villages brought a sense of accomplishment, while the rugged cliffs and serene fjords provided breath-taking vistas. Each crew member embraced their roles, knowing that

success depended on their collective effort to arrive at the new location.

This sailing adventure exemplified the power of teamwork, shared experiences, and the ability to turn novices into capable sailors. As they returned to Stavanger, the crew carried back cherished memories of their laughter-filled days at sea, proving that even a dip in frigid waters or soaked through from the rain couldn't dampen their spirits.

JJS

Field Sports

QDG fieldsports in 2023 was one of the busiest of recent times. Along with the annual Officers Mess shoot there were various shoot days organised by Jono Beatson-Hird that were a huge success. The fishing on Holkham Lake, belonging to the Norfolk Fishing Club was used more than ever by both Officers and Soldiers alike.

Fishing

The QDG Officers Fieldsports Fund purchases two rods from the Norfolk Fly Fishing Club and this year saw no exceptions. The lakes are just a short walk from camp and provide rainbow and brown trout fishing which is fantastic to fill some time in an evening. Some great fish were caught by many members of the QDG but best fisherman of the season goes to Lt George Webster, mainly because he has a beat covered in flys but also because he catches quite a lot of fish!

Milborne Wick, Dorset

On the 6th Nov and the 18th Dec a number of QDG officers, past and



Capt Maltman: Did you know I've done the Sniper Commanders Course?

present met for a days shooting in Milborne Wick, Dorset, organised by Jono Beatson-Hird. Both days were a huge success! Not only were they fantastic fun for those involved but it was a great to meet some new faces. We even had the pleasure of having one of our NATO allies that Lt Walsh met when deployed on Ex DIAMOND-BACK join us for the day.

Officers Mess Shoot

As we have done on previous years, the Officers Mess enjoyed a fantastic day of shooting on the Hoe estate that surrounds us at Robertson Barracks. In the usual fashion we were picked

up in the gun trailer and moved off to various drives around the estate. Some great sport was had by all with Capt Ben Maltman taking the highest bird of the day but it was rather a shame that he insisted on wearing his 'sniper platoon commanders' baseball hat in the process. The commanding officer shot well (so he says) and those that partook for the first-time last year managed to bag more than their fair share of pheasants.

At the end of the day we retired to the mess to celebrate Burns night, hosted by the PMC. A fantastic day as per usual Ed had by all.

EJC

Army Senior XV 2023

Since the enforced break during COVID, Army Rugby has bounced back stronger than ever. The first year back saw two QDGs in the coaching set up, with Rob Jones overseeing the forwards and Bongo Davies overseeing the backs. The 2023 season said goodbye to Rob as he left the Army and as with any sport big shoes must be filled. We went full steam ahead, and a new look coaching team and new players caused a quick turnaround, meaning we made it back to the field much quicker than expected!

The season has slightly changed due to funding which is to be expected but

the quality of opposition hasn't changed to prepare the team for the Inter services campaign. Exciting times for QDG over the past two seasons which saw QDG coaches fully embedded into Army Rugby - a testament to the fact that the QDG have and always will lead the way within the RAC when it comes to Rugby Union.

The season has been frenetic and started with an open trial to identify any new talent within the Army. Once finalised, it then had 3 development games to whittle down the squad but to also identify any talent that could move up to the senior squad before moving onto

Inter Services selection.

Moving forward, there are games against Cambridge Varsity, Oxford Varsity and the French Army and a training camp in Cardiff. You heard right; in true QDG style we are back in Maindy. Personally, I have waited years for Portugal but Cardiff Met and Maindy will have to do for this year. Post training camp we are then into inter-services month. RAF at Kingsholme and then the Navy at Rugby HQ. In between the annual Mobbs memorial match will be played against Northampton or Bedford. This year it was Bedford.

Hopefully, there will be some familiar faces in the crowd at Gloucester and Twickenham. It's been a long journey but an exciting journey from playing to coaching and getting the opportunity to coach international and premiership quality players. The opportunities as a coach and a mentor have been amazing and just having the opportunity to be involved with Leicester Tigers and Harlequins has only reiterated why Rugby Union is a great sport to be a fan of, not only as a fan but as a pathway for the future. The opportunities that have been afforded to individuals as players and coaches are memorable. Long may it continue.

JD



11 Bde

The 11th Security Force Assistance (SFA) Brigade was conceived as part of Future Solider, which was part of the 2021 Integrated Review. The vision was to have force elements from within the Brigade persistently engaged around the globe by 2025. Despite the Brigade Headquarters being responsible for the training of Ukrainian soldiers in the United Kingdom, this vision will still be achieved 12 months early. Operation INTERFLEX has driven change at pace and has made the Brigade more relevant and useful in the 21st Century.

Security Force Assistance is both a strategy and a capability. It is not just the preserve of the 11th SFA Brigade but a whole of Defence activity. The Brigade is a proponent for security force assistance within the Army and one of its principal delivery mechanisms. The QDG have been involved in this activity over the last decade, most recently with short term training teams in Kenya, The Gambia and Sierra Leone. Short Term Training Teams, however, do not in their own right build meaningful relationships and these activities must be cohered so that we create a platform for enduring engagement. The Brigade flash of the 'Charging Bull' is the symbol that seeks to bind our security force assistance activity into a coherent effect.

The Brigade consists of 4 Regular and 1 Reserve Infantry Battalion that are re-structuring into an SFA organisation with Advisor Teams. These Advisor



The tempo, like the rest of the Army has been high but exciting



soldiers who specialise in Human Security, Security Capacity Building, Cultural Advisors and Civil and Military Affairs.

Our role is delivered through 'Train, Advise, Assist, Accompany and Enable' activity across the spectrum of conflict, from peace to conflict. In warfighting this could see force elements from the Brigade supporting the Force Generation of partners such as Operation INTERFLEX, providing a global offset force, or leveraging partner force advantage as they are likely to be in the fight first.

The tempo, like the rest of the Army

Teams are built around Fire Support capabilities such as mortars, anti-tank, snipers, assault pioneers and reconnaissance. The soldiers within the Teams are appropriately trained and equipped to operate at distance in austere conditions much as a reconnaissance soldier is. The final unit is the Outreach Group which is a tri-service organisation with Regular, Reserve and Special Reserve

has been high but exciting. In November 2023 around 80 percent of the Brigade was deployed around the globe in Hawaii, Australia, South Korea, Japan, Brunei, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Nigeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Bosnia, Latvia, Finland and the UK. We were either training our Partners or on joint exercises helping integrate UK and Partner forces. Relationships matter in the Brigade, and we have built strong connections with the United States Security Force Assistance Brigades allowing us to cohere and synchronise our effects globally. Concurrently we are building new relationships with the nascent Italian and French security force assistance organisations as well which will help increase our reach.

The Brigade Headquarters is a young organisation but full of energy and enthusiasm. If Captains or Majors are looking for a stimulating and rewarding staff appointment in a small and agile headquarters, then I can highly recommend HQ 11th SFA Brigade. It has an exciting future and is fast becoming a key part of 'How We Fight'.

HS



RMAS Academy Headquarters

I don't think there will have ever been a time with more QDGs serving at the Royal Military Academy. Having recently said farewell to Capt Will Simpson, 2024 will welcome Maj David Hoey and Capt Bertie Lewis in as Company and Platoon Commanders respectively. Despite gentle nudging of the 2*, I'm still unable to convince anyone that we should have Troops and Squadrons. They will join WO1 David Chant, Me, and probably most importantly, SSgt Thomas Warner – a Plt Staff Sergeant (still called 'Sgt Maj' – worry not).

I say most importantly as the Officer Cadet facing posts are where we make a difference recruiting new officers into the regiment and raising awareness of the capbadge more widely. Excitingly, there is real opportunity for growth in

this area too. This year, The Platoon Sergeant's Battle Course (Senior Brecon) was removed from the list of pre-requisites to instruct at RMAS. Why? because there is a subtle tilt away from pure Dismounted Close Combat towards Combined Arms Manoeuvre so that we better prepare our next generation of leaders for the technical realities of leadership and the requirement to constantly look left and right for all the assets at your disposal. This, to my mind, is a massive opportunity for QDG. Happy on our feet but with bright, technically able SNCOs conscious of the

wider battle.

Like all training jobs, it's full on but with the massive benefits that come with a set timetable. In addition, unlike much of the Army, training remains well-resourced with time, equipment, and people to ensure continued delivery. The job satisfaction is hard to beat. If you're interested, for one of your soldiers or yourself, the RMAS briefing course runs three times a year and I warmly encourage you to get involved!

STBF



BFSAI

I write from the rolling bridge of HMS Forth, returning from a patrol of South Georgia. I recall that while serving with the Regiment at Swanton Morley in 2016 there was a fleeting opportunity to send a QDG squadron south as the Falkland Islands Roulemont 'company'. Unfortunately, it didn't work out and none of us had a chance to experience the unique South Atlantic environment. 5 years on when the chance to deploy as Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands arose, I seized it. Commanding a joint force charged to deter threats to British sovereignty of 780 or so South Atlantic islands including the Falklands, South Georgia, and Ascension, is proving to be the highlight of my career to date.

In the Falklands, memories of the 1982 conflict are never far from the surface. My tour began with a ceremony to mark the 41st Anniversary of Landing Day at San Carlos Water and although decades have elapsed since the conflict, threats to sovereignty are increasing.

While physically a long way from current hot-spots in the Ukraine and the Red Sea, BFSAI is no stranger to 'great-power competition' and the strategic

significance is set to rise.

Perhaps surprisingly, the situation has changed more in the past 2 years than in the past 20. Previously, a degree of normalisation was achieved with a previous Argentine administration, but this ended when a hard-pressed president in Buenos Aires resorted to the age-old tactic of distracting the population with the nationalist cry of 'Las Malvinas son Argentinas'. The Argentines devote an entire department of state to this cause and have made significant gains in the diplomatic area while pursuing a rearmament programme with Chinese and other partners. The fighter and submarine options they are exploring would certainly change the calculus for us. Recently, a newly installed radical right-wing government in Argentina has attempted drastic fiscal reforms, but its initiatives are being met with strikes and public unrest. While softer in his Falklands rhetoric to date, President Javier

Milei (famed for wielding a chainsaw at rallies and professing to be a tantric-sex teacher) might yet resort to the 'Las Malvinas' option.

Meanwhile in the Falklands we operate Typhoon fighters, various helicopters and multi-engine aircraft, a battery of Sky-Sabre air defence missiles, a warship, a land force, various radar installations, and other capabilities. The support and logistics required to keep this all operational is significant and made all the more challenging by the 8,000-mile range and austere environment. I have spent much of my time driving initiatives to increase resili-

ence, readiness, and generally trying to improve the lived experience of our team. There has been time for some fun too. The sea-trout fishing is exceptional, the wildlife and scenery transfixing – especially in South Georgia.

DD



The sea-trout fishing is exceptional, the wildlife and scenery transfixing



An Eagle amongst the Hawks

In Sept 2023, I was given the fantastic opportunity to join The King's Royal Hussars as one of their Squadron Leaders. Having been living in Tidworth for the better part of 4 years this was an easy decision and one made quicker only by my wife. I took over D (XRH) Squadron consisting of their Command and Reconnaissance Troop where on arrival, I was swiftly informed that I would be thrown into the deep end with Summer Ball prep being one of my first serials to assist with, which was a welcome introduction back into a Regimental lifestyle after the wilderness of ERE!

With a busy FOE and an ever-changing ORBAT, getting to know personalities and understanding the requirements of an Armoured Squadron was a steep learning curve. Amongst the day-to-day, we prepared Recce Troop to compete on CAMBRIAN PATROL whilst Command Troop were gainfully employed on the BGHQ CPXs ahead of CSTTX

and Ex COMBINED RESOLVE in the Spring/Summer of 2024. All before the Regiment were involved with Christmas build up, including Regimental Boxing Night and the standard Cavalry trappings of silly week and Officers to Seniors.

The KRH Officers' Mess have been delightfully busy, a fantastic trip on HIGHLAND HAWK to the Cairngorms maintaining the hind and pheasant numbers for a week was all important Officer Development. A series of Flashman Lectures in the Mess involved inviting notable personages to talk and dine with the Officers, a standout event being Sir Lindsay Hoyle (Speaker of the House of

Commons), who gave us a frank and fascinatingly insightful account of Parliament and his political career. In return, he kindly invited the Officers for a tour of Parliament and to sit in Speaker's Gallery for Prime Minister's Questions - a memorable experience! The bonus of joining another Mess

is also getting to enjoy two Officers' Association dinners in the year, so I was fortunate enough to join the KRH in the Cavalry & Guards, even kindly given my own pair of "Cherry Picker" crimson trousers for the occasion!

It has been a privilege to be part of the KRH, albeit for a short period, they have been extraordinarily welcoming, and I want to thank them wholeheartedly for their generous hospitality and providing me with a hugely enjoyable year.

GESJ



It has been a privilege to be part of the KRH, albeit for a short period



All the slippers

Armoured Trials and Development Unit (ATDU)

The Armoured Trials and Development Unit located at Bovington Garrison in Dorset is here to conduct experimentation and trials in Lethality, Survivability, Communications & Vehicle Systems in order to inform the development of current and future Mounted Close Combat (MCC) capabilities. The Army is replacing or upgrading all of its tracked and wheeled armour over a ten year period which, combined with the rapid advancement in defence capabilities and technologies requiring the move from analogue to digital systems, has resulted in ATDU growing in size and output.

There are currently two of us from the QDG posted here at ATDU, Cpl Young, working with the Trials Troop, who as part of his remit, is focused on the development of Lt Cav capabilities and Maj Rob Mansel, as the OC of the Ajax Reliability Trials Team (ARTT). One of three Cat A programmes currently being delivered ARTT is made up of 63 soldiers and eight analysts from DE&S, who work alongside a team of 30 from General Dynamics UK (GDUK). Due to the fact GD has a strong Ex-QDG element ATDU can resemble a tank park in Sennelager or Catterick with characters like, Rob Jones (beast), Rob Lockyer, Andy Bale and Nick Sterry daily, as well as regular visits from the likes of John Smith, Neil Greaney and Dickie Hudd.

As mentioned, ATDU is currently increasing its footprint to accommodate the other Cat A programs, including the new Infantry Boxer Vehicle and Chal-



A completely mythical beast

lenger Mk III programmes, additionally, working with industry and defence partners developing MCC Capabilities and concepts by investigation and trials of new, novel, or nascent technologies. All with the aim of improving MCC capabilities fielded on current operations, optimising MCC for urban operations, modernising MCC through hybridisation and electrification, transform MCC for the advent of robotic and autonomous systems and the digital integration of MCC with other capabilities and platforms. ATDU is a busy but very exiting place to be posted.

RCM



Coming to America

Jon Sopol's book 'If Only They Didn't Speak English' builds on the now pervasive idea that we and the Americans are two cultures separated by a common language. It was in the spirit of lifting the lid on the military microcosm of this truism that I embarked on two years of command and staff training in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Coming to America for intermediate staff college is like a 'buy one get two free' deal. The unwitting candidate is actually signing up for three distinct elements of professional development. The first is a two-month-long introduction to the United States as a cohort of over 120 international students. The second is a year-long Intermediate staff course called the Command and General Staff Officer's Course. Finally, and only on selection, a year of more advanced strategic and operational study at the School of Advanced Military Studies.

The first is the obvious favourite. Landing in Kansas as part of an international cohort of 120 officers from 90 different countries is an astounding privilege. The course material is equally for the ages, in essence, a thinly veiled propaganda exercise that might as well have started with compulsory chanting of U.S.A. U.S.A. U.S.A.. The program introduces us to vague concepts like democracy and the rule of law in a tone that is humorous to most but frankly patronising to some. By design or not, it perfectly forges the international students into a tightly knit cohort of eye-rollers. The stories from this course are numerous and almost all hilarious, but a personal

favourite occurred during a counterfactual historical planning exercise about dropping the bomb on Japan. In groups of 10 we were to recreate the Truman war cabinet and brief the president on how, where, and why to deploy this new super weapon. Our facilitator didn't blink when the Japanese officer drew "President Truman" from the hat. Nor was there a command appointment change as our colleague begged, wept, not to be made to order the nuclear annihilation of his own people.

Hot on the heels of international induction, we assimilated into our US syndicates. Now, the 120 international officers (about the same as a UK ICSC

“Our facilitator didn't blink when the Japanese officer drew “President Truman” from the hat



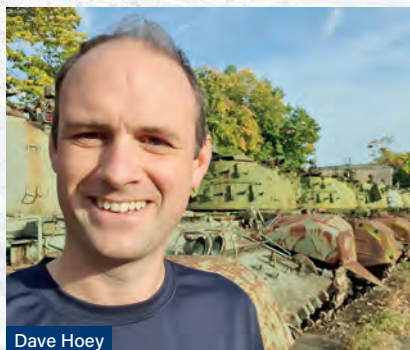
Allied Rapid Reaction Corps

ARRC has for some time, fairly or unfairly, had a reputation as a sleepy posting, with staff officers drifting from sports afternoon to international families day with only the occasional ski trip as an interruption. It may not surprise you to learn that this is yet another aspect of service life that has been shaken up by the war in Ukraine. As one of NATO's ten corps headquarters, HQ ARRC has been rotating through readiness in a way that will be familiar to all QDG and will therefore stand up as the NATO Response Force Land Component Command for the first half of 2024, before assuming a Strategic Reserve role as the model changes thereafter. This has seen a busy year of preparation, from study weeks at the start through run-up exercises and battle planning periods to evaluation and validation on Ex STEADFAST JUPITER in October, an enormous CPX held across Europe but with HQ ARRC deployed to Bucharest. Happily, we beat back the Donovanian hordes from the gates of Europe and were declared 'ready.' Who knows what the coming year will bring? It is quite possible that by the time you are reading this we may have deployed somewhere.

My own role here is as a generalist planner in the G5 branch. We have the luxury of concentrating solely on operational planning as there are G7 and central staff branches who take care of planning HQ activity. In my own team,

led by a Dutch Lt Col and accompanied by a Turkish Maj, we run planning training courses for staff officers from across the Alliance as well as contributing to actual planning on exercise. This also involves a lot of conceptual development as we continually refine our practices in light of new technology, for example. The multinational aspect means there is a hugely broad range of experience to draw on. The war hasn't completely doused all our fun though and I managed to squeeze in qualifying as SF2 on that ski trip after all, as well as taking a team to the Isle of Wight for the Combat Arms Regatta. I would definitely recommend a posting in ARRC to all QDG soldiers and officers for the opportunity to learn about warfare at the corps level, valuable experience for a formation reconnaissance professional.

DCMH



Dave Hoey



Dave Hoey Skiing

intake) were spread out among the 1000 US officers. These are only the top 50% of their year group, with the other half attending remotely. CGSOC focuses on Divisional level planning with a healthy dose of history and leadership thrown in. A real highlight of this first year is thinking about Division in a Corps context without the cognitive reservation of hollow structures. When you are told you are the G5 for 4th Infantry Division being deployed to Europe as part of 5th Corps, you can refer to the manning and equipment tables of all these organisations and be confident that they exist on more than paper.

It is during CGSC that those hoping to attend the School of Advanced Military Studies go through a rigorous selection process. SAMS is a blue ribband course for the US Army that attracts attendance not just from the international community but all of the other US services. After several exams, interviews, and essays, I

was lucky enough to be awarded one of these coveted slots. SAMS is an ACSC equivalent course focusing on translating strategic direction into tactical output through operational design. The array of high-profile speakers from business, government, academia, and the very highest echelons of the US military infers the cachet of this experience. The wider institutions invest in the students here because the statistics tell them that 20% of this student body will achieve 1* rank or higher. Herein lies the true privilege of attending SAMS: working with highly motivated, extremely intelligent, and driven colleagues.

Staff college in the United States should be an aspiration for any QDG officer, and should any be interested, I encourage them to get in touch. The earlier you express an interest the stronger the case for attendance can be made through MS.

JPC



A military genius and Churchill

6th (United Kingdom) Division

Headquarters 6th (UK) Division has been raised and disbanded on five occasions over an iterative 213-year history. It has been an answer to specific problems: partnering with the Portuguese in the Peninsular Wars; generating the mass of men and guns required for the Western Front; enabling the Western Desert Force; commanding and staffing the headquarters of Regional Command (South) in Kandahar; and most recently, integrating information manoeuvre and unconventional warfare. Since it created 77th Brigade and the Specialised Infantry Battalions out of the 2015 Defence and Security Review, the Army has been on course to generate Land Special Operation Forces (Land SOF). The closure of HQ 6 Div – where I had the privilege of serving as its last Chief of Staff for just over a year – was part of that evolution.

The term 'special' can be a stumbling block to some people's perceptions perhaps suggesting exclusivity or exclusiveness. But special operations are not defined by the forces that conduct them but rather by their novel and contentious nature, risk profile and by the levels of assurance required. The benefit of this approach is that any part of the Army can be task organised to support a special operation. And there are good reasons to develop Land SOF: to free up special forces from some existing tasks to focus on the most challenging and discrete activities; to address a paradigm shift to grey zone activities that requires more specialist capabilities; and to be able to offer them to alliances, most importantly NATO.

Land SOF capabilities are multi-do-

main and require integration with capabilities at the level of command most effectively able to synchronise their application. Synchronisation is on the critical path to achieving convergence, defined in JDP 0-20 UK Land Power as 'the concerted employment of effects created in multiple domains and directed at decisive points, such as an adversary's systems, formations, commander or ground.' Whilst this systems approach may be taken by tactical formations, especially when allocated capability and permissions, operational and component headquarters may be better placed to integrate Land SOF effects across the temporal, physical and virtual deep. For this reason, Land SOF is now vested in HQ Field Army working to the Land Component Commander.

Whether in conflict, crisis or competition, three mutually supporting elements – platform, cell, reach back – are required to fight the capability. A platform is a forward partnered and stand-off relationship with host nation SOF or directorates that provides access and generates insights. It is designed to be built out to broaden a network, to act as a surrogate to other specialist activity, to conduct intelligence gathering ahead of crisis and to help set a theatre for conflict. Land SOF platforms will share multi-domain intelligence start points, some derived from partners, that could be developed into actionable targets. A deployed cell

will deliver this within the appropriate operational headquarters' Joint Effects Cell. Consonant with a drive to reduce the size of headquarters, platforms and cells will reach back to rear based targets and effects cell for support. Target packs, put through the full Defence targeting process, will contribute to military advantage and create choice for policy makers.

Land SOF is a logical evolution of existing units and formations. It is neither a niche nor exquisite capability. Nor is it a sport reserved for an exclusive few. It is a capability that draws on the good work of others to integrate our

information operations brigade, special operations brigade, cyber and electronic warfare units with military intelligence and multi-domain targeting. And whilst the structures that helped raise, develop and command these capabilities have changed and may yet morph further, the capability itself should endure because there is a pressing operational need for it and looming NATO commitments that demand it. If we do this, and well, then Land SOF will integrate special operations in a manner that does not simply free up special forces for other tasks but adds to military advantage by helping to make the deep battle as decisive as possible whether in conflict, crisis or competition.

HTL



The term 'special' can be a stumbling block to some people's perceptions



A view from Whitehall

There is a healthy QDG cohort, past and present, in Main Building and across a number of Whitehall departments. World events over the last 12 months have ensured that not only is our Regiment having another busy year but all aspects of Defence remain committed well beyond comfortable levels. A changing Ministerial team, forthcoming elections and a perilous financial position across the public sector will have been constants for the many Whitehall warriors amongst this readership, they remain as present as ever.

At the time of writing a balancing act is being played to ensure that the UK remains in the lead as the partner of choice for Ukraine, regains influence and access in the Middle East and finds ways to continue to service the global ambition set out in recent policy reviews. Initiatives such as training Ukrainian land forces have rightly captured much attention and continue to give significant leverage and access. The Regiment's contribution to NATO operations in Eastern Europe comes at a critical time as NATO seeks to demonstrate its credibility and capability. Upwards of 80,000 NATO troops will have deployed to Eastern Europe in early

2024 to support this. It is likely to remain a focus for the government and Defence for many years to come.

Events in the Middle East have highlighted the need to reassure regional allies of the UK's commitment to the region. Once again, the Regiment's network of experts in the area have been front and centre of our efforts to deploy the right capabilities at the right time without driving a coach and horses through the broader global programme.

Whilst 2022 was dominated by Ukraine, 2023 was best characterised by issues appearing in nearly every continent on a regular basis. African coups, non-combatant evacuation operations, humanitarian relief as well as backfilling other public sector workers on industrial action are but some of the areas that have occupied this small outpost on Whitehall. There is little sign that political ambition for Defence to remain ready, usable and even more productive will wane, especially in an election year where foreign policy will be expected to just happen whilst domestic issues take centre stage.

CER-B

The Gunnery School: A Year In Review



The year began for the Gunnery School with the "left-right" sucker punches of my arrival as Officer Commanding and the imminent arrival of a large batch of Ukrainians intending to be trained on the Challenger 2 Main Battle Tank. Being at the forefront of Defence's main effort and genuinely doing something was very exciting but did involve some trepidation as I had to this point never even been inside a CR2. Fortunately, I had plenty of very expert senior soldiers who had and I was brought up to speed. Less fortunately this whole affair did involve (un) healthy doses of media attention which climaxed with the visit of Messrs Zelensky and Sunak. It was very apparent on the Ukrainian soldiers' arrival exactly where there had been, and the nature of the fighting they had been involved in. My most prominent memories are their OC showing me his successful T-80 kills on his phone, and that they had a penchant for smoking that would make the Flying Scotsman blush. One of the 14 Challengers has been destroyed, but everything else we hear is that the Ukrainian Challenger Crews are doing well. I truly wish them the very best of luck.

Our second surprise was far less sexy and exciting and has consumed far more effort; funny how these things always work. 3XX has decided to change its whole training pipeline, which for an armoured training establishment does pop a large anvil onto the inner workings. Every single course had to be reviewed,

lesson by lesson, justifying each and every serial. This is with the view to getting Soldiers and Officers back in role, within their fighting formations, so they can all train together properly; all very laudable principles. Accompanying this, there is no longer a tactics course for the Armoured and Armoured Infantry Crew Commanders. Instead, the tactical theory is distributed throughout the other modules, including Gunnery. The idea being they then put this all into practice and earn their tactics qualification whilst deployed alongside their troops on the new 'Iron Cyclone' exercises; that will dominate the Plain for most of the year. This means my Gunnery Instructors have had to put the drill rounds down and pick up their webbing (metaphorically, obviously) and teach some tactics. We are lucky that our senior SIs have got lots of tactical experience on their platforms from Iraq, Afghanistan and BATUS; and so have plenty of wisdoms to impart onto their students.

We are now busy preparing for the arrival of Ajax and Boxer into the Field Army, and therefore the Gunnery School. The Ajax beast has been firmly awoken. We have taught our first set of HCR Ajax Regimental Instructors (Gunnery), and our Schools Instructors have been

Live Firing on its clearance trials. They are genuinely very impressed with it. All schnebbing aside, it is a serious bit of kit. Boxer is also kicking off this year, with

the first company of 1RRF coming through the School in the spring. I will be rather pleased when they stick a proper gun on top of it as I have a vested interest in big guns on armoured vehicles. I have been assured that is the plan; we wait and see. We have spent much of this year preparing for both, and the period of overlap between them and Warrior. Everyone loves a shiny new toy, though if we are being honest two at the same time is quite inconvenient, but there are worse problems

to have. By this time next year both platforms will be genuinely embedded into the Field Army, and that is exciting.

Lulworth is a place of extremes. Extremely sunny and pleasant in the summer, extremely windy and miserable in the winter. In solidaric pathetic fallacy with its coastal home, the Gunnery School has followed several similar cycles through 2023. It has weathered (I wish I could stop) this rollercoaster and continued to deliver the most professional training of its kind in the world.

SLU

“
the Ukrainian
Challenger
Crews are
doing well.
I truly wish
them the very
best of luck.”



Centre for Army Leadership (CAL)



Ray Winston grabs a selfie

As many will be aware, I moved on from QDG in January 2023 and entered the realm of ERE. Departing from Regimental Duty, I had the privilege of assuming the role of WO1 Leadership at the Centre for Army Leadership (CAL), situated in Sandhurst.

In my capacity as WO1 Leadership, each day presents new challenges. Working within a compact team is much like any other setting and being a specialist at being a generalist has been unavoidable. With only three members in our team, we often find ourselves physically separated. Our weekly and monthly tasks cover a wide spectrum, ranging from recording and publishing podcasts to engaging in outreach activities and briefing diverse audiences across all



The CAL annual conference

rank ranges. Notably, we have experienced a significant demand from entities such as the Police, Ambulance Service, Fire Brigade, and the Premier League Managers Association.

Since my tenure at the CAL began, a primary focus has been crafting the inaugural version of the Followership Doctrine note. In tandem with this initiative, we organised an annual conference at the National Army Museum and launched both an essay competition and presented awards for the inaugural Leadership Excellence Awards.

This event attracted virtual participation from 2,000 personnel and had an additional 130 attendees in person. The day provided a valuable platform to spotlight the indispensable role of followership in leadership—an essential reminder that without followers, there is no leader.

The CAL has presented numerous opportunities, including a trip to the United States in October to connect with our counterparts. During this exchange of best practice, we addressed blind spots and forged lasting professional relationships that had been hindered by



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A rose between two thorns

the pandemic. Visiting the US CAL was eye-opening, their outputs are vast and whilst they are achieving a lot, they are heavily invested in data analysis. Amidst our work, we also seized the chance to attend a university football match, which added a touch of retention to our trip.

Concluding the year, we participated in a charity day at Barclays Bank in London, setting up a stand engaging with celebrities and supporting a day that raised over five million pounds which was fantastic. As the year draws to a close, our attention turns to Project Bramall, the 10-year

plan for Leadership. As a part of this, we are already gaining momentum in reviewing the Army Leadership Code, and with 2024 on the horizon, we anticipate another exciting year ahead.

DC



Alabama Conference with leadership



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The Royal Yeomanry

The Royal Yeomanry's year has been characterised by the ever-increasing set of demands, opportunities and pace of work that has been the feature of recent years in the Army Reserve light cavalry. Our resubordination to 3 (UK) Div and 1DRS alongside the QDG has produced more clarity in our operating concept and role, which over the course of this year has played through into our training focus. Our six squadrons and band are spread across the midlands and south of England but we train together as a unit regularly, and where possible alongside the QDG as our sister regiment. This year has seen joint training across trade courses as well as on exercise, as well as our ongoing contributions to QDG operations and taskings.

The first half of the year was mandated for Squadron-led distributed training. The difficulties with access to and training on Jackal dictate that our mounted close combat training is mostly conducted on Jackal 2 (Res) or as it is also known, the GS Land Rover. Despite the difficulties of training on Jackal, troops were able to practice their tactical movement in the

various snakes, command and control at reach in broken country, and reaction to enemy contact perfectly well throughout this period. Ultimately, the pressure on platforms means that the RY are experts in 'bicycle training', applying our MCC skills on any platform. When we support operations we must be platform-agnostic, and our training must, and does, reflect this.

The ceremonial is an element of military life not often encountered in the Reserve. But contributing a marching contingent and guidon party to Op GOLDEN ORB was a timely reminder of how the Army can be perceived in the wider public realm, as well as a chance for the RSM and Senior Yeoman to really earn their keep.

The second half of the year entailed Regimental-led training, culminating in Ex SCORPION CYCLONE. For novelty value, the RY contingent was

the only HMTV-mounted force element on the entirety of Salisbury Plain, as well as providing dismounts to the RL Warrior-mounted callsigns and IAs to the QDG Red Forces BGHQ. This was a critical chance, especially for those in BGHQ and 1DRS FWD, to see the 1DRS concept in action and truly understand how we are expected to slot into the wider framework.

The post-September period was dominated by rollback and trade courses, but also some challenging training such as Ex URBAN SHARP-SHOOTER, which saw C Squadron leverage some professional contacts with the Kent Police firearms unit to use their purpose-built OBUA training estate and MRTS.

April 2024 will find us on solid footing to meet the challenges that will no doubt be leveled at us throughout the year.

HMJ



April 2024 will find us on solid footing to meet the challenges that will no doubt be leveled at us throughout the year.



1st Reconnaissance Regiment Sri Lanka Armoured Corps

In the year 2023, the strategic stronghold of Rock House Camp has been diligently maintained by the Regimental Headquarters, Headquarters Squadron, A Squadron, and B Squadron concurrently and the 3 troops of B Squadron deployed covering the key points around the city of Colombo while the vigilant C Squadron has been assigned the crucial task of safeguarding the Ceylon Petroleum Storage Terminals Limited at Kerawalapitiya, Sri Lanka. A robust force, led by 12 x BTR APCs from A Squadron and supported by the indispensable BREM-K Armoured Recovery Vehicle, currently forms the formidable Combat Transport Group engaged in the United Nations Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

Within the esteemed Sri Lanka Armoured Corps, our unit assumes pivotal responsibilities for urban security, primarily focusing on safeguarding the capital city of Colombo, Sri Lanka and its surroundings. In times of crisis, we stand ready to secure vital locations, including the President's Office, Temple Trees, Parliament Complex, Bandaranaike International Airport, and other key

sites, prepared to counter civil unrest and public disturbances.

Despite facing formidable challenges, our Officers and Other Rankers display unwavering dedication to their duty by actively participating in rigorous training, army courses, overseas deployments, and human rights courses. Particularly noteworthy is the commendable triumph of C Squadron, securing the Queen's Dragoon Guards Trophy, a testament to their exceptional performance and unwavering commitment in the realms of administration and sports excellence in the year 2023.

The grand celebration of the 75th Independence Day on 4 February 2023, proudly showcased the prowess of our unit, featuring a display of the President's Standards and the Regiment's Standards. The parade, adorned with numbered Armoured Tanks, 3 x WMZ 551A APCs, 4 x BTR 80A APCs, 1 x Ferret Scout Car, and 1 x Saladin Armoured Car, added a dynamic flair to the ceremo-

nial proceedings.

With a storied history spanning 68 years, our unit stands firm in its commitment to assigned duties. Officers and Other Rankers, embodying professionalism, dedication, and courage, meticulously uphold our fleet of armoured vehicles to the highest standards. Even in the aftermath of a 30-year war, the armoured forces camaraderie ardently remains devoted to the rejuvenation of our motherland, their commitment solidified through sacrifice and valour, positioning us to confront any challenges that may manifest.

As we forge ahead, may the tapestry of our shared history and unwavering commitment to excellence guide us towards a future marked by continued service and success. Heartfelt wishes are extended to all members of the Queen's Dragoon Guards for enduring strength, resilience, and pride in our collective achievements.



our Officers and Other Rankers display unwavering dedication



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"Savoia Cavalleria" Activities

Throughout 2023 "Savoia Cavalleria" was constantly engaged in training and operational duties within national borders and in foreign theaters of operations.

The first six months of the year saw a significant part of the regiment's operational component engaged as part of UNIFIL in South Lebanon and eVA (Enhanced Vigilant Activity) in Hungary. The remaining units were simultaneously engaged with the annual ITA MoD Joint Interagency exercise "Joint Stars" in Sardinia and NATO "Saber Guardian" in Romania.

The latter exercise saw the Savoia's pathfinders operating in the maneuver scheme of the Romanian 282nd Mechanized Brigade, tasked with carrying out a river gap crossing of the Danube River. After an airdrop (free fall technique) and in coordination with a parachute

company of the Romanian 495th Airborne Battalion, operating on a different drop zone, Savoia troopers received the task of reconnoitering the area, identifying and assigning targets near the opposite river bank to be struck with air assets, thus allowing the bulk of friendly units to cross the town of Frecatei to the north and south.

In July a team from "Savoia" participated in the multinational jump week organized by the Polish Army's 6th Brigade at the Leznica Wielka aircraft and parachute training center. This valuable exchange activity, carried out in the larger context of the NATO airborne community, was aimed at increasing interoperability and integration of similar units while conducting airborne activities through static line (SL) and military free fall (MFF) techniques.

The regiment's niche capabilities took part to a wide range of training opportunities. Relevant activities were carried out in Spain and in the western side of Alps, at the Pian dell'Alpe range (Turin), where Savoia Snipers could train and compete with similar inter-force and international teams. Specific training included operations in inhabited centers with raids and fire engagements, courses with shooting stations in critical positions (trenches, differences in height, tactical holds, etc.), dynamic shooting sessions with pistol and rifle and abseiling activities, on various height differences and altitudes, with the employment of standard equipment.

Horse mounted training activities and equestrian competitions also were hosted at the facilities of the regiment's Military Riding Center with a significant



participation by civilian and military teams across the nation in the various categories involved, succeeding in the aim of promoting equestrian sports activity.

In September the annual re-enactment of the "Isbuschenskij's charge" and the related Russian campaign events (World War II) took place. 2023 marked 81 years since the last epic horse mounted charge in military history, for which the regimental standard was awarded the golden medal for military valour. During the ceremony was also celebrated the tenth anniversary of Savoia's transformation to its new prominent role as Recce component of the Airborne Brigade "Folgore", which has been undergoing since September 2013.

In the second part of the year, the squadrons put their effort in reorganizing

after the operational tours in Lebanon and Hungary and preparing for the forthcoming Homeland Security operation named "Strade Sicure" in which they will be engaged by December on in the cities of Milan and Rome.

In November 2023 a last Airborne Brigade wide field training exercise was organized and carried out in the training areas between the cities of Livorno and Siena. The exercise, code named "Mangusta", saw our regiment perform OPFOR duties while conducting counterinterdiction activities in a warfighting context. "Savoia" units were successfully augmented by a QDGs team, while US,

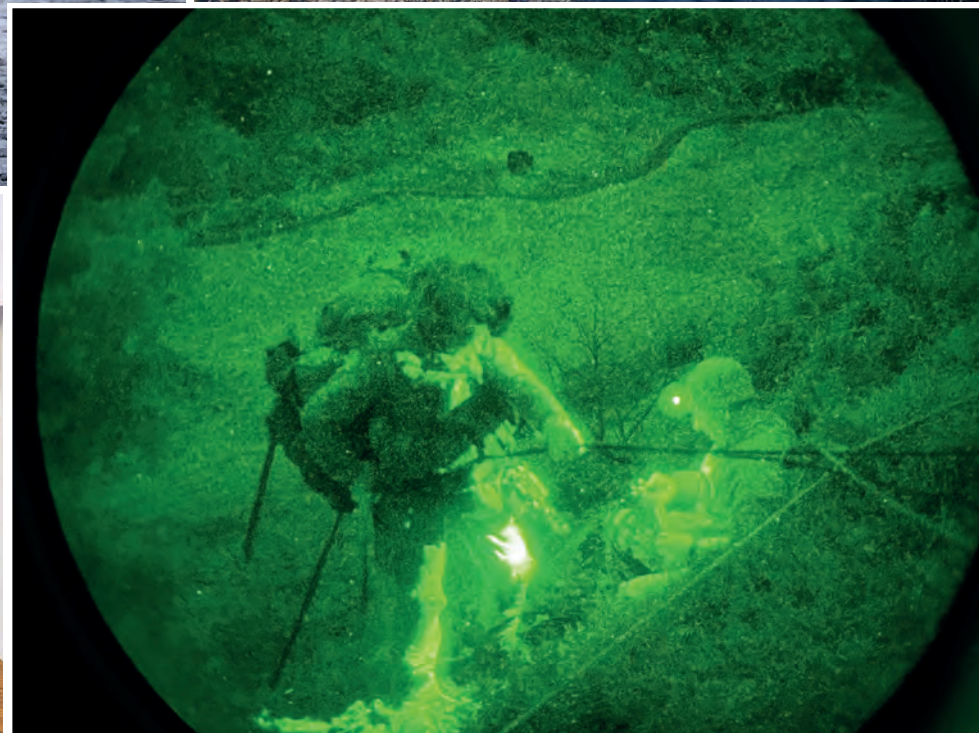
Spanish and British paratroopers joined interdiction operations of BLUEFOR.



Horse mounted training activities and equestrian competitions also were hosted



mounted recce international community.



3rd Reconnaissance Guard Hussars Regiment

3rd Reconnaissance Battalion of the Guard Hussars Regiment currently consists of three squadrons and we are based in the small town of Rønne on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic Sea.

The battalion's primary tasks are to provide a light reconnaissance squadron (1st Squadron) to the Army's Intelligence-Surveillance and Reconnaissance Battalion under 1st Danish Armoured Brigade, and to train and provide reconnaissance troops (2nd Squadron) for the three battalion battlegroups formed

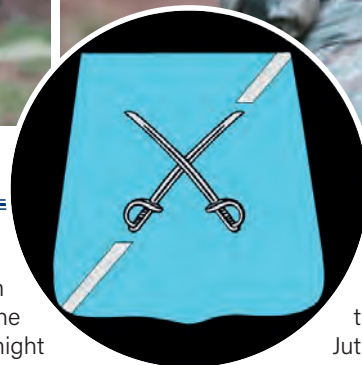
by the Royal Life Guards, The Jutland Dragoons Regiment and our own Guard Hussars Regiment. Last but not least, train recruits and soldiers (4th Squadron (The Marine Squadron)) to provide a steady supply of quality personnel to the two regular squadrons.

2023 was a good year for the battalion with plenty of meaningful tasks and challenges and 2024 promises to be just as busy if not more. Indeed 2024 started with the abdication of Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II. Incidentally, the

Queen's successor King Frederik X was a troop commander in 5th squadron of the Reconnaissance Battalion during his mandatory military service in the late 1980's.

We wish all the best for Her Majesty and King Frederik X.

2023 was the also the year when we were reintroduced to the Queen's Dragoon Guards as QDG Regimental 2iC Major Ben Matthews joined us during our "Patrols Week" in late November. The Patrols Week is the last major battalion



led exercise of the year and centres on dismounted core reconnaissance activities: Infiltration, area reconnaissance, ambush, raids, and exfiltration. Most of these activities take place on public and private land outside the military training areas. In doing so the Battalion can use the islands particular natural features for training purposes such as rappelling, land navigation and obstacle crossing in unknown terrain rather than trudging around within the confines of the well-known military training areas.

The only activity we could not place in civilian terrain was the raid. The raid was carried out at night as a live fire exercise using the troops' organic weapons, live explosives and a variety of pyrotechnics.

As we enter 2024 we are currently preparing our 1st and 2nd Squadrons for participation in Exercise ALLIED SPIRIT '24 in Germany, Exercise SPRING STORM in Estonia, participation in Exercise CAMBRIAN PATROL, standing

to as national response force and deploying a troop to Estonia as part of a Jutland Dragoons Regiment battlegroup within the framework of NATO reassurance measures.

We look forward to another year with challenges, opportunities and strengthened cooperation with our allies and partners in the U.K.

Uffe Geckler Pedersen
Lieutenant Colonel
CO III GHR

Clwyd and Gwynedd ACF

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

In May Porthmadog Detachment had an interesting visit from Sergeant Scott Grills and Trooper Brown. The cadets took part in a team building exercise, which not only helped their communication skills but also their fitness as the forfeit was push-ups, although this ended up with lots of laughing. Afterwards Sgt Grills and Trooper Brown set up a basher then demonstrated, explained and challenged the cadets to put one up in preparation for a forthcoming Company fieldcraft weekend.

The highlight of the year was summer camp in Swynnerton where cadets from across North Wales enjoyed two weeks of great activities including visits to the National Memorial Arboretum and Alton Towers.

Matteo Molica-Franco from the Mold Detachment has had another rewarding year including being appointed the Cadet RSM and representing the detachment on Exercise KwaZulu Natal Draig the all-Wales visit to South Africa. We are grateful to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess for their contribution to the significant cost of the trip. Matteo, as part of the follow-up reporting, also took part in a briefing to the distinguished delegates at the Reserve and Cadet Forces for Wales Annual Briefing in Cardiff.

Several instructors attended a 160 (Welsh) Brigade ACF conference where one of the speakers on leadership was WO1 David Chant who had visited detachments when he was RSM.

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

JB



Dyfed and Glamorgan ACF

With 2023 drawing to a close, we look back at the accomplishments managed by all Cadets and CFAVs (Cadet Force Adult Volunteers) within E Squadron. This year has pushed everyone to their limits, and every challenge was met with determination and smiles. Reflecting through the months, here is what we accomplished!

Kicking off the year, our cadets attended Pembrey to conduct Navigation, three-star Drill, and First Aid. This was followed by two weekends of Girls Football in Wrexham where one of our cadets went through and obtained her County Colours! We had CFAVs on both the Mountain bike leader course and First Aid at Work, Army Cadet Syllabus (ACS) training day at Haverfordwest ARC (Army Reserve Centre) and Senior Cadet shooting on the GP Rifle (5.56mm) and Target Rifle (7.62mm). We also conducted our first Sqn Basic Training Cadre with a parade at the end where parents were invited which was a huge success. This was followed up with the Rugby Nationals at Altcar Camp, a Study Day to further CFAVs training and CPD (Continuous Personal Development) and further Target Rifle Training for cadets. We also conducted Fundraising in preparation for our South Africa trip for which we had a donation from the QDG Mess – many, many thanks! We had the opportunity for a visit from 160 Brigade Cadet Engagement Team, Summer Sports at Crickhowell Camp and several Senior Cadet Navigation and Expedition Exercises in the Brecon Beacons. This was then followed by several E Sqn CFAVs (SSI Bowler, SI Rhys Howells and SMI Thomas Thomas) celebrating their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award with a visit to Buckingham Palace – well done! Cadets also had the chance for a Military Studies event along with contact for BTEC qualifications and attend a Battlefield Study at Ypres, Belgium and conducted a memorial Service at the Menin Gate, had further National Athletics, conducted Duke of Edinburgh Bronze and Silver expedition training and assessments and entered the Bisley shoot. 1ST Queens Dragoon Guards treated us with visits to various Detachments, we had a FTX Weekend (Fieldcraft Training Exercise), the Milford Haven Civic Service and then in preparation for our Annual Camp 2023, we conducted all pre-requisites including SAA (Skill At Arms), swim tests etc and then several lucky E Sqn Cadets embarked on their journey to South Africa where they had the opportunity to attend Exercise KwaZulu Natal Ddraig - 72 Cadets and 15 CFAVs from Wales attended the overseas expedition - this involved Adventurous Training, Battlefield Tours (including Rorkes Drift and Isandlwana) and Safari activities over the period 23 Jul – 11 Aug 2023. The cadets were split between three groups of Giraffe Field Study, Zulu Trail expedition and Tugela River Decent. This once in a lifetime opportunity allowed the cadets to challenge themselves by learning about South African culture and wildlife. We supported



**This year
has pushed
everyone to
their limits,
and every
challenge
was met with
determination
and smiles**



the "Wings Over Carew" event at Cheriton Control Tower and then moved onto Annual Camp 2023, where due to Longmoor Camp being removed for Priority Operational Training, we needed to revert to CYG Camp (Cwrt Y Gollen), Castlemartin Ranges (Merrion Camp), and Templeton Training Area, where we weathered the storm during our FTX (quite literally!) and delivered the best training we possibly could for our cadets – thank you to the QDGs for supplying assistance during this event! CADSAAM (Cadet Skill At Arms Meet) was next where E Sqn supplied at short notice a Team and two of our Cadets from the Tenby Detachment Cadet L/Cpls Priestly and Hughes

between them achieved a selection of Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals! A Commemoration Service was then held in Tenby for Belgium soldiers that were stationed there during the Second World War with the QDGs in attendance along with Ceremonial Guards, Farrier Major, L/Cpl Jones the Mascot and a Jackal Reconnaissance vehicle. We also attended both Orienteering and X-Country Competitions in Altcar Camp. As we get closer to the end of the year, our cadets attended a 160 Brigade Pan-Wales event, where Senior Cadets attended Four Star CIS (Communication Information Systems) and Four Star Fieldcraft training including TIBUA and TIWAF (Tactics In Built Up Areas and Tactics In Woods And Forests) which was a resounding success! At the same time we had cadets attend The RCN (Royal College of Nursing) Prince of Wales Nursing Cadet Scheme. E Sqn then began several weeks of Poppy selling for the Royal British Legion raising £1,000s for the great charity that it is and attended no less

than 11 Remembrance Parades across Pembrokeshire. We have also just completed a Cadet JCIC (Junior Cadet Instructional Cadre) at Bridgend HQ, Healthy Minds Awareness Course, ACS Training, 5.56mm Shooting at Cawdor Barracks during a Training Weekend. E Sqn HQ also held their first Sergeants Board (Congratulations to Cadet Sergeants Lemon and Measey) in many years and numerous local Council Christmas Events were supported by the Cadets and CFAVs across Pembrokeshire. After all of our hard work, we held our first E Squadron Cadet Mess Dinner at Milford Royal British Legion to celebrate the years successes including Trophies and Shields for Detachment of The Year (Narberth Detachment), Cadet of the Year (Cadet Sergeant Measey) and Best Drill Detachment (Neyland) as well as the Shooting Trophies and Medals which were awarded to Cadet Wilton (3rd place - Pembroke Dock), Cadet Mattson (2nd Place - Haverfordwest) and Cadet L/Cpl McLaren (1st Place - Pembroke Dock). Well done to all of you ! Phew! What a year!

All of us would like to thank the Cadets, Parents and Guardians as well as the 1st Queens Dragoon Guards for your assistance with our events throughout the year. Without the commitment from all involved, we would not be able to accomplish all that we have. We would also like to acknowledge all the E Sqn CFAVs time they give to make all these events happen – there are too many of you to list you here – "thank you" to each and every one of you!

JB



Regimental Comrades Association

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

Welcome everyone to another bumper journal. Much has been happening throughout the year and I'm pleased to report that the Regimental Comrades Association has again been very busy.

As usual The Branches have been active. Dinners and drinks are becoming very popular with many new members attending. I'm pleased to report that we have another new Branch located in the valleys and my thanks goes out to Dave 'Para' Evans for taking the lead with this. That brings us up to ten in total. Their inaugural drinks in November were well attended and it was encouraging to see many new faces. I will let the Branch Secretary's brief you over the next page on what has been happening in their areas.

New Branches are still required however in West Wales and we are now looking at North Yorkshire bordering with Scotland. You will be surprised on how many ex members live in these areas.

A number of RCA members this year attended the RAC Sunday Service at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. We are keen to bolster up our numbers for 2024 so if you

would like to attend, please let myself or HHQ's know. We would like to re-establish our links with RHC especially as John Morris (Ex Queen's Bay) is our resident pensioner. John attended the Field of Remembrance with us this year at Westminster Abbey where he met the Queen for the first time.

We had a change in membership to encourage more people to join. It is now free and all you need to do is visit our website at www.qdg.org.uk/rcamembership to complete an electronic form. It is important to capture as many ex members as possible to strengthen our data base.

The Regiment this year are on deployment to Poland and thanks to Mark Ashley-Miller and a dedicated team of deliverers the Christmas hampers will be going out to the families of those deployed. The soldiers will not miss out as Mark and Guy Deacon will drive across to deliver

some small packages to each individual so they will have a present to open on Christmas Day.

To date having had a very successful seven years in the chair I shall be standing down in March 2025. We have gone through quite a few changes which has brought the RCA into the 21st Century. If anyone would like to put their name forward for the Chairmanship, please send your application to the CoR via HHQ's. It has been an honor and privilege to lead the RCA and a dedicated team on the committee.

Thank you all again 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

Dinners and drinks are becoming very popular with many new members attending



Herefordshire and Forest of Dean Branch

Another Year has passed with the Herefordshire group putting on another "St David's in the Shire" black tie dinner, the numbers continue to grow for this event and the Regiment being kind enough to allow us Quarter Guard which certainly gives more pageantry to the occasion, not one to sit on my laurels I shall be asking for the Regimental mascot as well, some logistical challenges to get it into the lift and up to the bar but where there's a will etc.

Our new branch flag had its first official outing up in Brecon, we held our own on a parade of 20 or so flags and Standards of the RBL in commemoration of Soldiers that had lost their lives from the Indian Army in WW2.

With other bits and bobs including delivering Hampers to family



members of A sqn serving on operations of the serving Regiment, we've had a great year, always welcoming new members and suggestions for events from existing members and I

look forward to catching up with more of you in the near future.

RC



London and Home Counties Branch

As Secretary I am writing to report another busy year for us, although sadly we were unable to organise a gathering, members of the Branch took part in the following events.

Our year started as always with the Cav Mem weekend, where a numbers of us hold positions assisting the running of the annual parade, always a challenge!

Later in the year a good number of the Branch attended an RAC sponsored Chapel service at The Royal Hospital

Chelsea, this was a superb day which we hope to attend annually.

To quickly we were into the local Remembrance Commemorations. However, a number of the Branch attended the Field of Remembrance at Westminster followed by a rather long liquid lunch in various public houses around Whitehall and several trains were missed.

Christmas brought the delivery of the hampers to families with serving QDG

abroad and I have to thank my wife for stepping into the breach to make it happen before Christmas Eve!

Finally, throughout the year, our most important task of attending our comrade's final parade.

Next year we hope to organise a gathering in the spring and hopefully a marching party for the cenotaph parade, more to follow.

ADB

Wessex Branch

The Branch held a small gathering of members and guests with the Coronation screened on a large screen in a marquee. Followed by a buffet and a toast to the King and Queen with QDG Le Haye Saint sparkling wine. Despite the cold and wet weather, a good time was had by all.

Once again, we had our Tankfest BBQ, and it was good to see some new faces and some returning friends. It was great to have the RSM in attendance and to be joined by Ralph Hanning from Wolfenbüttel, Lt Col (Rtd) John Smith and guest and Martin Ord, his partner Joan Collins,

and German friends. The evening was a great success with £500 raised for branch funds. We even had a sing-along with Martin Ord, Johnny O'Brien, Dave Littlewood and Twiggy Thomas leading the choir.

Following the BBQ there was a small gathering at Glyn (Twiggy) and Jane Thomas's home in the summer where we were joined by Chris Ions for a very pleasant evening. There was even an "O Group" with ice creams.

As the RCA Banner Carrier I attended three funerals this year, paraded at



Cavalry Memorial Weekend and at the RAC Sunday service at the Royal Hospital Chelsea

DW



The Valleys Branch

The Valleys branch RCA officially opened Nov 23. However, we could say the Valleys branch started during Covid, where we organised the meet up of Dragoons who were living alone and having no contact with people. We organised these meet ups on top of the Rhigos mountain where we complied with social distancing and brought our own food and drink to prepare i.e., Egg Banjos etc.

After lockdown these meet ups continued and grew in number, with many wives and girlfriends attending.

Since our establishment myself (Dave

'Para' Evans) and my two admin staff (Chuck Berryman and Ian Moore) have been reaching out to Dragoons who have been lost during time and enticing them back into the fold. Something that is slowly working with some of the old and bold coming back to join us after a long time away.

More recently we were successful with having ten Dragoons on parade in Aberdare for Remembrance Sunday, all flying the cap badge and representing the Regiment.

Prior to Christmas I organised a Christmas party for my wife and some of

her friends, at Bryn Meadows Golf Club and Spa. Word soon spread and I was surprised as to how many of the valleys branch members requested to join us, although this was not a formal RCA event. After the success and turnout for this party I can see this Christmas party becoming a formal RCA event for the Valleys Branch in future.

We have plans and ideas for the future of the Branch and we will continue to seek out our former mates we have lost over the years.

DE

South Wales Branch

The South Wales Branch has held three very successful get togethers this year. We have had two meet ups in May and January in the Ty Llewellyn Army Reserve Centre, slap bang in the centre of Cardiff and hosted superbly by 53 (Wales & Western) Signal Squadron in their bar. Our flagship event of year was The Néry Dinner and we sat and dined in style on Welsh Beef Wellington at the Masonic Hall, Cardiff. We dined and drank in honour of those fine Queen's Bays attached to the British 1st Cavalry Brigade that had bivouacked for the night at the small village of Néry, whom at dawn on 1st September 1914 were surprised by the entire advancing German 4th



Cavalry Division in a devastating attack. However, the rifles and machine-guns of the Queen's Bays and one 13 pound gun from L Battery held off the Germans long enough for elements of the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigade to counterattack and drive away the attackers in disorder. The

dinner was outstanding and was followed through in true Dragoon style till the early hours of Sunday morning, not quite dawn and thankfully no surprise attacks!

ME

Regimental Home Headquarters

Mark Hawtin – Regimental Secretary • **Kate Cox** – Assistant Regimental Secretary
Mark Evans – Regimental Curator • **Hannah Searle** – Regimental Assistant Curator

HHQ is a team of two for the time being, myself and Kate, this is whilst we wait for the Ministry of Defence Civil Servant recruitment pause to be lifted. HHQ is still staffed Monday to Friday, however I would ask for you all to be patient if you're trying to phone and there is no answer, either leave a message with your contact number or send us an email and we'll get back to you as fast as possible.

2023 has seen the RCA going from strength to strength, the Branches have all held extremely successful events with blacktie suppers, coronation parties, Sand Baggers BBQs and large reunions and dinners in Denbigh, Hereford, Oswestry and Cardiff. Op TELIC 1 reunions were held in March by the A and C Squadrons of 2003 with over 75 comrades attending each, a few even traveling from the other side of the world, both Sqn's RV'd in the afternoon at the Prince of Wales followed by A Sqn dining at Leonardo's and C Sqn in the Masonic Hall and an A Sqn Op HERRICK 9 reunion lunch was held in London on the Saturday of Cav Mem. We can look forward to numerous events in 2024 including Op GRANDBY and Op AGRICOLA reunions. We now have a Valley's Branch, set up in the summer by Dave Evans as Secretary and Ian Moore and Neil Berryman as sidekicks, they have had great success with their inaugural events and are organising the Kosovo 25 and Christmas Party this December in Cardiff.

After many years of running the Germany Branch, looking after our comrades across the English Channel and organising the extremely well attended Wolfenbüttel Waterloo Weekend and Christmas Market meet ups Martin Ruscoe has handed over the reins of Branch Secretary to Ralph Hanning, I'd like to thank Martin for his stalwart support to the RCA over the years.

Comrades attended the Royal Armoured Corp Church service in the Royal Hospital Chelsea, Fields of Remembrance in Cardiff and Westminster Abbey and the National Services of Remembrances at the Cenotaph in London and the Welsh National War Memorial in Cardiff, with many requesting regimental wreaths and attending their hometown Remembrance Services. There has been a lot of interest shown in having a larger marching contingent at the 2024 London Cenotaph, if you wish to take part, please give HHQ your details.

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 for us by the firm '2Viz'. Our App called 'QDG Connect' went live in the Spring. This enables the regiment to reach out to QDG's, serving and retired, especially those traditionally hard to contact; enabling us to connect and renew friendships, pool our skills and help each other; extending the comradeship of regimental service to all. I would ask you all to 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.

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 17 grants have been given, we have also given quarterly, annual, fuel and Christmas grants, with the total value of grants awarded by the Regimental Benevolence Fund for 2023 being £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.

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.





Regimental Comrades Association Cardiff Dinner

The RCA Committee once again organised a great evening of catching up over wine, food and good company at the Masonic Hall on Guildford Street in Cardiff. Ninety Comrades and partners sat down to dine on Welsh Beef and Bara Brith pudding with the usual suspects keeping the stools warm in the bar, slightly down in numbers over the previous two years, but understandable considering the amount of Association events held throughout the year. After the excellent meal the Colonel of the Regiment, Brig Richmond, gave a detailed account of all regimental activities, followed by the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Kierstead, who gave us an overview of all that those

at Regimental Duty had achieved. Mr Chris Gibbons replied and toasted the Regiment on behalf of the Association.

The Following Association members sat down for dinner: Brig Richmond, Gen Mayall, Brig Stenhouse, Brig Thomas, Col Wilson, Col Brooke, Mrs Brooke, Lt Col Kierstead, Maj Matthews, Capt Barham, Capt Cooper, Capt Hansen, WO1 RSM Ruddy, WOII RQMS Navunisaravi, Sgt Delana, Mr Gibbons, Mrs Gibbons, Mr Walker, Mrs Walker, Mr Evans, Mrs Evans, Mr Hull, Mrs Hull, Mr Sullivan, Mr Churchill, Mr Evans, Mrs Evans, Mr Jones, Mr Moore, Ms Snape, Mr Druce, Mrs Druce, Mr Sabel, Mr Lenderyou, Mr Evans, Mr Yoxall, Mr Burgess, Mr Schum-

skji, Mrs Schumskji, Mr Chilcott, Mr Thorley, Mr Scott, Mr Smith, Mr James, Mr Bynt, Mr Carter, Mr Morris, Mr Andrews, Mrs Andrews, Mr Reed, Ms Lloyd, Mr Harding, Mrs Harding, Mr Edwards, Ms Brittney, Mr Crane, Mr Rash, Mr Thomas, Mrs Thomas, Lt Col Ions, Lt Col Brace, Mr Thomson, Mr Deacon, Mrs Deacon, Lt Col Thayer, Mrs Thayer, Mr Harrison, Mrs Harrison, Mr Clegg, Mr While-Paddon, Mr Reed, Mrs Reed, Mr Duruty de Lloyd, Miss Forse, Mr Doe, Mrs Doe, Mr Clare, Mrs Clare, Mr Hawtin, Mrs Cox, Miss Searle, Mr Evans, Mr Way, Mrs Way, Mr Rawbone, Mr Farthing

Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey

On Thursday 9th November a small group of serving and retired members of the Regiment gathered for the 94th Royal British Legion Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey to pay homage to our fallen comrades. Her Majesty the Queen laid the first wreath then toured the Regimental Plots, our plot is always the final plot of the field and this year right opposite the Press enclosure, however we were extremely privileged that the Queen stopped and spoke with Chris Gibbons and John Morris.

The Royal British Legion once again kindly planted our Regimental Rolls of Honour and our wooden remembrance tributes bearing the names of all those from the K.D.G, Bay's and QDG who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

The conservation to the Sacristy is still ongoing, thus the field having to be smaller, so only three tickets were issued per plot, once again a big thank you to the RTR who gave us a few spares.

Those in attendance were Lt Col Brace MBE BEM, Maj R Parry, Maj C Ruggles-Brise, Mr A Bowtell, Mr C Gibbons, Mr M Hawtin, IP J Morris and Mr C Williams. Please contact HHQ if you wish to attend next years FoR.





Combined Cavalry Memorial Parade and Service

The 99th Cavalry Comrades Old Comrades Association Memorial Parade was held under sunny Skies on the 14th May 2023 with His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, Deputy Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards taking the salute in Hyde Park, London. 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 Rob Chubb and Mr Andy Bowtell for representing the RCA on the CCOCA committee and ensuring that everyone was once again in the right place, at the right time. The parade was followed by a Regimental Rendezvous at The Aragon House, Wimbledon, where it was great to find the pub full of old and new faces catching up over the afternoon.

MLH

The QDG Regimental Trust

During the financial year 2022/23, the Regiment returned from its operational deployment in Mali and transitioned to the 3rd Division, which allowed a little more time for activities that could be supported by the QDG Trust.

The principal grants to the Regiment, which cover, among other items, Adventure Training and the maintenance of heritage assets that are on loan from the Trust to the Messes, increased by 10 per cent to £48,494. 2022/2023 also witnessed a significant increase in benevolence grants from the relatively low level of the previous year. With regard to benevolence, the principal point of contact is the Regimental Secretary, who coordinates our cases with other charities and these activities are covered in his report.

During the year, David Rosier retired as trustee and many thanks are due to him for his outstanding guardianship of the Regimental finances over the last 30 years.

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 unrestricted Trust fund, although there is also a restricted fund for benevolence should donors specifically wish to support that activity.

Officers Regimental Dinner

The annual Regimental Officers Dinner took place at the Cavalry and Guards Club on Friday 12th May, attended by 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:

Brig Richmond, Col Andrews, Col Wilson, D Warner, Maj G Fearn, Lt Col Sugden, Lt Col Parry, Shepherd Barron, T Dobson, Lt Col Smart, R Dennis, J Brooke, Col Peacocke, Maj Stenhouse, M Thompson, Col O'Brien, Prof Hacker Hughes, J Beatson-Hird, Maj Coleman, A Roe, D Rosier, Lt Col Brace, M Hawtin, Gen Mayall, Brig de Quincey-Adams, D Cole, Maj Craven, P Wickham, R Staveley, J Barker, T McCallum, Maj Smith, Brig Botsford, D Sheehan, R Charlesworth,

K McGinnity, N Martin, R Coleridge, J Banbury, R Ferguson, Col Lloyd, Maj Beaver, S Patel, H Renshaw, Lt Col Farebrother, Maj Whelan, J Carroll, Brig Stenhouse, Lt Col Kierstead, Lt Col Tyson, J Hoenich, Maj Ruggles-Brise, H Pilcher, W Weischselberger, W Russell, S Mildinhal, Maj Matthews, R Chambers, Maj Hoey, H Martel, R Robinson, Maj Wiggins, M MacHale, Maj Williams, Maj Curry, Maj Shallow, C Poppleton, C Homewood, Capt Davies, Capt Groome, Capt Chaplin, Capt Cooper, Capt Lewis, Capt Dillon, Capt Holland, M Carter, Capt Fulloway, Capt Maltman, T Wills, G Jackson, C Byrd, Lt Carter, Campbell, Capt Hind, A Selka, Capt Maxwell, Capt Barham, Capt Brockless, Capt Kite, H Paine, Lt Swailes, Capt Fetherstonhaugh, Lt Clark, Lt Allington, Lt Spicer, F Maddison, 2Lt Webster, 2Lt Gammon, 2Lt Fearn, 2Lt Logan.

The QDG Heritage Trust

Exercise TRUMPET DANCE, Fort Lewis, Washington State, 1984

In April 1984, 5th Troop C Squadron was sent to Washington State as the recce troop for the 2nd Battalion, the Light Infantry on Exercise Trumpet Dance. This was a live firing exercise conducted jointly with the US Army. We had instructions to report at Brize Norton, where we were to catch a VC10 to McChord Air Force base, refuelling along the way at Gander. McChord is adjacent to Fort Lewis which was to be our destination.

Following its return from Beirut in August 1983, C Squadron was reorganised and 5th troop became the support troop. At the time of leaving for Washington, Sgt McWilliams had just gone on his resettlement course and Danny Mead was the senior Troop Corporal. I requested that he be promoted for the exercise as I didn't want the NCOs of the 2LI taking advantage of us. This was duly done. And thank goodness we did, as Danny was more than able to hold our ground with the LI.

We broke the journey at Gander International Airport in Newfoundland, which was built as a transatlantic refuelling station in 1938, when airplanes didn't have the range to cross the Atlantic in one haul. After a couple of hours wandering around the empty airport, we continued on to McChord where we were picked up by coach to go to Fort Lewis.

Fort Lewis is a huge site of 87,000 acres, 9 miles southwest of Tacoma in Washington State and was home to the 9th Infantry Division. It was a town within itself and had every facility imaginable, from sports facilities to cinemas, bowling alleys and restaurants.

It soon became pretty clear that we were not on 2LI's radar and the Company Commander of the company we were attached to, basically told me to go and do my own thing. I had spotted a sign as we drove through the camp announcing the lines of the 5th Cavalry. Any knowledge I had of the US Cavalry had come from the diet of cowboy films I had watched as a child and in these, the 5th Cavalry always appeared as the good guys! So, on the first morning, whilst the troop were in one of the restaurants, I found their RHQ and walked into the Adjutant's office. As I saluted on entry, I didn't quite anticipate the reaction; clearly, a British Cavalry Officer in barrack dress was not a regular appearance and the Adjutant was astonished. I introduced myself to him and without taking his eyes off me, he pressed an intercom and said:

"Boys, get your arses in here now.



You've gotta see this. There is someone from the Queen's Dragoons Guards (sic) in my office."

This announcement brought around five men crashing through the adjacent door, who then just stood and stared. I introduced myself again and told them that we were not required by the LI, and could we attach ourselves to them instead? They looked at each other, then back at me. The Adjutant responded that they were off on exercise tomorrow and that I should assemble the troop and we would get a briefing, then draw stores and chow. So that was that.

I went back to the restaurant and found the troop being chatted up by the manageress and her daughter, a well-known duo. As a troop we walked over to the 5th Cavalry RHQ and were ushered into a small lecture hall where we were given a briefing on regimental history. The 5th Cav, known as The Black Knights, had its origins in the Confederate Army and was even commanded by Robert E. Lee. They fought in most of the major Civil War battles, including Gettysburg, and at the time the regimental battle honours included action in the American Indian wars, the Spanish-American War, the Philippines and the Pacific theatre, Korea and Vietnam (subsequently Bosnia, Desert Storm, and Iraq have been added to this list.) They prided themselves on their Southern manners and their Motto: First to Fight. But no longer on horseback, they were Air Cav, predominantly in Bell AH-1 Cobra helicopters.

The advance party was leaving the following day to the Yakima training area. This was high desert covering 500 square miles with sagebrush, volcanic formations, dry gullies and large rock outcroppings. With its vast flat valleys separated by intervening ridges, it was perfectly suited to large-scale mechanized forces. We would fly out in three days' time by Huey.

We were introduced to their Gunnery Sergeant (Gunny) who was the equivalent of the RSM. Gunny led us to the stores, and we were equipped for the coming exercise. He took an instant shine to OCdt Pitman's mackintosh which, for some reason, he had brought with him. For the next two weeks, he was harassed by the Gunny:

"Hey Tony, how about your raincoat?"

We suggested bartering a dress Stetson but sadly, that was a trade too far.

That evening, the Adjutant invited myself, Anthony Pitman and Danny Mead to join the officers and the Gunny in the Officers' Club. There we were entertained with beer and popcorn before dinner. As we were enjoying ourselves, 'our' company of 2LI officers came in. The Company Commander called me to one side and proceeded to give me a dressing down: how dare I bring a sergeant into the officers' mess? I had great pleasure in directing him over to the Adjutant and suggesting he take it up with him; as Sergeant Mead had been invited by the Adjutant and as it was the Adjutant's club,



who was I to argue? Needless to say, the Company Commander didn't go over to complain, nor did this ingratiate us with our parent 'unit'. It was that evening that I met up again with the Captain from the PPCLI who I had met in Cyprus the year before (as discussed in last year's article on Beirut.) He gave me his number and said that we really ought to visit them in Vancouver.

The following day, Gunny told us that we had a training video to watch, and the troop assembled at his house, which we thought somewhat unusual. He ushered us into his home cinema (we couldn't believe anyone had a home cinema!) and put on a John Wayne film, *The Searchers*, about an ex-5th Cavalry officer! That evening, we all went to one of the bars on camp where there was a Korean girl band playing Michael Jackson. It was somewhat surreal, especially as there were regularly patrols through the venue by MPs armed to the teeth.

We had little kit with us when we embarked upon the helicopters to fly out to Yakima because everything had been sent ahead with the advance party. I was marginally sceptical that we would find everything as I remembered how chaotic the USMC had been in Beirut. I needn't have worried. We arrived, were shown to our tented lines where the accommodation had already been erected, the camp beds set up and our kit laid out in each pre-designated four-man tent. Furthermore, each tent had a wood burning stove with a pile of wood ready to be lit. Proper Cavalry style. We were camped under a hill which looked like a pimple, but was known as Squaw's Tit. We could see Mount Rainier in the background, glowing at night and the surrounding area looked a bit like rural Afghanistan. It was more like a caravan park in Pembroke-shire than a tactical scheme.

Over the next week, there was not a lot of exercise conducted. Instead, we were taken up in Cobras, abseiled out of Hueys, fired the M203 grenade launcher underslung from an AR15, and spent a great deal of time listening to war stories. We met one of their pilots, a German, who it was claimed had flown for the Luftwaffe at the end of the War. The pilot looked in his mid 50s, so I suppose that this was possible. The Lieutenant who was our liaison officer was an extremely good guy called Leo. His speciality was extreme altitude diving which was done with an air tank. He came to visit me sometime later back in the UK and before he arrived, I told my girlfriend that he dived with a tank on his back and how dangerous it was. She didn't believe me, saying that no one was that strong and anyway, the tank would squash him when he hit the ground!

At the end of the first week, Leo told us that we were going on a survival

course run by the Rangers in the snow at Huckleberry Creek, which was in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and on the northeast corner of Mount Rainier National Park. We flew by helicopter into a Nissen Hut camp. There we were given cross country skis and searched to ensure we had no provisions since we were going to live off the land. We set off for half a day's trek and arrived in time to be shown how to build a snow hole. At twilight, we set up snares and were told that when the sun rose, we would check the traps and would be so hungry, we wouldn't even wait to cook the rabbits! Before we turned down for the night, we were instructed to stuff grass and leaves down our trousers and to gather up some wood to burn, which we should put in our sleeping bags to dry out. With this gung-ho Ranger attitude, we unrolled our sleeping bags and divided up the contraband provisions we had smuggled in - hidden in our sleeping bags - in good Cavalry style.

At daybreak, we checked the snares. Not one rabbit! One of the Rangers showed us how to make a fire from our dry provisions using belly button fluff and two stones. We were pretty sceptical, but it worked! We boiled some snow to have hot water for the morning bevvie and spent the day cross country skiing and learning some tricks of the trade. On arriving back to camp, we checked the snares again. No rabbits. We repeated the ritual of preparing for tomorrow morning's fire, climbed into our snow holes and consumed more of our illicit provisions. Needless to say, the following morning there were still no rabbits!

Unaware that we had actually eaten quite well on our provisions, the Rangers started to panic and ordered some take away rabbits. A couple of hours later, a helicopter dropped off a cage full. They were not the grey wild ones we were expecting to catch, but fluffy white domestic ones with large pink eyes. The head Ranger, who was probably the only person who hadn't eaten, summoned us round him in a circle, grabbed one of

the rabbits and bashed its head on the ground so hard, its eyes popped out.

"Gentlemen," he said, "in a survival situation, there is no room for niceties. It is imperative to consume food as expeditiously as possible. Every part of the animal needs to be eaten."

He proceeded to pull the eyes right out of their sockets and stuff them in his mouth.

This party trick didn't go down too well and for a moment, I thought I wouldn't be the only person to embarrass themselves by puking up the Mars Bar I'd had for breakfast. Thankfully, the stiff upper lip won. Not to be outdone and to show that the Cavalry are more civilised than the Rangers, we made our fires, boiled the water, skinned the rabbits and cooked them. Most left the eyes to one side. But there was some one upmanship and a few, including Danny Mead, did eat their eyes raw, just to prove a point.

At the end of the third day, as we returned to Fort Lewis, the head Ranger debriefed us and congratulated us on our professionalism and how impressed he was that he hadn't heard one complaint about the lack of food.

With a week or so to spare, I contacted the PPCLI and they very kindly invited us to stay with them in Vancouver. We hired a couple of cars and drove up through Washington State to Vancouver, a journey of 3 ½ hours. Anthony Pitman and I stayed for 24 hours before driving up to Vancouver Island to stay with some distant cousins of mine. I have no idea what the troop got up to whilst we were fishing, but there were plenty of grinning faces when we met up again. Better not to ask. And then the month was up! We flew back and on my return, I was summoned by Col Gordon and told that we had had a glowing report - from the 2LI.

First to Fight!

J B-H



RSM Thomas Barlow's grave

SCHEDULE B.				SCHEDULE B.			
DEATHS in the District of <i>Wellingwood</i> in the Colony				of Victoria. Registered by <i>Samuel Allen</i>			
No.	RESIDENCE.	Age.	Place of Birth.	Age.	Place of Birth.	Place of Burial.	When and where buried.
185	<i>Elizabeth</i> <i>May</i> <i>1850</i> <i>Wellingwood</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>Wellingwood</i>	<i>Samuel Allen</i> <i>1850</i> <i>Wellingwood</i>	<i>Wellingwood</i>	<i>Wellingwood</i>	<i>1850</i> <i>Wellingwood</i>

A lot has been written about our famous RSM from Waterloo. But whilst we know a little about his KDG career, we know nothing really about his life after he left the Regiment.

In 1818, he transferred to the 23rd Light Dragoons as a Captain, on half pay. In 1819, he became adjutant of the Prince Regent's 2nd Regiment of Cheshire Yeomanry, an appointment which he held until his retirement in 1833. Just before then, in 1830, his wife, Elizabeth Wagstaff, who was the daughter of the KDG Quartermaster William Wagstaff, died of unknown causes. Three years later, he received a commuted allowance for his commission and on 12 August 1833, he married Sarah Dorrington, at St. John's, Manchester, Lancashire.

He became a full time Methodist preacher and for some years lived at Pickmere, Cheshire. But thereafter, we have no further information. Nor did we know where he was buried.

Enter Jill Birtwistle.

Jill was born in Ilkley, a small town perched on the edge of West Yorkshire. Her father joined the Cheshire regiment in 1939 and was sent to India in 1942 as an NCO. He was commissioned into the 17th Dogras with whom he served until demobilisation as a Captain in 1946. Her mother was a British record holding field athlete who represented Britain in the subsequently named 'Austerity Olympics' of 1948. Jill met and married an Australian and has been living there for forty years.

When she first became interested in her family history, she had no idea of Thomas Barlow's existence nor anything about his descendants. Her mother, Margaret Jean Lucas, was from Surrey and her father had never much talked about his own relations. Jill traced her family back four generations to Margaret Rose Barlow, the youngest of Thomas's five children. She married John Wesley Barritt and their daughter married William Lucas, Jill's maternal grandfather.

What she found particularly fascinating was how Thomas's life was very much connected to places she knew well, both in England and Australia. Her brother lived for some years in Brussels, and on

one visit, long before she knew about Thomas, she took a tour of Waterloo.

Jill decided to research her family tree which, by her own admission, was quite a learning process, not only of the military history of the Napoleonic Wars, and the war against the Japanese in WWII, but also of Christian Evangelical movements in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, as well as the growth of the industrial revolution in the North of England.

A search of the Australian National Library's database 'Trove' revealed newspaper articles about Thomas's time in the Colony, including his funeral notice. Thus, Jill managed to track down his death certificate which revealed where he was buried.

When she visited the UK in 2017, she came to our museum in Cardiff to research Thomas and that was where we made contact.

Enter Peter Jones.

Pete joined the regiment in Wimbish from Junior Leaders. He served in Wolfenbuttel, Tidworth, Sennelager and Catterick with operational tours in the Gulf and Bosnia. He emigrated to Australia on leaving the regiment in 1999. There, he set up his own business and married Elizabeth who lived in Melbourne too. They now have three sons and a daughter.

In November 2023, he received an email out of the blue from Howard Smith, who asked for his help in tracking down Thomas Barlow's grave. Pete contacted a friend of his in the public records office who put him in touch with the Melbourne General Cemetery (MGC) where he was purportedly buried. The MGC was extremely helpful and located reams of ancient documents and plans. After many days spent thumbing through old records with a magnifying glass, Pete discovered Barlow's grave site. Or so he thought!

Armed with a sketchy and somewhat inaccurate 160-year-old map, he went in search of Barlow in an old graveyard that stretches over 110 acres. The site is seldom visited, very neglected and so overgrown that it is almost impossible to navigate. He requested assistance from the authorities to help clear years

of undergrowth. This enabled him to narrow the site down to a large palm tree grove where there were multiple crumbling gravestones. In true recce style, he hacked his way through the undergrowth until he reached Barlow's grave. In his excitement, he managed to knock it over! Returning to the MGC to check the maps again so that he could mark it for posterity, he discovered it wasn't even Barlow's grave he had desecrated, but some other poor old pioneer of early Melbourne!

With assistance from the authorities who spent nearly a month of their own sleuthing, Pete finally found Thomas Barlow...approximately four meters from the grave he had knocked over! Sadly, the plot was empty. There is no longer a gravestone or anything else in memory of Thomas nor his wife Sarah, who is buried with him.

The MGC informed Pete that, if we wished to erect a memorial, he needed permission from the owner of the plot. Under Australian law, a plot is owned by the descendants of the deceased. Pete contacted Howard who told him about Jill and so he contacted the museum to ask for her contact details. But sadly no one at the museum had taken them down when she visited.

So, Pete called his wife's aunt, Trudy, who is a whizz at genealogy. Trudy spent three weeks searching her sources and tracked down Jill to Queensland, even finding her email address. Pete sent an email with a detailed explanation of who he was and that the regiment were interested in erecting a memorial. He received



a very charming email back on the same day! Apart from offering her support, Jill provided the details which she had collated over the years. In addition, she identified the man whose grave Pete had knocked over!!

John King deserves a mention after coming into contact with a veteran of the QDG. He was part of the famous, and somewhat disastrous, Burke and Wills expedition in 1860 to cross Australia from Melbourne to the Gulf of Carpentaria, a distance of approximately 2,000 miles. At that time, most of the inland of Australia was largely unknown to the European settlers.

The expedition left Melbourne in winter in very bad weather, traveling on poor roads and broken-down horse wagons meant they made slow progress. The return journey was plagued by delays and monsoon rains. Burke and Wills themselves died and the expedition was decimated. Only one man survived the entire crossing, John King, an Irishman who had served in the 70th Regiment of foot. It would have been a suitable coincidence if he had fought at Waterloo! But alas, the regiment was in fact in Canada!

Back on mission...

Jill was a mine of information and our understanding of Barlow is increasing daily. In addition to supplying us with all sorts of snippets, she has kindly agreed to assist with permissions that we need for a memorial. This is a laborious task and involves filling out endless forms including statutory declarations to hand back to Melbourne General Cemetery. Once complete, we intend to erect a memorial fitting to someone who had a major influence upon the regiment.

We have uncovered an enormous amount of information on him, including letters that he himself wrote. As one would expect, he led a fascinating life and was a serious character. There is sufficient information to put together a book...

But what is clear is that he would not have been out of place in today's regiment.

I would very much like to thank those who have helped in putting this article together.

Jill Birtwistle has provided us with all her hard work which took several years to piece together. She patiently dealt with my avalanche of questions and is kindly helping to get permissions for our monument to Barlow. Thank you.

Pete Jones has meticulously applied all those skills he learnt as a recce soldier. He devoted serious time to find the site of Barlow's grave and always responds instantly to any and all requests for help. Your hard work is very much appreciated.



The QDG Heritage Trust Oral History Project

Recent highlights of the QDG Heritage Trust include the purchase of some fantastic artefacts, including an oil painting of Patrick Moir-Byres, who was a Major in the King's Dragoon Guards in the early 1900s. The portrait itself is unique for its depiction of the KDG frock coat, whilst the name 'Moir-Byres' perhaps provides an interesting link to the 1685 formation of the Regiments, the 'Moirs' and 'Byres' both having a Jacobite connection. In other news, via a National Manuscript Conservation Trust grant awarded to Firing Line Museum, one-of-a-kind KDG Recruitment Instructions, dating from 1787, received some serious restoration at the hands of Emily O'Reilly, a Cardiff-based Icon accredited paper conservator. Great headway has similarly been made on the watercolour and silver restoration projects thanks, particularly, to the tireless efforts of Richard Dennis and Robert Mansel. Finally, the oral history project has taken off in a big way, with a number of wonderful connections made (or re-made) and stories recorded - let me show you a few highlights.

Our first participant was Major John Hamilton, recently departed and late of the KDG; at the time of interviewing, he was one of the last survivors of Dunkirk. John served in the Second World War with the 56th City of London Heavy Anti-Aircraft

'We were told to take up five positions on the beach, near the beach, because the German Luftwaffe had started bombing. They had already shelled the town (the Germans were about eight miles inland), they shelled the town, they destroyed the harbour, the number of troops who got onto the beach was increasing (and I don't know how many hundred there were) but there were two points of evacuation. One was the mole - the mole was this mile long breakwater. The second evacuation point - not a good one - was the beach.'

John Hamilton on Dunkirk

Regiment before commissioning into the KDG a short while later:

'Harold Castles, we became friends together, and he said, "why don't you if you're waiting for commissions join us? KDGs." So, I had an interview with the Colonel of the Regiment... and became a KDG and joined the regiment in North Africa.'

John's story continued through his experiences in Benghazi, Hamburg, an extra-regimental post to the Arab Legion and, moving on from the KDG before the amalgamation, to his time



Recently acquired: an oil painting of Patrick Moir-Byres, unique for its depiction of the KDG frock coat.

'And a big part of this was the final mounted parade of the Queen's Bays... Our colonel in chief, Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, took the salute and it was a lovely autumn day on the Tidworth polo ground. And we drove past in our Saladin armoured cars and Dingo scout cars. And obviously the standard party was mounted on horses. And then we had a usual lunch and reception afterwards and a ball... we had Tommy Kinsman's band, which was one of the most renowned bands in London.'

Major General Robert Ward on the last mounted parade of The Queen's Bays

as a Staff Officer. Overlapping John's time in the KDG are interviewees Lieutenant General Sir Maurice Johnston KCB CVO OBE and Major General Robert Ward CV MBE DL, both of whom served with the Bays, through the 1959 amalgamation, ultimately becoming Commanding Officers and Colonels of the Queen's Dragoon Guards; Major General Ward also served as Chairman of the Regimental Trust. At the time of the amalgamation Lieutenant General Johnston was Adjutant of the Bays:

'We had a cable saying the Queen's Bays and the King's Dragoon Guards are going to amalgamate. And I took it down to the Commanding Officer who almost burst into tears until I said, "Look, they want us to be a vulgar fraction like the 1926 cavalry amalgamations, 15th/19th, 16th/5th, etcetera. 1st/2nd Dragoon Guards," and I said, "we'll become known as a half a Dragoon!" So, we chose a name instead, 'The Queen's Dragoon Guards.'

As of the time of writing, eight people have been interviewed and their stories have taken us worldwide: from the U.K. to Germany, Ireland, the Middle East, Beirut and even the Falklands. They have been told by

both soldiers and their partners (and the great thing is that everyone has a unique perspective to tell) and have covered operations and exercises, conflict and peace:

'[In Hohne] I was what they called Op UNION SQMS for two years... which was looking after the quarters for the married families. You moved them in, allocated them a quarter and liaised with the garrison quarter people... They were joining families together.'

- Anthony 'Jumbo' Harrison, Queen's Bays and Queen's Dragoon Guards

But there is space for many more!

The purpose of this project is to capture memories and preserve stories, create a dynamic and interesting history based on personal accounts and experiences, and promote engagement with the regiment and its deeds. We are delighted to have recently been awarded a grant from the Grocers' Charity in furtherance of this endeavour, so please do get in touch to take part.

HS

Firing Line

As always, the Firing Line team has had a busy year. Although visitor footfall has still not reached pre-Covid levels, the last two years have seen great leaps in numbers and we are predicting a continuation of this trend throughout 2025.

Highlights since the last report include Firing Line volunteer, Elliott Attwood, being named as the Marsh Volunteer Awards joint-winner for Wales 2023; Elliott was subsequently invited on-stage at the British Museum to collect his award.

Secondly, in October 2023 Firing Line submitted its application to renew the museum accreditation; accreditation is vital to the museum and ensures working practices adhere to highly professional standards. At the time of writing, we are waiting for the outcome of the application – with no concerns.

Day-to-day, our team continues to carry out talks on a variety of subjects, including helmets/headwear, swords, firearms, flags (our new addition last year) and, this year's new addition, SOEs. Our education program looks to bridge the gap between Regimental History and the National Curriculum, both providing outreach and welcoming to the museum cadets, schools, youth and home-education groups.

We hosted several military visits last

year and have especially enjoyed the strengthening of the relationship with the RCA, with whom we have collaborated on numerous occasions over the last year. And what would this journal article be without our yearly reminder that QDG comrades are entitled to free entry to the Museum – please do get in touch to arrange a visit.

Hannah and I visited the Regiment on numerous occasions throughout the year to carry out our annual audits of the collections held by the various Messes, receiving a wonderful welcome each time. Thank you!

Exhibitions:

There have been numerous changes made to the exhibits over the last year. Here are some highlights!

Korean War Oct 23 – Present

This banner exhibition commemorates the Welch Regiment's participation in what was known as "The Forgotten War".

Beirut 1983

This is the story of QDG in Beirut 1983, based on the narrative of Chairman Jonathan Beatson-Hird and Colonel Simon Stewart. Their full story is in last year's journal article!

Bellerophon and Napoleon

For a short period over the summer 2024, the museum has been offered a loan of artefacts relating to Napoleon and his surrender to Captain Maitland of HMS Bellerophon. Highlights of these artefacts include the sofa on which Napoleon sat! At the time of writing this we are in the planning stages; it is expected to be the biggest exhibition the museum has ever hosted, so watch this space!

At the beginning of 2024 the Museum Manager left Firing Line to pursue other ventures, so the Management Team are now:

Major Mark Evans (Regimental Curator and Operations Manager): curator@cardiffcastlemuseum.org.uk; and Hannah Searle (Company Secretary): companysecretary@cardiffcastlemuseum.org.uk.

Hannah is also the Assistant Curator and her email address for curatorial matters is ast-curator@cardiffcastlemuseum.org.uk.

Iain Fife continues in his role as Front of House Supervisor, leading a team of six employees and around five volunteers.

ME





Obituaries

Lt Col Simon Stewart OBE

It was with great regret that his many friends, especially those that served with him in the Regiment heard of the death of Simon Stewart at his home in Swinburne, Northumberland, on Wednesday 20th September 2023, whilst surrounded by his family.

Simon, during the final year of his life, fought stoically against cancer, a battle that he fought with great bravery and cheerfulness to the last. He was lucky in one way during this difficult year to have had such a devoted and unselfish wife as Katie to look after him.

Simon or "Stewpot" as he was fondly known, grew up in Lymington, Hampshire but after his 29 year Army service moved to Katie's family home in Swinburne, Northumberland, where he also served for 4 years as the County Director of the British Red Cross, then as the Chambers Director of Trinity Chambers in Newcastle upon Tyne, from 1998-2018.

He was first commissioned into the 4th Royal Tank Regiment, equipped with Saladin and based in Herford, Germany in 1967, moving to Hohne and Chieftain tanks and the Guided Weapons Troop in 1969 where he combined soldiering with sailing in the Baltic, skiing in the Alps and driving his distinctive Open-Top Triumph Vitesse accompanied by his beloved "Napoleon", a cocker spaniel.

A move to Catterick in 1971 as a "Link Officer" brought him in close contact with the QDG in the role of Royal Armoured Corps Training Regiment (RACTR), where he built up a strong rapport with his QDG peers. At Catterick he met with Catherine (Katie) (Riddell), his future wife, but being an adventurer and seeking fun, he volunteered for a tour with The Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) in Oman, where he honed his desert warfare and infantry skills.

Upon his return from Oman in 1974 he transferred to the Regiment, joined 2nd Troop, A Squadron briefly, then to RHQ as the Intelligence Officer and married Katie in July of that year.

Back to A Sqn as 2 i/c in 1976, then as OC from 1977-



May 1979, where his enlarged Sqn provided Close Recce Troops for the mostly BAOR based Battle-groups, gaining his squadron a reputation for professionalism and tactical excellence.

But in May 1979, he was sent off to 1st (UK) Armoured Division in Verden as the SO3 Ops until attending Staff College (SC) from Oct 1980 - Dec 1981 after which he was posted back to QDG as OC C Sqn from Dec 1981 - March 1984, with regimental moves from Omagh to Wimbish and his squadron to Cyprus and Beirut. A subsequent Directing Staff (DS) appointment at the Junior Division of the Staff College (JDSC) from Mar 1984 - July 1986 was a useful prelude to his post-Staff College "Black Bag" appointment as SO2 Ops, HQ DRAC at HQ I (BR) Corps from July 1986 - April 1988 which ticked

the boxes for promotion but not before his final tour as a major, in what he called a really fun job, as the SO2 RAC at the Battle Group Tactical Trainer (N) (BGTT(N)) based in Catterick until Jan 1990 and promotion.

Described as "the epitome of a gentleman and resolute support and ally", Simon was a popular figure being eternally courteous, agreeably humorous and invariably immaculately dressed in shirt and tie and well-polished shoes. As a squadron leader particularly, his organizational skills and a flair for leadership ensured that his men were operationally competent, loyal and motivated.

His leadership and diplomatic skills were tested particularly in Beirut where warring factions battled for supremacy and control of the city. His Squadron as a part of the Multi National peace-keeping force (BRIT-FORLEB), attempted, very successfully as it happens, to keep the factions separated for the most part. It was Simon who initiated the signal "The Eagle Has Landed" when C Squadron arrived by ship from Cyprus. Simon claims that it was he who was the first member of the squadron to set foot on the ground, but this is disputed by his then SSM, Martin "Ordy" Ord, who also claims the accolade.

In pursuing the Squadron Mission Statement, Simon found that he was at logger-heads with Commander BRITFORLEB over how to achieve the mission. Rather than rule by force as directed, Simon's concern was for the safety of his men and advocated that patrols should be conducted as peacefully as possible. An operational modus that gained huge respect from all sides in the conflict.

For this brilliant act of leadership, he was appointed MBE.

With his leadership, man-management and instructing credentials now fully recognized, he was appointed SO1 (DS) at JWS (Poole) for a year after which, he commanded successively, two separate TA Regiments for two years each, which must be a record. In October 1990, he first commanded the DLOY in Lancashire for a very successful command tour, but having established

his competence as a commanding officer there, he was selected to raise The Scottish Yeomanry (SY) Regiment in Edinburgh, from August 1992 until his retirement in April 1994. Raising the SY (now the SNIY) required masterful diplomacy, sensitivity and skill. It is indicative of his ability to encourage and lead his officers and men and to cut through the obstacles set by local TA loyalties and the chain of command that this task was so cleverly engineered and successful.

For his efforts he was advanced to OBE.

Simon was a devoutly religious person whose belief underpinned his daily life and enhanced his respected dealings with his fellow officers and men, especially.

Our deep sympathies go out to Katie, and their children Philippa and Marcus.

EJK O'B

Major ACA Benda

Anthony Benda, who died on 7th April 2023 aged 89, was forced to retire being medically discharged with a slipped disc. He had a long spell with De La Rue and, after two years as a schoolmaster, founded and played bass in his ad hoc dance band performing at the Berkeley, Lanesborough, Savoy hotels, the Mansion House, Cavalry and Guards Club and London Zoo!

On leaving Winchester Tony was commissioned as a National Serviceman in The King's Dragoon Guards in 1952 and converted to a Regular a year later. He served at Regimental Duty in Hamburg, Neuminster, Malaya and Wolfenbuttel. At ERE he was successively ADC to GOC 6th Armoured Division (1954), G SO 3 (Ops) HQ 11 Infantry Brigade (1960-62), Training Major Pembrokeshire Yeomanry (1963),



Staff College (1964) and finally Instructor RAC Tactical School, Lulworth (1965 – 66).

Tony was an extremely talented all-round sportsman. He was a free-scoring batsman, captained the KDG team winning the Army challenge Cup, Malaya in 1958 and, along with Robin Carnegie, was awarded his State Cap (Malaya). He ran the 100 and 200 yards at Army level and represented the Regiment at all major, non-equestrian sports. He was a competent small arms shot.

He had a flair for the stage and music. He organised pantomimes and made non-serious films.

Tony married Camilla Skipwith and they had three sons, one of whom, Jonathan, served in the Regiment for four years. Sadly, Camilla died in 2017.

RWW



Sadly, the following deaths were notified to the Regimental Secretary throughout 2023

Name	Regiment	Served	Dec'd	Age
WO2 A Jones MBE	QDG	1967 - 2005	Jan 23	73
GJ Wallis	QDG	1967 - 1980	Jan 23	72
WO1 N Wilson	QDG	1972 - 1996	Feb 23	66
P Logue	QDG	1972 - 1985	Feb 23	68
J Winther	KDG	1955 - 1958	Feb 23	85
M Coventry	QDG	1972 - 1980	Mar 23	67
I Vickery	QDG	1967 - 1981	Mar 23	73
Maj ACA Benda	KDG/QDG	1952 - 1966	Apr 23	89
JJ Marshall	QDG	1962 - 1966	Apr 23	82
A Monckton	BAYS		Apr 23	89
WO1 M Stiff	QDG	1951 - 1976	May 23	
S S Marshall	BAYS	1948 - 1950	Jul 23	
G M Kelly	QDG	1978 - 1995	Aug 23	62
N P Gaynor	QDG	1963 - 2000	Aug 23	
Lord R Elton	BAYS	1949 - 1950	Aug 23	
J Hicks	QDG	2008 - 2014	Aug 23	32
D White	KDG	1948 - 1953	Aug 23	93
Lt Col SMP Stewart OBE	QDG	1967 - 1994	Sept 23	
N W Davies	QDG	1967 - 1993	Oct 23	74
Lt Col TAK Watson	KDG	1943 - 1958	Oct 23	99
S Lowe	QDG	1993 - 2012	Oct 23	54
C Taylor-Young	KDG	Neumunster	Nov 23	89
Major J C Edwards	QDG	1959 - 1975	Dec '23	

Valetes

Lt Col Jerome Tyson

Jerome (Tys) Tyson ends a career that spanned four decades. Joining the Regiment before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1987, he spent time in every squadron and deployed operationally ten times, two of which were at war. Although qualifying as a tank crew commander in the 90s, it was in both the Close and Formation/Light reconnaissance roles where Tys thrived the most. During his 37 year career only 7 years of it was spent away from regimental duty highlighting not only dedication to the Regiment but also to that of his craft. It was this professionalism that thrust him as a SSgt to the position of 1st Troop Leader with C Sqn and 3 Cdo Bde during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Regimental Sergeant Major for Op HERRICK 9 in 2008 and Regimental Second-in-Command from 2018 to 2020, the first Late Entry Officer to hold the appointment. Tys finally bows out of the Army as QM(T) Bovington, which poetically is the place where his career began as a Junior Leader all those years ago in September 1986.

After reaching the dizzy heights of Junior Trooper in the Junior Leaders Regiment he eventually joined B Sqn in October 1987 Wolfenbuttel, Germany. In Support Troop under the watchful eye of John Sharp, Jim Crowley and Wayne Lloyd, a tough grouping with a reputation for being grumpy and hard to please at the best of times.

Whilst deployed on a Regimental exercise being run in the Moselle Valley, a wine region and very popular tourist spot, which also coincided with Tys' 19th birthday the troop all dressed in combats and cam cream, took itself on a wine tasting tour followed by a pleasure boat trip down the Moselle River. It ended very messily with a very drunk Tpr Tyson being dragged off a truck by the SSM, birthdays didn't get much better!

1989 saw his first operational deployment to Northern Ireland and although only lasting two and half months. Not long after returning from Northern Ireland, Tys volunteered for the Boeselager team. Boeselager was a NATO reconnaissance competition hosted by the German Army. It required extremely high levels of fitness, Soviet map marking skills, AFV and Warsaw Pact uniform recognition and navigation to an almost impossible standard. The intense training lasted 6 months and by the end of the competition Tys promoted to LCpl, cementing his status as a reconnaissance soldier of the future. Those in the wider Regiment admired the Pose-a-lager blue hoodies that seemed to last for decades post the teams cessation.

His second operational deployment was with A Sqn Support Troop during Gulf War 1 – Op GRANBY, as part of the US-led coalition to free Kuwait from Iraqi invasion. Flying to Saudi Arabia in Oct 90, spending months training in the desert with Sp Tp A Sqn which included rehearsals for the entire Sqn to be underlugged by CH53 into Kuwait to support US Marine Corps seaborne assault. However, with the Sqn realigned to 1st (UK) Armd Div from Jan 91, Op CERTAIN DEATH never came to fruition. To celebrate Christmas in the field each troop performed a skit during the Sqn review with Tys' mocking a bumbling troop leader lost in the desert, which by all accounts was very funny and one he would recall when landing his own troop near Um Qasr some years later. The festive period of 1990 also included 'raft' races, food fights and a pyrotechnic assault against the rest of the Sqn which included firing the complete stock of 51mm mortar illume. The 100-hour war was fairly uneventful for Sp Tp but they did take a number of POWs and cleared bunker



complexes.

On return from the Gulf Tys went back to B Sqn and joined the Regiment at its new home in Tidworth. Deploying to Northern Ireland not long after, and also assuming his first command of a Team. This mixed and very hectic deployment started in County Tyrone, moving to West Belfast and finished in South Armagh. Whilst operating out Springfield Road Police Station,

Tys' team was moving through the grounds of the Royal Victoria Hospital when suddenly a contact report came over the radio. A mobile patrol in APVs had been hit by an IED just off the Falls Road. Tys sprang into action, made his rifle ready whilst shouting "Contact....on me!" He preceded to run at pace through the hospital using its walk ways as a short cut to the Falls Road. On reaching A&E he burst through the spring loaded doors, leapt up the escalator and out onto the street, however it was at this point he realised his team were no longer with him; they couldn't keep up! Unfortunately, the only way for Tys to find them was to go back the way he came, asking A&E patients if they'd seen any soldiers walking around. The contrast of a very aggressive action only minutes before compared to politely questioning as to the whereabouts of his soldiers didn't go without ridicule from hospital staff and patients but thankfully the team were found, and the mobile patrol only sustained light damage.

Conversion to Challenger 1 meant the next few years were all about live fire on Hohn ranges and training exercises on Soltau and in BATUS training areas. In early 1993 Tys completed, and came top of his PTI course, a qualification he kept until he was SSM and one that all soldiers in B Sqn really appreciated! Due to having spindly legs in the turret

of a Challenger, 1993 also saw Tys with a serious leg injury that resulted in him marrying his future wife Liz with a full leg plaster cast 'neatly' tucked under his Blues trousers.

Now promoted to Cpl, Tys deployed in 1996 to Bosnia with Recce Tp. Initially located in the mostly destroyed town of Sanski Most, the troop later took up position in the enclave of Bihac, which at the time was the most mined area in the world. Leaving Bihac a month early, Tys went on to complete his Challenger 1 crew commander's course but returned to Recce Tp for another BATUS exercise. A move to C Sqn meant another deployment to Northern Ireland, one striking memory was the first time he deployed and whilst still sat in the back of his Saxon he could hear and feel the commotion outside as it was physically moving the vehicle from side to side. Inside the Saxon were anxious faces looking back at him, it was the first time he needed to reassure soldiers before going into 'combat'. It wouldn't be the last.

Now with a young daughter Tys promoted to Sgt in 1998



it ended very messily with some very angry tourist and a very drunk Tpr Tyson being dragged off a truck by the SSM. Back in the day, birthdays didn't get much better!





posting out of the Regiment for the first time to make use of his key RAC instructor qualification. Assuming the rather chilled post of kayak instructor with 20 Cadet Training Team in Taunton, Somerset. Returning after two and half years away, the Regiment had moved from Sennelager to Catterick and converted back to formation reconnaissance.

Promotion in 2002 meant a move back to C Sqn but this time as 1st Tp Ldr. Post 9/11, another war with Iraq seemed inevitable and training took on a different focus as a result, but by late 2002 C Sqn were as well trained as they could possibly be. In February 2003 the Sqn deployed to Kuwait as the recce squadron for 3 Cdo Bde. Initially located in Camp Coyote, which bizarrely was only 1km away from where A Sqn halted at the end of the 1st Gulf War in 1991. Over the following few weeks the Sqn conducted mission specific training which included working with the US Navy and rehearsals for landing onto the Al Faw Peninsula. On the day his troop slowly made its way up the Basra waterway towards the port of Um Qasr in 'old school' landing craft with 30mm turrets traversed over the sides covering arcs. On finding what was thought to be a suitable landing point, Tys brazenly declared over the net "The Eagle has Landed" just as all 4 Scimitars sank up to the tops of their tracks in mud. Thankfully the landing point wasn't covered by Iraqi fire, the next hour or so was spent freeing vehicles before moving into an OP screen to the south east of Basra. The next 14 days were spent in and out of contact with T55s and infantry with Tys experiencing the first tank contact and what can only be described as a very surreal experience, watching through his binoculars as a T55 began engaging him with 100mm HEAT rounds. Luckily, range and a hull-down fire position meant the rounds fell short. Nevertheless a very 'twitchy' moment!

2004 brought the birth of his son Toby and further promotion



Knowing that warm (free) food would raise morale, Tys cooked up a squadrons worth of hotdogs



with Tys taking over as SSM B Sqn. Focus quickly changed from NIBAT 4 training to a 6-month Iraq deployment on Op TELIC 5. Based from the Shatt Al Arab hotel, colloquially known as the 'Shat', B squadron's early deployment was dominated by the attachment to the Black Watch BG as part the UK contingent to support to the US Marines in Fallujah. Op TELIC 5 finished in Apr/May 2005 and within 12 months Tys moved from B to HQ Sqn as RQMS(T) and redeployed to Iraq for nearly 9 months on Op TELIC 8.

2007 not only saw the regiment move from Osna-bruck to Sennelager but also promotion to WO1 and RSM of the Regiment, and straight into training for Op HERRICK 9. Deploying with RHQ to the Garmsir District as RSM of BG South. This was a tough deployment, but one highlight was the visit of COMISAF who at the end of the visit presented Tys





with his commander's coin for 'combat excellence'. Pleased with the award, he proudly showed the CO, who, because he didn't get one, flung it as hard as he could across the FOB, bouncing it off the Hesco walls a number of times. Albeit with a few new dents, the coin was eventually recovered to be later displayed in the RSMs office out of the CO's way.

Commissioning in August 2009, Tys' first appointment as a captain was RCMO. Moving to QM(T) 18 months later and taking acting Maj rank as OC of the Brigade Troops Echelon (BTE) during Op HERRICK 15. The BTE was a significant undertaking, maintaining G1/G4 responsibility for the independent units deployed on Op HERRICK, in all around 1800 personnel and nearly 800 vehicles. In early 2014 Tys posted SO3 O&D to HQ 11 Signals & West Midlands Brigade, Donnington. He was then selected for promotion and attendance at ICSC(L). On completion Tys joined the Regiment in Norfolk, assuming command of HQ Sqn in September 2016.

As Sqn Ldr he deployed with RHQ and supporting staff to Malaysia for a computer based exercise. Unlike UK IT based training systems, the Malaysian version allowed all participants to 'nuke' the opponent. As soon this functionality was found accidental 'nukings' became routine as did annoying our Australian and New Zealand Army colleagues who were also on the exercise. In 2018 Tys was asked if he would assume the appointment of Regt 2IC, a position never held by an LE officer at regimental duty.

In part due to his performance as Second in Command, Tys was selected for promotion to Lt Col, taking over as QM(T) ARMCEN, later renamed Combat Manoeuvre Centre, in Bovington. Within 6 months Tys had transformed the way equipment was maintained, creating closer ties with contractors, maintainers, and training deliverers, in so doing increasing platform availability by over 35%.



Tys completed 3 of his 4 assigned years at Bovington before deciding it was time to eventually hang up his webbing, finally leaving the Army in October 2023. His time in Dorset clearly made an impact as he and Liz have decided to make it their permanent home. Now working within the defence industry, he spends most of his spare time on a paddleboard around Bournemouth and Studland beaches or cycling around the Jurassic Coast

Jerome will be remembered not only for his combat prowess, and kayak instructor skills, but for his welcoming nature and ability to get the best from any situation. We wish him and Liz well and look forward to pulling up a sandbag with him at future Regimental gatherings.

TRJ

Major Alexander Dumont

Alexander "Monty" Dumont came to the regiment as a trailblazer on the now well-trodden path of having prior service in the yeomanry. By virtue of this 'soft launch,' by the time of his 'general release' onto the regimental population, he had already accrued many of the traditional subaltern experiences. Free of the angst and growing pains experienced by most young officers in the early days of regimental duty, Monty felt comfortable adopting the airs and graces of one beyond his seniority. This phenomenon manifested in many ways but perhaps most amusingly in the form of a near-instant duty rumour that this cock-sure new officer was, in fact, Lord Dumont, a not-too-distant relative of the royal family. The picture Monty has selected to accompany these words is, of itself, a manifestation of this aspect of his persona.

Monty spent his time as a troop leader in A Squadron under the tutelage of Ed O'Brien; without doubt, this was a hugely formative relationship for Monty, who remains in close contact with Ed and his family to this day. It would be a busy period for A Sqn with first, Bavarian Charger, the regiment's first real run out on wheels, followed by Build-up and deployment on Herrick 20. Indeed, training the Afghan National Army during that tour sits centrally among Monty's favoured memories of his time with the Regiment.

We can perhaps look to this period in Afghanistan to explain another Monty-ism. Those who know him well will comment on his affection for Americana. One could be forgiven for attaching a Freudian link between being exposed by Max McKechnie to an American colleague as 'not a real Captain' and a career-long endeavour to impress our American cousins.

After Herrick 20, Monty returned to Sennelager and began preparations for the unit move back to Swanton Morley. Never was an RHQ role more suited to a man than RSO was to Monty. An unabashed technophile (this man built his own gaming computer in his mess room), he was most professionally fulfilled when fiddling with radio dials. Never one to stand still for too long, he was soon off to Kenya as Adjutant BATUK before being recalled to regimental duty as Operations Officer.

I'm told a man's Valette should make some reference to his legacy; well, very few of us leave the regiment having endowed it with a two-ton oak edifice. Monty marked his appointment as OpsO by purchasing the most offensively enormous clerk's desk, which made it impossible for more than a couple of people to occupy what had once been the largest office in the building. The Commanding Officer, with the help of a telescope, was very impressed with what he saw on the business end of that desk. He promoted Monty to acting Major and put him in command of HQ Squadron.



Very few of us leave the regiment having endowed it with a two-ton oak edifice



Soon after, Monty was selected for substantive promotion to Major and ICSC. Little did he know that his year of professional development and 'being invested in' instead see him surged to the NHS to unclog logistical problems during the COVID pandemic. The reward for this undoubted stashing would be the prize he has always sought: an assignment to the United States. At the National Training Center, he would progress from Recon coach to brigade trainer. He would finish up as the XO for Live Fire, an unprecedented appointment for a foreign officer.

With his departure from the Army, the Regiment is deprived of a true regimental character, the endless parade of female companions and the guy that still pays for the sky sports subscription in the Mess. Colonialist Thomas Morton wrote of the Americas, where Monty chooses to retire: "He that desires to thrive in the new world must either turn soldier or turn merchant... in these new countries, both these states are most honourable and profitable." We wish this soldier luck in his new life as a merchant in the New World.

JPC

Captain Hugo Chaplin

Meet Hugo, a man whose life has taken a sharp turn from the disciplined ranks of the military to the world of ostentation. Having recently (over 18 months at time of writing) left the Regiment, Hugo seems to have exchanged his combat boots and issued smock, for the most expensive orthopaedic designer trainers and velvet Nehru jackets to wear at his weekly dinner parties. He has become a member of his local bougie Padel (indoor tennis for people that can't play tennis), taken up spinning classes (indoor bike riding for people that are scared of cycling outdoors), as well as hiring a local wine merchant (Hedonism Wines) to help him navigate through ever-growing social circles with a penchant for flaunting wealth and feigned sophistication.

It wasn't always like this for Hugo though. He joined the Regiment in August 2017, and the author was fortunate enough to meet him on a summer weekend at a lovely pub in Notting Hill before he arrived at Regimental Duty. It was here that Hugo affirmed his on/off relationship with nicotine, smoking an entire pack of Lambert and Butler menthol clickies and an equal amount of Lager tops. He wasn't seen again after this day until re-appearing on the slopes of Verbier, visiting the Alpine Ski Team. He was quickly roped in to joining the team, finishing the RAC championships as a convincing racer, ironic that he could ski downhill better than downing pints. It was here that he met his future wife, Harriet – a beginner skier. After rescuing her from a particularly booze filled fondue lunch at Le Mayenzet, like a true gentleman he escorted her down to Medran, swapped Instagram profiles and waited for her to 'slide into' his DMs, which she duly did about a year later...

After this initial heartbreak, he quickly established himself as a capable Troop Leader. Joining C Squadron led by Major Ben Parkyn, fellow troop leaders Joe, Alice and Charlie showed him the ropes. He first began by bonding with his Troop Sergeant, Sergeant Owain 'Dav 220' Davies, who refused to talk to him for 3 months. After an un-remarkable performance on Ex WESSEX STORM during the feared 'Beast from the East', he deployed on his first Operational Tour to Bemowo Piskie, Poland. It was here that we first learned about a mother's love for one's child. Every week another premium care package would arrive, with Fortnum and Mason biscuits, designer chocolates and posh herbal teas galore as he tried to break himself away from his nicotine addiction (not helped by the bad influence of fellow troop leader Joe). Halfway through the tour Ben and Alice left with new OC, Dave Hoey, arriving with his doppel-ganger in tow, Will Groome. Will took over 1st Troop and Hugo was no longer the 'new boy'. So began a period of relentless toxic body shaming, theft of his nice treats, and even the disappearance of his brand new named and numbered Arsenal shirt that his dear Papa had sent out especially for him, only to turn up in the hands of a horrendous Tottenham Hotspur comedian – you can imagine what happened next.

After returning from Poland, he went on his adventures where he discovered his love of Africa. Weeks spent trekking through the Ugandan rainforest tracking Gorillas, followed by a deployment to Kenya where Will and he found a new pair of victims to bring into their sport obsessed shit-chat Whatsapp group – Ed and Seb. These four founding members of the Subalterns Golf Club had their inaugural match during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hugo had the business acumen and vision to bring to life a 9-hole golf course and employed the useless Gardens Member to mow some greens around Robertson Barracks. It is now assessed by most leading Management Consultants that this golf course would now be bankrupt with millions in lost revenue. It was also during this time that he became the infamous 'Quiz Master' during



Thursday night lockdown quizzes, ranging from Modern History to Shag, Marry, Avoid of various celebrities. He then developed his love for the finer delicacies in life, confusing Moët & Chandon with white wine put through a soda stream, and commenting on the delicious duck we had at supper one night – it was pork.

The next chapter in Hugo's career saw him take over as C Squadron Second in Command, under Major Bryn Williams. They deployed to Mali in May 2021, having had no pre-tour leave and confined to the horrific Linton-on-Ouse transit camp for two entire weeks for isolation to stop them contracting any nasty

bugs like COVID. This did not stop Hugo though, who whilst on one patrol managed to contract a rare blood infection, leading to his CASEVAC back to Camp Bagnold. Luckily his mother's love once again came to rescue, and the entire Squadron was supplied with the entire Fortnum and Mason summer hamper, and all the herbal tea one would need to recover from a most deadly illness. On his return from Mali, he quickly whisked himself away to a coveted job in London, and started planning the event of a lifetime, his wedding to Harriet. A guard of honour made up of the Officers and SNCOs who had played such important roles in his military education were there to assist him as he made that final leap from the QDG and into a job in town.

Upon leaving the military he now finds himself a man of two halves. On one side of him is the board game playing, wine tasting, ostentatious faux chin who wears his regimental slippers to the Cavalry and Guards Club – when questioned on this was overheard to say, 'is my club not my home?'. The other side of him can be found at the Home of Football, The Arsenal. Hugo is a man possessed in his Papa's pitch-side season ticket seats. F'ing and blinding and the referee and linesmen, swilling pints before and after the match, and generally thinking that every away fan there might as well be a member of a terrorist organisation, the venom that he espouses is quite shocking to the feint hearted. Hugo is a brother officer and closest friend of the author, and I have been exceptionally proud to serve alongside through all of this time. He remains a close friend of many QDGs still serving today and remains incredibly proud to call himself a QDG. It has been a pleasure to write this Valette, bringing back the fondest of memories, and a look forward to making many more as he journeys into the next phase of his life in the civilian world.

JDK



**Upon leaving
the military
he now finds
himself a man
of two halves**



Captain Will Groome

William Groome was educated at Oundle School and later Reading University (never heard of it either). Will's passion for all sports meant he naturally gravitated toward 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, commissioning in December 2017. Joining The Regiment in 2018, he almost immediately deployed on a gruelling 6-month (some say 6 week) tour of duty in Poland on Op Cabrit.

A true sportsman – have I mentioned that? Will provide some much needed "panache" to the QDG Rugby and Cricket teams. There are few that haven't experience the thrill of him recounting his famous match winning conversion (some say from the halfway line).

Never one to shy away from a niche sport – Will next deployed to Norway to try his hand at Nordic Skiing. This would serve two purposes; he would be able to further show off his sporting prowess, at the same time tackle a persistent 'yoghurt based' issue that he had been dealing with. Having established dominance in almost all events, it was time for warmer climes.

A green soldier through and through, certainly for the early part of his career, Will departed for Kenya with C Sqn, in 2019. Despite being confused for C Sqn OC David Hoey (favouring the same hairstyle), the exercise went without a hitch, Will along with the rest of C Sqn successfully dashed any dreams of the 'The Rifles' success. Will further honed his green skills whilst on Ex Wessex Storm – even managing to present his Troop Sgt, the opportunity to demonstrate his exceptional troop level recovery skills just moments before the Battlegroup Raid.

Lockdown, a dark day for the Nation. There was only one thing for it, and 'it' was, Golf. The final solution to the ever present 'yoghurt problem'. Will along with several



other Mess Members ingeniously redeveloped the area surrounding the Officers Mess into a notoriously challenging 18-hole course. With great skill, participants skilfully avoided parked cars, garages, and the assault course – every day reducing their handicap.

Feeling that there was little more to understand about 'green soldiering', Will's thoughts turned to getting a grip of the Staff Officer sphere – graciously accepting a job offer to be the AMA to 7 Brigade Commander, Brigadier Jasper De Quincy Adams. Not much is known about his time with 7 Brigade other than a nasty nickname about grooming... However, never one to miss out on an opportunity, Will managed to snaffle the role of AMA to Commander Op NEWCOMBE, Brigadier Dan Duff – conveniently coinciding with C Sqn's Op NEWCOMBE 2. There he served with

distinction; he worked tirelessly meeting the demands one can expect of an AMA. A much-valued friendly face within Headquarters, Will was always there to provide the background 'gen' to any recent issue. Uncharacteristically even 'deploying' to Bamako, on a discreet mission, which was absolutely not to collect laundry.

With his time and hairline receding and having now completed Staff Officering. His attentions turned to the relatively untrodden path of the corporate world. Identified as somewhere that was in direly needed someone of his talent. Will saw out the remainder of his career as C Sqn 2IC, notoriously proclaiming that he would "sign anything".

A true Cavalryman and a Gentleman. Will, shall be missed by all, we wish him the best of luck in his future endeavours.

EJD

Captain Howard Paine

In an inexcusable omission, it has come to the editor's attention that the now long-departed Howard Paine has been allowed to escape to the business world without proper recognition. What follows is a true account of the man whose enduring claim to fame will be 'completing' the night tray.

Howard came to the Regiment in September 2012. He was immediately suited to life in Germany, not only as a fluent German speaker but, more importantly, as an alumnus of a Studentenverbindungen. These fraternity-like organizations place such a weighted importance on the consumption of beer that they provide silver-coated receptacles for its regurgitation to make room for yet more beer. Be it Warsteiner, Paderborner or a numbers (1664), Howard was and remains the unchallenged pintsman.

Howard's contemporaries from these early days are unanimous in their condemnation of the peperami thief. Mess lore has



it that if one were missing one's own swagger stick, it would undoubtedly be discovered in a pile of 4-5 others in Howard's room. No malicious intent is inferred, more a reflection of his occasionally forgetful persona. A trip to retrieve a peperami would reveal further insight on the young Howard; one could normally expect to find him either asleep or, in rarer cases, a recently vacated sleeping bag – bed sheets were an administrative leap too far.

Initially assigned to 3rd Troop B Squadron, Howard was under the auspices of Simon Farebrother. While most young officers have some kind of 'coming of age' story of embar-

assment during their early days, Howard's is quite unique. During a buildup exercise for a subsequent BATUS exercise, he delayed the squadron's recovery from the training area, having somehow not only lost a side bin of his Scimitar but, more concerning, the SA80 it contained.

Later in the year B Squadron and Howard would complete Prairie Thunder in BATUS, the Regiment's final run out on tracks. From there, it was Afghanistan as part of the Brigade Advisory Team on HERRICK 20. Another final foray not just for the regiment but for the Army as QDG closed the door behind them after 20 years of campaigning.

Upon the regiment's return to Dempsey Barracks and the move to the UK, Howard was employed first at Pirbright, training the next generation of young soldiers. On promotion to Captain, he returned to QDG as Second in Command of B Squadron. The highlight of this period of his career was a deployment to Kenya as the OPFOR. The photo

above captures Howard's attitude to that exercise perfectly. Hoarding rations and sleeping more than most. Of equal note, during his tenure as 2iC, was Exercise GUMA SUN alongside the Sierra Leone Reconnaissance Regiment.

Much of this Valet has been written to mimic the jovial approach that Howard adopted for much of his career. Doing this fails to highlight what a phenomenal man Howard is. He was a friend to all and a mentor to anyone that asked. It is truly testament to his character that to this day his name is still alive amongst those that served with him. When those small, largely B Squadron, groups come together, Howard is always at the centre of what ever dit is being spun.

Howard's final appointment in the Army was a return to Pirbright, but it would be a mere interlude on his inevitable path to the world of business that he was ultimately destined for. Despite this valet being nearly six years overdue, the Regiment still has a tubs-shaped hole missing from it. The world of accounting software (or something) is much richer for our loss. He is now growing old with dignity somewhere nice in the loving company of his wife, Pippa, and daughter, Polly. I'm told he even makes his bed these days. **JPC**

Captain Alex Allington QDG

Alex started at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in September 2018, but due to being 90% glass, rugby matches were too much for him and due to this he commissioned into 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards in April 2020, immediately deploying with A Sqn on Op RESCRIPT (COVID response) testing tasks with 4th Troop.

In the Summer, he began the Light Cavalry Troop Leaders' Phase 2 course in Bovington. Managing to keep injury free for that phase, it was then to Warminster for tactics. On this course the members of his Troop quickly came to admire his northern skill of digging, one that Alex was taught as a young boy 'down pit' in Sunderland. True to form, Alex was injured in a Jackal flop on the final exercise but was still able to pass.

Following that he went on to normal Sqn activity, COVID testing from 'FOB Pontins', Cyprus Live Fire Range Package, all before going onto the Sniper Platoon Commanders' Course in Warminster. Now it wouldn't be a course if Alex did not get injured, and true to form on the area, with a phenomenally large bergen on, he wrapped his bangers in hard. A point of jest now but at the time this cast a large shadow on his time as a Troop Leader, him deploying on Op NEWCOMBE 3, and his career. Fear not though dear listeners, for 'our Alex' (as he is know up North) is just as good at recovering from injury as he is at getting injured!

In November 2021, after completing the PDT for Op NEWCOMBE 3, in which he learnt a lot about the mechanics of a Jackal and the operations of the A Echelon, he and A Sqn deployed to Mali, ahead of a 6-month UN Tour. On this tour Alex was a key figure in on-camp cohesion, creating numerous inter Tp/Pl sports competitions and quizzes. On patrol, 4th Tp were a formidable force for guiding A1, where no lorry was safely stuck in a wadi for long! All alongside this, 4th Tp also managed to



commandeer a cherry picker for the Welsh Flag on St David's Day, and purchase a large battle axe! Alongside other Human Intelligence and reconnaissance taskings.

Following the return parades and AT, Alex decided to move on from the Army and take up life in the North living with his darling wife, Eleanor, and working for the Nissan Corporation of Japan, where his skills as a reconnaissance officer are best put to use! His last great task with 1st the Queen's Dragoon Guards was on parade in London at the head of the Squadron in which his name is synonymous with care, quality, and camaraderie. **ZAK**



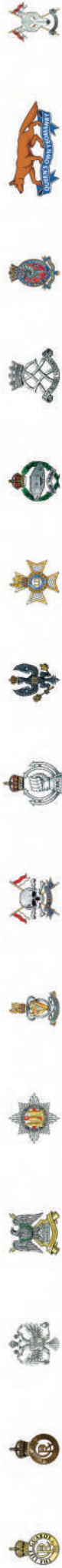
Lieutenant Ned Fetherstonhaugh

Ned Fetherstonhaugh came to the Regiment after Eton College and Exeter University, with a passing detour through RMAS. He commissioned in August 2020, having been persuaded by fellow QDG Officer that accepting an unconditional offer from the RLC wasn't quite as good an option as the QDG. His powerful combination of dashing good looks, charm and intellect made him a perfect fit for the QDG. He joined his brother officers after completing Phase 2 training beaming with pride, because he knew he had joined a truly incredible Regiment. During his short time in the QDG, Ned threw himself at any available challenge. His team thrived on the 2021 Mullens Cup and won the SERE patrol competition Exercise Evasion Eagle. These impressive performances showed off his gritty side which was often lost behind his more flamboyant characteristics. He was then aligned to the mighty C Sqn prior to Op NEWCOMBE 2. He joined the Sqn halfway through their tour and took on the callsign of 33D. Although he didn't experience a full tour, he certainly got to tick off a few life experiences.

The Sqn led the way on the longest reconnaissance patrol since World War Two. He learned many lessons over those months in the desert, notably one about not admitting embarrassing things to Welsh soldiers during an ice breaker. After Mali, Ned deployed on an STTT to Sierra Leone with Lt Fulloway as the UN Special Advisor to the RSLAF. After a short spell as a Troop Leader at Bovington, Ned was selected to be the XO at DRS to Brigadier Neil Budd. While doing this job, Ned served alongside fellow QDG Officer Captain Cooper on Exercise Warfighter. They developed a bond over their passion for literature and co-wrote a book that may become a best seller in years to come. In the Mess, Ned was very popular, and this was marked by the fact he was always ready to have a laugh and enjoy a gin and tonic. His relaxed approach, ability to talk to anyone and concern for his boys meant that he was a much-loved Troop Leader and should stand him in good stead in any challenge he takes on. We wish him the best of luck in the future.



Sgt Humphries awaiting HM the King



THE ROYAL ARMoured CORPS
THE CORONATION OF HM KING CHARLES III
6TH MAY 2023

