



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



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





1st THE QUEEN'S DRAGOON GUARDS

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

Allied Ship
HMS MONMOUTH

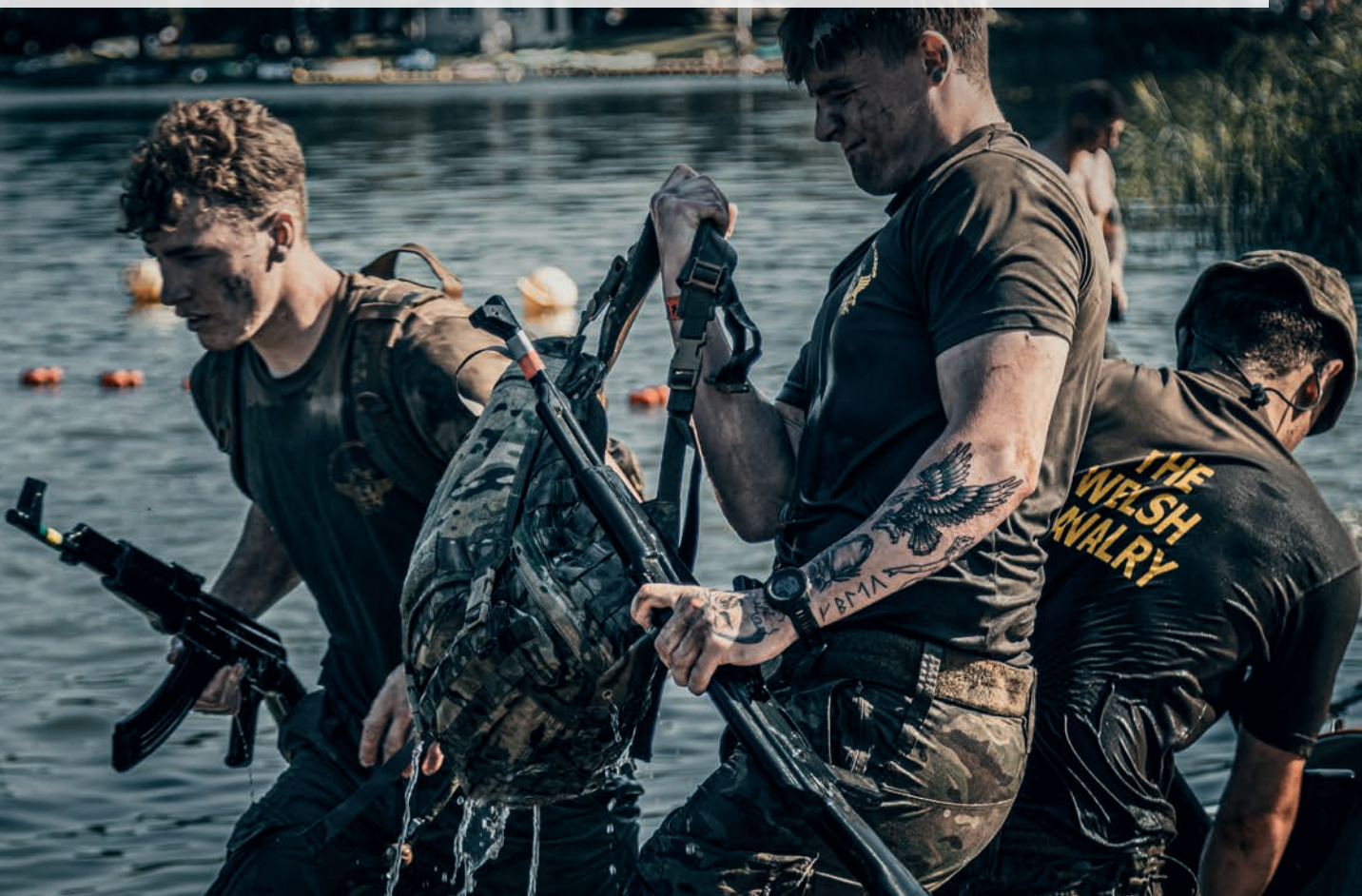
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THE 11th CAVALRY (FRONTIER FORCE) PAKISTAN ARMY
1st/15th ROYAL NEW SOUTH WALES LANCERS
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The Regimental Journal of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards



Editor: Major AJ Purbrick

Contents

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Swanton Morley 2024

Colonel of the Regiment's Foreword	3	Admiral Pitka Challenge.....	56	CASR.....	98
Foreword from the		Ex ARROW 24	58	Squash	98
Colonel Commandant.....	4	Ex Resolute Warrior.....	60	Field Sports.....	99
The Editor.....	4	Op CABRIT (Poland) 16	61	Bovington Dragoons.....	102
Commanding Officer's Foreword.....	5	Poland National Armed Forces Day.....	62	Grantham Army Training Regiment.....	102
Honours and Awards 2024.....	6	Ex Paladin Strike.....	64	Centre for Army Leadership	103
Diary of Events 2024.....	6	Operation Elgin.....	65	Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.....	104
A Squadron.....	7	Ex CERBERUS.....	66	MOD Main Building.....	104
B Squadron.....	12	A week with the French		CAMS Light Cavalry	
C Squadron.....	16	Foreign Legion	67	(Crew Commanders)	105
Headquarters Squadron.....	20	Cold Weather Operators Course	68	RMAS: Leading the way in	
Quartermaster's Department.....	22	Recce Cadre.....	70	military excellence.....	106
MT.....	23	Ex OLIVE EAGLE	72	Ministry of Defence	106
Training Wing	24	Lethality Development	73	Defence Digital.....	107
Welfare.....	26	Celebrating St David's Day	74	The Royal Yeomanry.....	108
AGC (SPS).....	27	Regimental Christmas Day and		Leathersellers' year in review	109
Light Aid Detachment	28	Coronation Medal Parade 2024	75	IV(AC) Sqn	110
Catering department	30	King's Coronation Medal Parade.....	76	Celebrating Success: a year in review	
Regimental Aid Post	31	Waterloo 209.....	77	for the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment	
OP CABRIT (P) 15	32	Waterloo CABRIT	78	- 2024.....	111
Gymnasium.....	34	Alpine.....	80	1st Special Service Battalion	112
Padre'	36	Nordic Skiing 24/25 Season	82	Panzer Grenadierbataillon 35.....	113
Officers' Mess.....	38	BAWF 2024.....	86	"Savoia Cavalleria" activities.....	114
Warrant Officers' and		The 27th Edition of Waterloo Ride	87	Dyfed and Glamorgan Army	
Sergeants' Mess.....	40	Equestrian Sports	88	Cadet Force.....	115
The Regimental Engagement Team		Boxing.....	92	Regimental Comrades Association	116
and Regimental mascot	42	GOC 3(UK)XX Driven Shoot.....	93	Regimental Home Headquarters	119
DIAMONDBACK.....	43	Ex DRAGON GAUNTLET AIGUILLE	94	The QDG Heritage Trust.....	122
Op CABRIT 15 Pre-Deployment		Golf.....	96	Firing Line.....	125
Training	44	Motorsport.....	96	Obituaries.....	127
Op INTERFLEX Training Delivery		Rugby.....	97	Valetes.....	129
Unit (TDU) 3.....	46	Baltic Osprey.....	97		

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12 Brooklands Court
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NN15 6FD

01536 418181
journals@typestartcrest.co.uk
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Colonel of the Regiment's Foreword

The past year has gone in a flash for me, and I suspect it will have also for those serving with 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. Their Brigade Commander acknowledged at a medals parade at Swanton Morley in early December that QDG was the most operationally committed regiment within the Army over 2024 and praised the spirit, professionalism and positivity of our officers and soldiers.

Our squadrons have passed like ships in the night as they have bounced between commitments, and it has been well over a year since the Regiment has been all in one place together. Our families have had to endure lengthy separations and for the second year in a row we had a squadron (this time C Squadron) deployed over Christmas. As has now become routine for this small family Regiment, the sacrifice of those serving was reflected across our Regimental Comrades who once again stepped up to raise the funds to provide every soldier deployed with some useful gifts and each of their families with a hamper of Welsh goodies.

As you will read in the pages below, the pace of life has been principally due to three back-to-back six-month tours in Poland for our sabre squadrons. Where they served alongside US, Romanian and Croatian forces as part of NATO's efforts to deter Russian aggression in the Baltic region. Each squadron conducted pre-deployment training at Fort Irwin, California alongside US allies, which added to the tally of time away from home. You will also note that in 2024 QDG soldiers also saw service on operations in Kosovo and Cyprus and have trained in France, Germany, Italy, Norway and Sweden amongst others. For the last 6 months of the year, QDG oversaw the training of over 2,000 Ukrainians in North Yorkshire as part of Operation INTERFLEX. Recruits arrive as civilians with no military experience and depart as trained soldiers, ready for service on the frontline. QDG has also strengthened friendships with existing partners and allies and forged new ties where opportunity arises. These relationships are key to ensure mutual trust and understanding with those alongside whom QDG might be called to fight.

I was fortunate to visit A Squadron in Poland in March, RHQ in North Yorkshire in November and to help present medals at Swanton Morley in December. Whilst there is so much that has changed in the Army, I always return from such visits uplifted by the clear evidence that



For the last 6 months of the year, QDG oversaw the training of over 2,000 Ukrainians in North Yorkshire as part of Operation INTERFLEX



somehow the rather intangible, magical QDG spirit that we all knew and loved still endures. In part, perhaps this is because we strive not just for professional excellence but also to give our people a richer life experience. In such a high operational tempo it would be easy to drop other aspects of regimental life and yet QDG have competed in sports ranging from sailing to rally car driving. We have developed a very competitive Nordic skiing team and recently our squash and boxing teams became Royal Armoured Corps champions. This is testament to good leadership and to the quality and resilience of our young soldiers.

Our Regimental Comrades have also been very active this year with many gatherings and reunions held over 2024. The RCA regional branches go from strength to strength, and it was a pleasure to present a new flag to our

newest 'Valleys Branch' in October. Such a vibrant RCA provides our veterans opportunities for comradeship and re-connecting with former comrades-in-arms and binds people into an enduring regimental 'cwtch'.

Our wider community also thrives. Our museum has recovered from its pandemic low, visitor numbers are up, its governance is tight and financial foundations robust thanks to the chairmanship of Jono Beatson-Hird who has now handed over the reins to Brigadier Didi Wheeler of the Royal Welsh. The Regimental Trust is also very healthy thanks to our trustees under Alex Roe's chairmanship and the serving regiment and our wider community benefit from generous financial support for lots of retention positive, esprit de corps or regimental cohesion activities and initiatives. Our badged Combined Cadet Force in Rydal Penrhos School, Colwyn Bay, is going from strength to strength and I was honoured to be able to present QDG berets to the members of their Army contingent in May. QDG has been as supportive as it can, given its programme, to our badged Army Cadet Force detachments across Wales. It was also reassuring to end the year with a visit, alongside the Commanding Officer, to Kensington Palace to engage with the Princess of Wales's Private Secretary to explore future regimental engagements and we all look forward to seeing our Colonel-in-Chief in the year ahead. A lucky five deserving members from across our regimental family attended a Carol Service at Westminster Abbey hosted by Her Royal Highness in early December.

The year ended on a sad note with the loss of Lieutenant General Sir Maurice Johnston who had such a significant impact on the Regiment from the amalgamation process that formed it, as Commanding Officer from 1971-1973 and as Colonel of the Regiment 1986-1991 where he was instrumental to saving the Regiment from amalgamation in the 1992 'Options for Change' Defence Review. He remained a regimental eminence grise throughout his retirement and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

Whilst manning in the Regiment remains strong, wider recruiting challenges are a worry and the wider QDG community can help by encouraging kith, kin and friends to join this fine Regiment.

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

Foreword from the Colonel Commandant of the Royal Armoured Corps

Today, we face an era defined by complexity and uncertainty, where global stability is increasingly challenged by shifting geopolitical realities. The resurgence of nationalism alongside great power competition, regional instability, the proliferation of advanced technologies, and non-state threats combine to create an unpredictable landscape. The war in Ukraine reminds us that state-on-state warfare has not been relegated to history. Meanwhile, tensions in the Indo-Pacific and the Middle East, growing economic competition, and the emergence of hybrid warfare require vigilance, adaptability, and unity of purpose across all domains.

Against this backdrop, and that of the Strategic Defence Review in 2025, the Royal Armoured Corps remains central to the Army's ability to respond decisively. We are an institution that has long served as a cornerstone of the British Army's operational strength. Our history is one of innovation, courage, and unyielding determination, forged in the crucible of modern conflict and honed by our dedication to readiness and adaptability. These qualities are once again much in demand. Our platforms and our people provide a critical edge, offering manoeuvre, firepower, and resilience on the battlefield. Yet, we are more than just the sum of our platforms. The men and women of the Corps embody professionalism and ingenuity, prepared to meet the challenges of tomorrow while honouring the traditions of those who came before us.

This past year has been a testament to the relentless commitment and oper-



ational tempo of all our regiments. From deployments in Eastern Europe as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence to delivering key contributions to training missions and global exercises, our regiments have demonstrated their readiness and versatility. Whether supporting operations, maintaining a visible deterrence in critical regions, or preparing for large-scale combat operations, our people and platforms have been fully engaged

across the spectrum of military activity. Their unwavering dedication ensures the Corps continues to stand at the forefront of the UK's approach to global security.

The challenge set by the Chief of the General Staff to double our lethality in three years and triple it by the end of the decade requires us all to think big and be ambitious. As we navigate these challenges, it is vital that we continue to modernise – not only our equipment but also our thinking. The conflict in Ukraine teaches us that new technologies are additive to rather than replacing extant capability. The trinity of firepower, protection and mobility remains as relevant as ever, but the balance gets ever harder with the extraordinary proliferation of mostly uncrewed airborne systems (UAS) – both sensor and shooter – with UAS responsible for nearly 70% of all Russian casualties in Ukraine. Investment in cutting-edge technologies, such as AI and autonomous systems, must be paired with rigorous training and a focus on integrating these innovations into our operational frameworks. Furthermore, our commitment to partnerships with allies and global institutions ensures that we remain a key contributor to international security and deterrence.

This foreword is not only a reflection on our achievements but a call to action. The challenges we face are formidable, so our resolve must be greater. Together, we must ensure that the Royal Armoured Corps continues to stand ready, adaptable, and resolute in its mission to protect and defend, whatever the future may hold.

NCLP

The Editor

My predecessors will attest, being the editor of the Journal means you are the most disliked soldier in the Regiment for months on end as you chastise, cajole and coerce articles and photos out of people. However, it gives me the very greatest of pleasure to collate the extraordinary breadth and depth of all the activity and operational output that your soldiers have delivered in 2024.

The word 'busy' has been censored; it's use suggests that others are not as busy as the one who has used it – and that simply isn't true. For every one soldier you see on the line, it takes three back home; and our old comrades; and

their families to keep them sustained and fighting fit. Thank you to all unseen who keep us going.

Every Regiment is a story. Stories require characters, and there is no shortage of characters contained in these pages. I could have published volume II and still not do justice to 2024: the peak of 2 years of 3 x simultaneous operations on four different continents across the spectrum of defence tasks. So, with the greatest honour, I commend to you Journal 2024. Like a novel, any mistakes, factual errors or otherwise are, no doubt, entirely my own fault!

AJP



Commanding Officer's Foreword

During his inspirational address at our medals' parade in December 2024, Brigadier Dave Glendenning remarked that 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards had become the 'most committed Regiment in the Field Army'. Amidst our Brigade Commander's barrage of tributes, these words stood out. They were seized upon by dragoons, echoing across the vehicle park, over the sports' fields and through the messes. Having the intensity of our operational commitments acknowledged at this level, came as welcome recognition of a truism we had long-since understood, but of which others, we assumed, were either ignorant or disinterested.

The Brigadier went on to highlight that our retention statistics do not correlate with the relentless deployments, nor does the palpable and infectious level of morale around camp. The ostensible mismatch can be explained, I informed the Brigadier proudly, by the character of the men and women who fill our ranks. Though our numbers make up less than 0.5% of the Field Army, we account for over 6% of internal transferees. Far from being a threat to retention, our reputation as perennially deployed, is having quite the opposite effect. It appears, indeed, that it is precisely what attracts young men and women to our fold.

Our three Sabre Squadrons deployed in succession to Poland on Operation CABRIT over the course of 2024, steadfastly supported by HQ Sqn throughout. At the start of the year, A

Sqn held the reigns under Major James Brockless before handing over to Major Arthur Purbrick's B Sqn in the spring. In neat alphabetic sequence, Major Tim Graham's C Sqn assumed the final rotation and approached their mid-tour point at the year's end. Their recovery will mark the end of eighteen months' unbroken QDG service in Poland as part of NATO's forward land forces.

Deploying a fleet of Jackals across the Atlantic provided each squadron with first class pre-deployment exercises in California. Our ability to project our vehicles with relative ease, puts us in a dwindling cohort of units who have trained recently as part of an 'actual formation' – albeit an American one. The Regiment also provided a Headquarters that delivered basic training to over 2,000 Ukrainian recruits over six months as part of Operation INTERFLEX.

Amongst the operational drumbeat, the Regiment achieved several sporting successes. These included our squash team, who delivered victory at the RAC championships. The nascent QDG boxing team were also notably hailed as RAC champions at an electrically charged evening in the Bovington Tank Museum in December. We also lay claim to having provided our soldiers with more days of adventurous training and sports than any other combat unit in the Field Army – testament to a genuine "work hard - play hard" ethos.

It was my utmost privilege to take over as Commanding Officer On 1



September. I pass on sincere thanks to my predecessor, Lt Col Chris Kierstead, for an excellent handover and for his diligent and steadfast leadership over his tenure. I was struck on arrival by the same phenomenon as that observed by our Brigade Commander – the zeal and enthusiasm from an organisation that has been so relentlessly deployed for so long. That our soldiers are drawn by the prospect of adventure through deployed operations, accounts for their calibre and boundless positivity. This speaks volumes, not just of the quality of our people, but of the enduring spirit and ethos of the Regiment.

DGAL





Honours and Awards 2024

Regimental Awards

Queen Elizabeth Trophy – Sgt Hugo
Leathersellers' Trophy – Cpl Hopkins
The Mann Trophy – Tpr Trerise
Gomer Lloyd Trophy – Lt F Logan

Land Component Commanders Commendation

Op CABRIT(P)15 – SSgt Aldridge
(REME)

Commander CABRIT Commendation

Capt Z Spicer
Cpl Downey (REME)

Polish Army Medal

Maj AJ Purbrick
WO2 McKinnon

Long Service and Good Conduct

Capt D Thomas
Capt R Hopkins
SSgt Casey
SSgt Humphreys
SSgt Petre
SSgt Mwamulima
Sgt Lunness
Sgt Brown
Sgt Rose
Sgt Downey (REME)
Cpl Whiting
Cpl Bain (AGC)

Diary of Events 2024

January

02 – 19 RAC Nordic Championships,
Ex PIPEDOWN & Ex SPARTAN HIKE
(Serre Chevalier)
Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 14

February

05 – 11 Ex EAGLE STALK
12 – 23 Ex DRAGOON FIRE, Warcop
29 – 3 March CoR visit to A Sqn on Op
CABRIT(P) 14
Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 14

March

04 – 13 Ex EAGLE FIRE, Lulworth
21 – 29 Gwent and Powys ACF Easter
Camp
Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 14

April

03 – 15 Ex SKIMO WARRIOR
12 – Op CABRIT(P) 14 to 15 TOA
19 – 25 Ex READY EAGLE
22 – 27 Ex GAZALA EAGLE
25 – 6 May Ex ARROW, Finland
Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 15

May

10 Officers' Dinner
12 Cavalry Memorial Sunday
19 – 26 Jun Ex DIAMONDBACK
20 – 24 B Sqn T3X, Ex ORTHRUS

26 – Ex DANZIG DEFENDER, Gdansk
Hyrox

27 – 7 June Ex BAVARIAN EAGLE III

27 – 14 June Ex CAMINO EAGLE

Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 15

June

3 – 7 A Sqn visit to Cardiff/Firing Line

10 – 14 Ex LOST EAGLE II (Hole Park)

17 – Onwards Op INTERFLEX

21 – 23 Waterloo Ride

Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 15

July

01 – 05 Sniperfest (Lithuania)

04 – Regimental Waterloo Day

Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 15

Throughout – Op INTERFLEX

August

01 – 11 Ex PALADIN SHIELD (Latvia)

26 – 30 Ex ACES LOW

Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 15

Throughout – Op INTERFLEX

September

02 – 13 C Sqn Mounted Ranges

06 – 14 Ex BALTIC DRAGOON III

16 – 27 Recce Cadre

17 – 18 Leatherseller Visit to RBSM

Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 15

Throughout – Op INTERFLEX

October

05 – 27 Ex CERBERUS

15 – Op CABRIT(P) 15 – 16 TOA

19 Regimental Reunion

Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 16

Throughout – Op INTERFLEX

November

01 – 17 Ex RESOLUTE WARRIOR

04 – 08 Ex OLIVE EAGLE

18 – 22 Cold Weather Operators
Course

18 – 24 RAC Elite Nordic Ski Camp

21 – 21 December Ex WHITE KNIGHT

22 – 24 Warrant Officers' and
Sergeants' Mess Generations
Weekend

23 – 07 December Ex WHITE LION

24 – 13 December Ex SUPREME
GLACIER

25 – 19 December Ex NORDIC
EAGLE

Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 16

Throughout – Op INTERFLEX

December

01 – 21 Ex TELEMAR EAGLE

04 Regimental Christmas Day

16 Regimental Christmas Leave

Throughout – 17 Op INTERFLEX

Throughout – Op CABRIT(P) 16

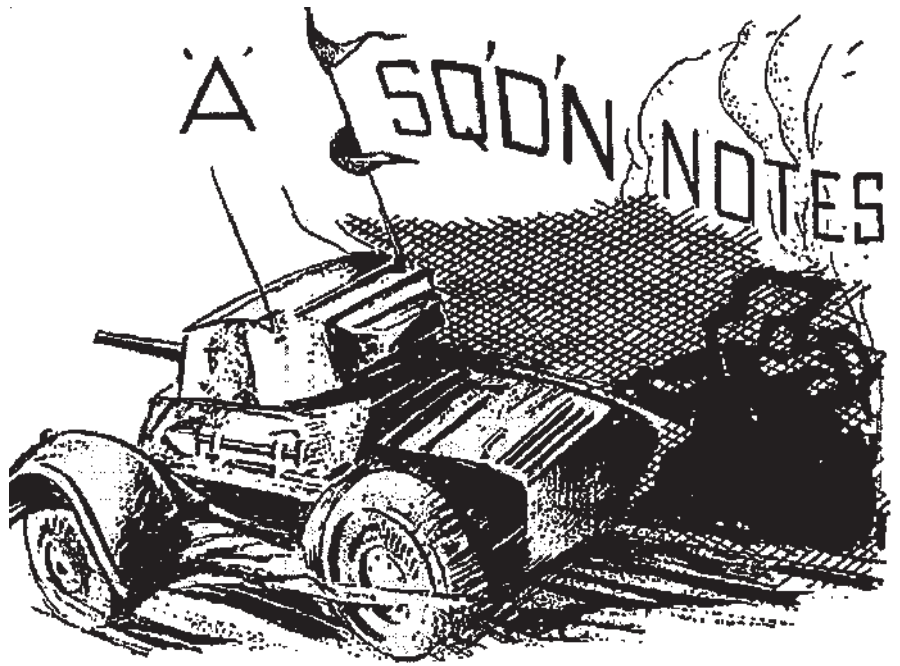
A Squadron

It has become a customary warning issued to all journal contributors to avoid allusions to being ■■■, or Franz Joseph forbid, of having had "yet another ■■■ year." Doing so, the editor informs us, is to waste word-count on a platitude which has long since lost its meaning. The new reality however, the unforeseen phenomenon of this editorial direction, is that even greater word-count is expended on promising to refrain from mentioning the "b" word.

It is perhaps worth considering A Sqn's year in terms of tempo. In so doing it is possible to acknowledge the very regular drum beat of activity without ascribing a frequency to that activity that would displease the Journal Fuhrer. Tempo, a predominantly musical term, fits the purpose of describing the familiar rhythm of regimental life. Our tempo ebbs and flows from the allegro or cheerful rhythm of adventurous training and social occasions. The andante, walking pace of regimental business in Robertson Barracks to the Presto of our operational commitments and exercises. The resultant tune is very much in keeping with the previous movement relayed by my predecessor in last years journal and will no doubt echo into subsequent editions.

Picking up the melody where we left off, A Sqn are in the depths of a cold Eastern European winter seeing in the year to the straining tones of Auld Lang Syne. The pace quickens as several of the Sqn's revellers engage in the soldiers most base instinct, a bar fight. The crescendo sadly falls flat as LCpl Williams fails to land a crucial blow on his American adversary (they started it) instead falling over as he swung a miss, much to the mirth of all. It took some smooth talking from Capt Thomas, the NSE commander, to patch over the fallout but in the end the alliance was strengthened in the way that only hand to hand combat can deliver.

This would not be the last time that Capt Thomas was called to intervene on the Sqn's behalf. Shortly after the NYE debacle he would be forced to severely restrict the Sqn's access to white fleet vehicles following an unfor-



tunate bogging-in incident involving a nine-seater and a tank track during the PWO cadre. It took a not strictly policy compliant crew level recovery by a Land Rover to save Tprs Archer and Jacobs' blushes.

The beginning of February saw the Sqn deploy on an ambitious urban warfare exercise in a disused Polish industrial complex. Not an inch of the training area was compliant with the safe system of training's definition of a "safe place" but as is ever the case, these realistic conditions provided some of the most engaging training that the Sqn undertook during Op CABRIT.

The back end of February was a veritable high-water mark of the tour in terms of activity. Four of the Sqn deployed to Latvia to employ sUAS [Ed: Drones in English] in a FIND role. Cpl Haden was able to unpick a Canadian BG commanders plan by identifying most of his concealed Leopard 2s. Back in Poland the remainder of the Sqn were undertaking a multinational CALFEX. It was much to the chagrin of the A Sqn Dragoons to learn that their position downrange was firmly within the arcs of a U.S. Abrams that

had misfired. Fleeting, concerns about NYE retribution crossed a few minds but luckily all escaped the danger area and any further international incidents.

Next, in late February and early March, was a PNCO cadre and once again an opportunity to compete against our transatlantic cousins. Satisfyingly this time with the upper hand, none of the U.S. participants completed the cadre. Of

note for their performances are Tpr Alston awarded top student and shared honours for "soldiers' soldier" on the course for Tprs Appleton and Crossley.

The tour ended in April with the pleasing sight of B Sqn bugling over the hill as relief in place and the sweet relief of a return to the more relaxing andante of POTL and some AT. Lt Webster hacked the AT

booking website and was able to send A Sqn soldiers to Bavaria to rock climb and canoe, sailing in Scotland and off the South coast, more rock climbing in Inverness and a Canoeing trip to Brecon.

As the Sqn formed back up in early June we deployed en-masse to Wales for a mini homecoming tour of the recruiting ground. Showing new Tprs and officers



Not an inch of the training area was compliant



A Sqn Photo Op CABRIT (P) 14



Jackal in the Snow - "I thought the blue flash would blend in with the snow and ice lads."



Tpr Crossley - "The face of the Soldiers Soldier"

around Cardiff castle and the museum was an invaluable experience in reconnecting with our history. The trip was topped off by a social gathering with the Cardiff branch of the RCA. Stories old and new were shared where the names were different but the cadence and antics remarkably similar.

Hot on the heels of the tour of Wales the Sqn embarked on Ex INVICTA DRAGOON at the generous hospitality of Edward Barham at Hole Park. This opportunity for training on private land allowed the Sqn to practice core skills and mandatory annual training in a relaxed environment. Several junior ranks were even afforded the opportunity to accompany the game keeper on a night stalk with many earning their blooding for shooting a deer. The trip was completed by a BBQ hosted by ex RSM QDG Andy Bowtell and his wife.

In July, a mere three months after recovering from Op CABRIT, A Sqn found themselves once again committed to operations this time Op Interflex in the UK. While the Real Life Support task of supporting foreign partners in their delivery of training for the Ukrainian Armed Forces was not the most glamorous of tasks it was none-the-less rewarding being at the political edge of UK policy. For six months A Sqn soldiers

rotated in and out of Wathgill camp in Catterick which became our second home. Being so close to an army engaged in existential war surely sharpened the minds of all those involved, and the moving scenes of the farewell parades will live long in all of our memories.

Throughout the second half of the year A Sqn were also held at readiness to surge to eastern Europe should the war in Ukraine expand or if NATO deemed it necessary to bolster the eastern deterrence posture. This requirement forced the Sqn to balance commitments to Op INTERFLEX with a need to maintain the Sqn's vehicles at high readiness. With extremely depleted manpower Cpl Flower led a determined and ultimately successful effort to bring the majority of the fleet online after a long period of storage and to against all the odds, meet our readiness requirement of 85% availability.

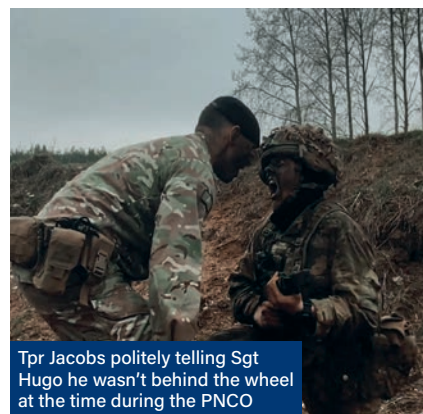
Toward the back end of the year, with operational taskings winding down there are a number of notable achievements to mention in closing. Firstly LCpl Glinos, largely off his own back organised a charity bike ride over 300 miles from north to south Wales. With a team of 5, including the SSM, they managed to raise £1850 for Papyrus.

Finally, and just in time for the

Christmas silly season the Sqn received the fantastic news from the Corps boxing championships that LCpl Flood-McCann and Tpr Jeffery both won their bouts contributing to the team effort that saw QDG crowned RAC boxing champions.

As I have demonstrated through this clumsy attempt to infuse a musical theme to this annual report, it is devilishly hard to accurately capture the year we have had without resorting to our banned adjective. Soldiering in A Sqn over the last 12 months has certainly satisfied our desires for adventure, challenge, and fun. 2025 is shaping up to follow a similar tune with a deployment to Kosovo on Op ELGIN slated for early in the New Year, who knows, it might even be a ██████ one.

JC



Tpr Jacobs politely telling Sgt Hugo he wasn't behind the wheel at the time during the PNCO



Lt Webster leading the charge like a true Cavalry Officer





Sprouts!



LCpl Williams ready to throw hands down after donning additional PPE



Concealment 101: get white vehicles!



LCpl Glinos - Charity Event



Photo of Russian taken from 25,000 feet



LCpl Haden - "And then I said to him, Sir, you might as well call end Ex now, I can see where you have positioned your tanks from here."



The Christmas Choir was desperate



A/Maj Brockless' personal MBT



Sailing on the Solent – not quite the booze cruise we had hoped for



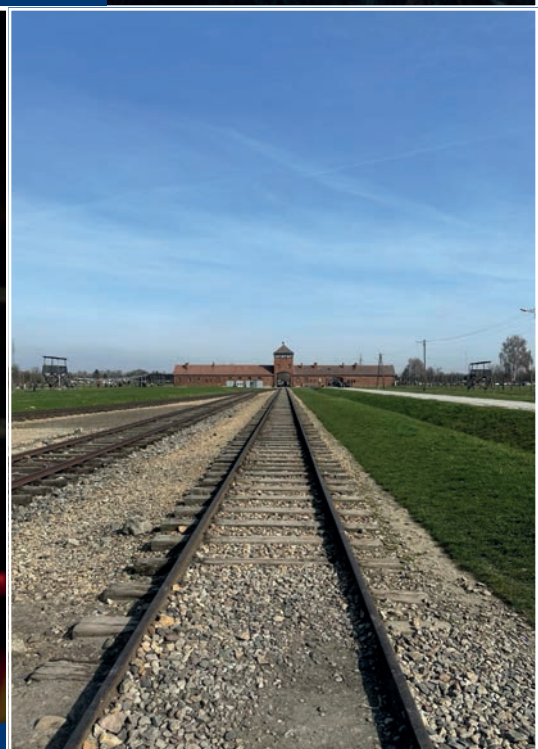
"AVADA KEDAVRA!"



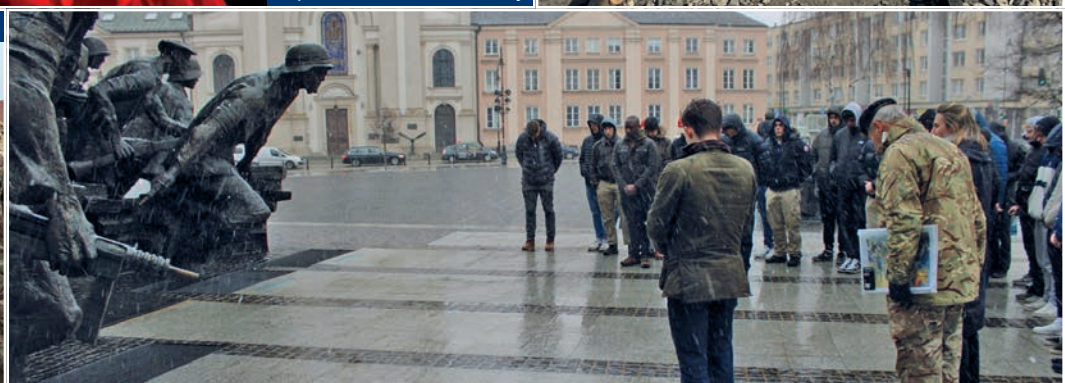
URBAN EAGLE – Tpr Lloyd "Nar lad I don't have smokes, I'm on the Snus"



LCpl Flood and his fists of fury



Super compliant dress standards with that UBAC



Anthony Woodd

Scottish - Military – Sporting – Natural History



Snaffles – *'Once Upon a Time'* c.1943 – 18" x 24"

- £580

From A Collection of 35 Prints



Snaffles – *'The Informers'* c.1933 – 17" x 22" - £750



Thomas Dighton – *'15th Kings Hussar'*

c.1780 - 10" x 6" - £180



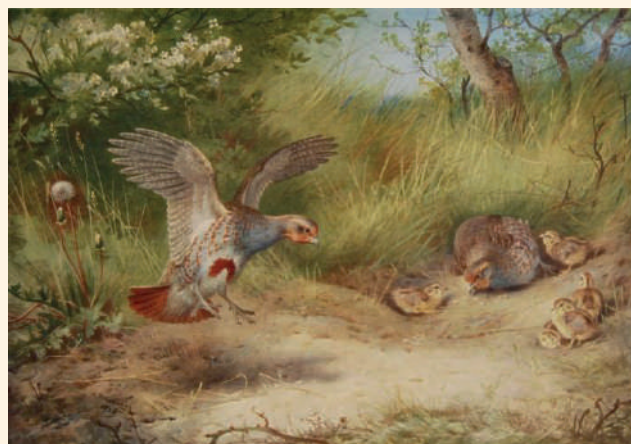
Snaffles – *'A Gent in Ratcatcher'* c.1922

16" x 14" - £520



Archibald Thorburn FZS – *'Sunshine and Drift'*

Signed Artist's Proof - 12" x 18" - £580



Archibald Thorburn FZS – *'Spring'*

Signed Artist's Proof - 12" x 18" - £580

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B Squadron

It is my enduring pride and privilege to have led the Best squadron in the QDG – I could not have asked for a Better team of leaders and soldiers. This year has been defined by the soldiers of B Squadron, their stories, their antics, their skills, their adventures, but most of all, their steadfast commitment to excellent soldiering. We shall all dine on the stories from these heady times and they're worthy of some form of epic. Hence, in lieu of prose, this year I offer this distinctly far-from-Homer like rhyme that may pay some small justice to the extraordinary wealth and reach of B Squadron's activities this year.

*Oh, B Squadron, Bold with the Big Blue Square,
Masters of Banter, grit, and flair.
For 2024, we toiled with all our might,
Facing down Russia, the herald of blight.
On NATO's frontiers, we stood as the line,
Defenders of freedom, democracy's spine.*

*At Warcop we thundered, grenades to throw,
Allen tried catching one – what a show!
To Lulworth with Jackals, their ballast too great,
Fighting fires in the gorse was our fiery fate.*

*Taskforce Panther called us to fight,
Missy's farewell left Capt Walsh light.
In Poland's warm fields, the Jackals did roam,
Taking over from A Sqn's winter, yet we made it feel home.*

*To Finland we ventured, where Apaches took flight,
With Walsh and Casey leading through the frosty white night.
They crossed the Baltic on a truckers ferry,
Through to fight in forests of Leopards and saunas so merry.*

*In Lithuania, Johnson and Whiteing roamed,
A storm spun their compass far from home.
Whilst compatriots enjoyed Gdansk, they marched on track,
Returning innocently, plentiful tracer rounds on their back...*

*Through Orthrus on table-top maps, we faced Iskander's might,
Though our grand designs gave no one delight.
Camino's buildings we stormed with pride,
With drones buzzing above and Clark as our guide.*

*Red Tiff declared each vehicle VOR in his glare,
Britten had to drive to Latvia, in her SVR ready to tow,
Then doubled back to Poland and fetch Gatfield to collect his SVR in woe!
Spoonier tamed Sharpshooters, their tempers unkind,
Whilst Cpl John was recognised for keeping Finland's Jackals in line.*

*Harman's gunnery crowned him the best,
While Wright on recce outshone the rest.
At Waterloo's dinner, Donnie shone bright,
Uniting us all in camaraderie that night.*

*Eyles broke ribs while taming the sea,
Horseback patrols added more to our spree.
Casey, remarkably calm, spared a US foe,
The luckless Private didn't know how close he'd go.*

*Back home in Poland, Logan gained a US fan,
While Fulloway, Johnson, and Thomas led the plan;
In Latvia's fields, Paladin Strike took flight,
Blazing through darkness with unyielding might.*

Sniper Brown's aim, though sharp, fell shy,



*In sniper halls, his fame won't lie.
Thomas & Logan ran bold on Daugava's bright sun,
In Lithuania's woods, the Czech Gun Run was won.
The Romanian Gepards strafed wide with jest,
Even the Coffee Shop couldn't escape their best.*

*Another Clark joined, his navigation askew,
Foster and Foster kept explosions in view.
Javelins and Engineer, a force to regret,
As Poland's green fields bore their fiery duet.*

*Duthie-Thomas and Clark braved Pitka's harsh test,
Fought fiercely, though fate denied their best.
The RMP, yet again, their antics grew bold,
A discipline issue, their story oft-told.*

*From Poland to Calais, we ran with pride,
Rowed the Channel's breadth, a virtual tide.
We cycled to Cardiff, our homeland's embrace,
Welsh dragons and eagles, our strength and grace.*

*The Norwegian Foot March and Tiger Run, REME John as hard as nails,
While the Colour Run brought light-hearted trails.
Through grit and fun, our strength was renowned,
Beating all challengers, our glory unbound.*

*Against Warsaw's heat, our SSM stood tall,
Unfazed by his battering from a Vistula algae brawl.
Chez brought us home, bagpipes in the air,
Though our antlers remain in the RAF's care.*

*So here's to the Squadron, of balance and jest,
To the banter, the bemoans, the bravest, the best.
Through laughter and trials, this year we have shown,
No matter the task, B Squadron's our home.*

Like any good odyssey, the story won't end here. The journey will go on; we've unfinished business in Eastern Europe and I can't think of a better team of soldiers to take on that job. However, my tenure as Custodian of B Squadron is over and I move on. It remains then only to end with one final thank you to all of those of B Squadron and my parting note:

"Like Eagles First and Foremost, tireless in flight, we hold course through storm and night; as warriors we will offer sword and bear the shield: Death or Glory! We will never yield."

AJP



Brigadier, have you seen this meme



Artillery 101 – make sure it's pointing the right way



You are (not) beautiful...



BPTA Day



From No.10 to 10 rounds a second



Describe NATO....



I'm telling you it's a fake fire



TF Thunderhorse, thunderhorsing



Pints and drums



You told me *they* could read a map



Two pimm's rule in strict moderation



Ex WHITE EAGLE



Gosh they look so real



A short lived boyband



Wisemen



Thats not Bitcoin! - Tpr Huish greets the second MinAF in the tour

How wreckers are made



Lt Logan "I'm telling you it goes this way up!"



Two feet of water



Tpr Bingham, moments before tripping over



Capt Maltman's leaving do



Suwalki Patrol



The SSM spoke and his word was law



White Eagle patrol



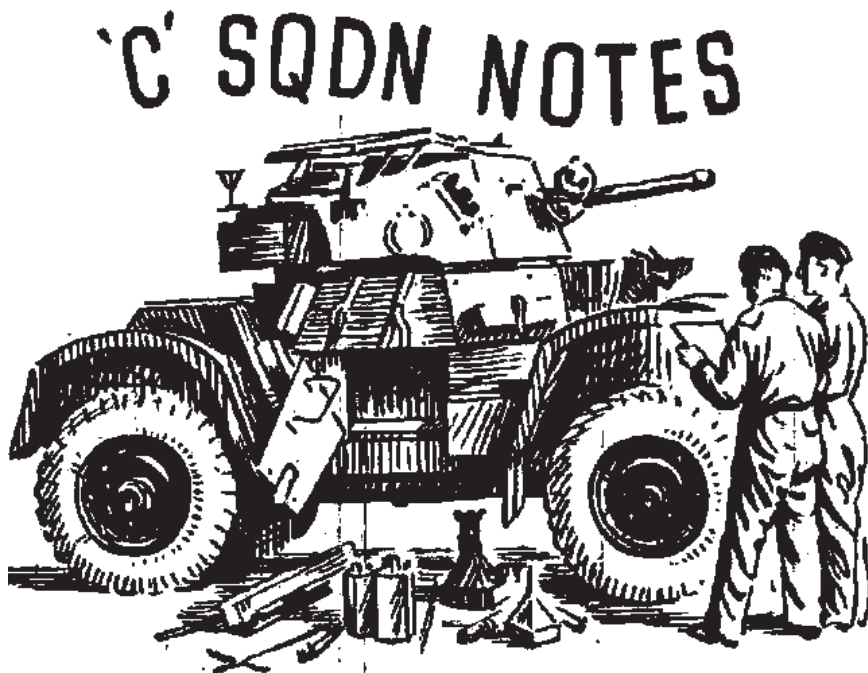
C Squadron

2024 was a challenging and rewarding year for C Squadron, defined by deployments spanning the arid Mojave Desert to the icy landscapes of Poland. Throughout, the Squadron demonstrated professionalism, adaptability, and teamwork, maintaining consistently high standards despite the demanding operational tempo.

The year started off with a Squadron personal development week, focusing on Op Teamwork, fitness, careers and finishing with a brief on Squadron history, presented by Lt Col (ret'd) HFA Sugden MC QDG - C Sqn leader during TELIC 1. The week also had the first Squadron dinner with Col Sugden as guest of honour.

In the first few months, we also had to say farewell to the longest serving member of C Sqn, WO2 (SSM) Gareth Roberts - who posts to RQMS 7 LBCT before taking up post as RSM RRY. We also wished farewell to Sgt Casey to HQ Sqn and Sgt Griffiths to B Sqn.

The Squadron then got stuck into preparations for Exercise Diamondback, the Squadron's deployment to California. This phase started with Exercise READY EAGLE at Longmoor Training Area, a rigorous training package designed to sharpen core skills in preparation for the



challenges ahead. From force-on-force engagements to a Squadron-level raid on a bunker manned by the ever-resourceful SQMS. Marksmanship was tested and refined at Lydd Ranges, where troops advanced through pairs fire-and-maneuvre drills and culminated in live grenade practice. By the conclusion of READY EAGLE, C Squadron was fully prepared for the complex and demanding scenarios that awaited them in California.

Exercise DIAMONDBACK was the year's standout deployment. For five weeks, C Squadron operated in the Mojave Desert, serving alongside 2-13 Cav during a 10-day exercise against the OPFOR, otherwise known as Blackhorse. The desert's searing heat and unforgiving terrain demanded the highest levels of tactical ingenuity, resilience, and cohesion. Pitted against a well-equipped and capable opponent, the Squadron



Where is the rest of the Sqn? Pretty much C Sqn's motto



I hate photos, the editor asked for them



Before



After



excelled in executing a range of dynamic scenarios, ultimately achieving mission success.

The deployment wasn't all work, however. Upon completing the exercise, the Squadron enjoyed a well-deserved period of rest and recuperation in Las Vegas and Los Angeles. The break included activities such as surfing lessons, city exploration, and cultural experiences, providing a valuable opportunity for soldiers to recharge.

Upon returning to the UK, the Squadron transitioned into preparations for Operation CABRIT. Mounted ranges at Warcop provided an essential test of troop coordination and combat proficiency, with soldiers executing manoeuvres in pairs and advancing through live-fire scenarios. The exercise was not without its quirks—the local sheep population added an unexpected challenge but fortunately emerged unscathed.

The lead-up to Op CABRIT also



Pitted against a well-equipped and capable opponent, the Squadron excelled in executing a range of dynamic scenarios, ultimately achieving mission success.



arrival, they deployed to Latvia to participate in Exercise RESOLUTE WARRIOR, an opportunity to strengthen interoperability and refine their capabilities in a complex multinational setting.

featured the All Ranks Brief (ARB), a series of essential yet often monotonous sessions. To combat against the gunk monster found in the Regi cinema, the RMP managed to add some fun to the briefs. The CPERS search brief saw the troops hiding a sweet somewhere in their clothing which had to be found by their fellow soldiers. A strangely challenging task.

In October, C Squadron deployed to Poland, relieving B Squadron on Operation CABRIT. This deployment marked the culmination of months of preparation and training, as the Squadron stepped into a key role within a multinational NATO framework. Working alongside allied forces, the Squadron quickly adapted to the challenges of operating in a new environment. Shortly after

As the deployment gathered pace, the festive season provided a much-needed break. Christmas in Poland saw the Squadron's unique blend of discipline and humour on full display. During a visit by Brigadier Glendenning, Commander of 1 DRS BCT, a particularly daring corporal stole the show at a fancy-dress morning run, appearing as a provocative Mrs. Claus—a memorable moment for all involved.

Boxing Day brought a highlight of the festive period: the Gurkha Curry Night. Hosted by the Nepalese soldiers, the event featured an impressive spread of culinary delights and an auction to raise funds for SSAFA. Prizes ranged from "being the OC for a day", to winning a traditional kukri, or being able to call on the 4th Tp leader for a coffee at any time and place of their choice.

As 2024 draws to a close, C Squadron reflects on a year of significant achievements and challenges. From the Mojave Desert to Poland, the Squadron has consistently demonstrated its ability to adapt and perform in diverse environments, maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and operational excellence. Well done C Squadron.



Mr Vice



"Have you seen this man?"



LIVE



CHRISTMAS DAY 10,000 armed forces personnel deployed c

sky news 06:36 message later today - with a focus on the efforts of healthcare workers



"15 Jaeger bombs!"





Green Street hooligans II



C Sqn dinner night with previous OC



Busy day for the Battlegroup sniffer dog



Is Mark Johnson lost?



Bronson visits C Sqn



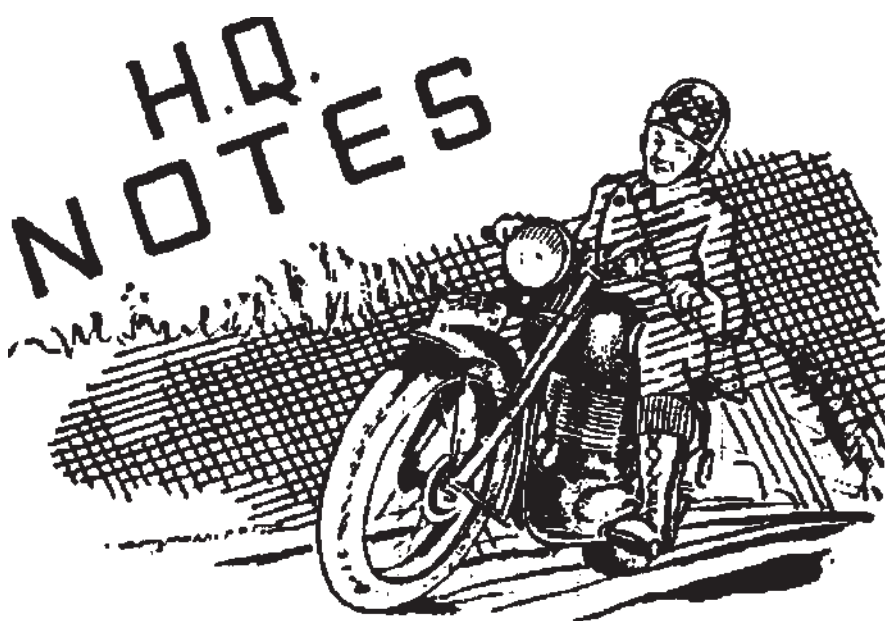
C Sqn love their mess dress

Headquarters Squadron: A year of change, chaos, and operation interflex

Another year, another rollercoaster of operations, leadership changes, and enough logistical headaches to make even the most seasoned Squadron members break a sweat. But despite the challenges, Headquarters Squadron has come through, stronger, smarter, and—thankfully—still well-stocked on coffee.

This year, we've had our hands full with a range of major tasks, with one of the standout operations being Operation Interflex—where we supported the training of 2,000 Ukrainian troops at Wathgill. Alongside this monumental task, we've also been enabling the deployment of two sabre Squadrons to Poland on Op Cabrit. To top it all off, we've also seen the arrival of fresh faces in key positions, with many of our senior soldiers coming to the end of their service. As you can imagine, it's been a year that's kept us on our toes—often running in every direction at once.

Let's start with the big one—Op Interflex. Supporting the training of 2,000 Ukrainian troops at Wathgill wasn't just a task; it was an operation of colossal scale and complexity. Wathgill, already an established training area, became a hub for vital training to help support Ukraine during a time of immense challenge. For us in Headquarters Squadron, it was all hands on deck deploying soldiers from every deployment. We had to ensure that



everything from the equipment to the training and accommodation schedules was spot on. Add to that the complexities of working with our international partners, managing cross-unit coordination, and making sure the facilities and services were up to scratch, you can begin to see just how much of a challenge it was.

If you've ever worked on an operation of this scale, you'll know it's not just about getting things done; it's about keeping a million moving parts working seamlessly together. And that's exactly what we did. The logistics team coordinated transport and ensured that the facilities were ready to handle the huge influx of troops. The Training Wing, under the leadership of Captain Mark Speight, ensured that training was structured and tailored to meet the needs of the Ukrainian soldiers. Op Interflex was a success, and the Squadron's role in supporting the training effort was nothing short of pivotal. We were proud to play a part in something that was not only logistically challenging but also of significant strategic importance. Watching the troops train and knowing we were helping them prepare for such an important mission was one of the rewarding and humbling challenges of the year.

In addition to Op Interflex, we also had the small task of enabling two Squadrons for deployment to Poland. A logistical marathon, we quickly rose





Other ranks body and tan (ORBAT)



The Xmas day O-Group

to the challenge, deploying out B and C Squadron with utter professionalism. From arranging transport, to creating comms plans and making sure everyone had the right equipment, to ensuring proper briefings and scheduling we were the backbone that supported the Regiment's move. Things like travel, accommodation, and ensuring all the necessary resources were available were all part of the mix.

As [REDACTED] as we were with the operational tasks, this year also saw some significant changes in leadership within Headquarters Squadron. January saw Major Steve Thomas retire after completing his long and successful career as both a soldier and LE officer. His leadership was the glue that held the Squadron together, it's fair to say he set a high bar for whoever took over. But as with all things, change is inevitable, and Major Thomas's departure opened the door for a new OC to take charge. Major Richie Wales, fresh from the RDG, stepped into



His leadership style is direct, practical, and exactly what the Squadron needs



the OC role. A big believer in teamwork and open communication, the Squadron's focus has been on maintaining and developing interdepartmental communication, better enabling the Squadron to work as a united department.

At the same time, WO2 Andrew "Smudge" Smith, the Squadron Sergeant Major (SSM), also stepped into civilian life. He'd been an excellent SSM and had built an impressive reputation for keeping everything running smoothly while maintaining a good sense of humour—something we all appreciate when the going gets tough. In his place, WO2 Kieran "Tails" Taylor has stepped up to the plate. WO2 Taylor's hands-on, no-nonsense approach has already earned him respect from his wider team. He's made sure that the NCOs remain focused and disciplined while also ensuring that everyone stays motivated during the [REDACTED] times. His leadership style is direct, practical, and exactly what the Squadron needs to

continue meeting the OC's intent.

This year also saw two fresh department heads arrive, both of whom have already made significant contributions to the Squadron's success. Captain Mark Speight RDG joined the Training Wing, filling the long-standing gap in the training officer post. Captain James Rosendale HCR also joined the team as the new Squadron 2IC / MTO, taking over from Captain Ross Hopkins before quickly deploying on Op CABRIT(P) with C Squadron. Both have quickly become an integral part of the leadership team, and we're looking forward to seeing their impact in the coming months.

As we wrap up another year of tasks, operations, and leadership changes, Headquarters Squadron can look back proudly at everything we've achieved. From supporting Op Interflex to preparing for Poland, we've faced every obstacle with determination and a bit of humour. With a Squadron full of motivated individuals, we're ready for whatever comes next. Here's to another year of success, challenges, and triumphs—bring it on, 2025!

RW



It'd been a very very long day



Strong plank

Quartermaster's Department – 2024: A year of hard work and high spirits

2024 has been an exciting year with all QM staff being fully committed into supporting the sub-unit deployments. A struggle to manage, but hugely rewarding and a time where soldiers can become masters of their trade. From deployments to day-to-day operations, the team has proven repeatedly why they are the backbone of the Regiment.

New Faces, Same Energy!

This year has seen a shake-up in the department, with Capt John Davies stepping into the QM role. A man of endless enthusiasm (Fixer of Everything), Capt Davies has brought fresh energy to the department. Additionally, Shaun Melhuish, the new 1LO, who hit the ground running and hasn't stopped since.

Operational Successes

The department has been at the forefront of supporting not one, not two, but three rotations of Op CABRIT this year. From Poland's icy conditions to the logistical juggling act of moving stores across Europe, the team has risen to the challenge every time. Capt's Dale Thomas (QMT), and John Davies (QM) have both completed a tour as the National Support Element (NSE) Comd in Poland. Meanwhile, INTERFLEX has kept WO2 (Nav) Navunisaravi (RQMS) and the rest of

the team closer to home, with the department ensuring that every exercise ran smoothly - though some members of the team are still recovering from the sheer volume of stores returns.

Back at Robertson Barracks, WO2 Tom Hughes (RQT) and the team has worked tirelessly to keep the home fires burning. Whether it's managing equipment, maintaining infrastructure, or finding ever more creative ways to store kit (seriously, we've run out of corners), the QM Department has kept the Regiment's home base running like clockwork - or close enough.

Together, they've kept the team motivated, ensuring that every task has been approached with gusto and a healthy dose of sarcasm.

The Real Heroes

While the leadership team has kept things ticking at the top, the real work has been done by the unsung heroes of the department. SSgt Eddy Edwards, Sgt's Dave Watson, and (Del) Delana, along with the rest of the gang have continued to provide the stability and expertise that

keeps the department moving forward. From distributing kit to managing the chaos of audits, they've done it all with their usual blend of professionalism and grumbling.

Special mention goes to the LSD team, still sequestered in their hangar corner like logistical wizards. Whether it's dispatching equipment or deciphering paperwork that looks like it was written in hieroglyphics, their efforts have been nothing short of heroic.

Looking Ahead

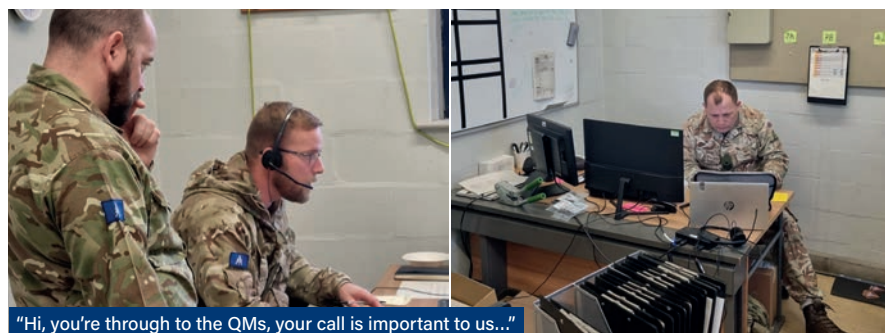
As we close out 2024, we're already gearing up for another year. With more deployments, infrastructure projects, and the constant challenge of managing stores, 2025 promises to be just as hectic - but also just as rewarding.

To the entire QM Department: thank you for your hard work, your resilience, and your ability to laugh in the face of logistical chaos. Here's to another exciting year of making it all happen!

JD



**Together,
they've kept
the team
motivated,
ensuring that
every task
has been
approached
with gusto and
a healthy dose
of sarcasm**



MT – you can't park there! ==

2024 has been an immensely ████ and dispersed year for the Motor Transport department and the Regiment as a whole. A Sqn's OP CABRIT 14 came to a close, handing over to B Sqn on ROTO 15 and onwards to C Sqn on ROTO 16. Members of the department including Sgt Powell, SSgt Korovulavula, A/Cpl Owen & LCpl Scott have taken their experiences to Poland in support of NATO's Forward Land Forces efforts, deterring our adversaries in the east.

Spring saw a change in management as the department bid farewell to Capt Hopkins, with Hoppy taking post as RCMO and welcomed Capt Rosendale HCR, arriving on commission from Army headquarters as the new MTO. With orders to deploy to Poland as NSE Commander, Capt Rosendale handed the reigns to WO2 Ewbank MTWO who steered the ship through seemingly endless audits and inspections, multiple deployments and the usual fast balls.

With a pre assurance inspection under the belt, summer saw Cpl Thomas deploy to California in support of EX DIAMOND BACK with C Sqn. Here, he single handedly wrangled a large hire car fleet, drivers hours and

“
The MT pairing
skilfully
trained our
partner
nations in
the knack of
driving on the
correct side of
the road



one too many punctures for his liking.

With the hopes of a quieter second half of 2024, news arrived of the Regiments involvement with OP INTER-FLEX. MT deployed teams of two to operate out of Wathgill camp, Yorkshire on rotation for the next 6 months. Their tasks included managing a sizable fleet of hire cars which would be used by Dutch and Danish training delivery units. The MT pairing skilfully trained our partner nations in the knack of driving on the correct side of the road,

how to not reverse into things and that a drive through McDonalds is an obstacle to be avoided - too often anyway. Cpl Whitting held the fort in RBSM, delivering some sterling work in turning as many



Capt Rosendale leads the BPTA Remembrance service with UK, US & Romanian troops in attendance.

QDG Soldiers as possible into part time coach drivers. These new drivers worked to deliver Ukrainian Soldiers to training venues so they can prepare themselves for operations in their home land.

As the QDG looked to hand over their role in OP INTERLEX, MT reflect on the 2000 brave Ukrainian Soldiers they welcomed into the UK and transported to Wathgill, then returning them for their flights home.

Squinting ahead to 2025, MT look forwards to the challenges of the next round of exercises and operations.

JR



An OP INTERLEX pickup truck which was definitely not driving off road, driving too fast or being driven without due care and attention!



The aircon was quite broken



MTWO

Training Wing

2024 has been a "transformational" year here at QDG Training Wing. Welcoming in the new Training Officer – Capt Marc Speight (apart from being a buckshee LE and RDG he is actually an all right bloke!). The "working" team consists of SSgt Petre as RGSS, Sgt Canning AFV(W) SNCO, Sgt Turner DCC SNCO and Cpl Cope Courses Clerk JNCO. All jokes aside, the Training Wing has a resolute team that has worked hard this year to ensure all SQN's got out the door in good stead.

2024 has seen the Regiment Deploy on Op INTERFLEX, with both C and B Squadron on separate tours of Op Cabrit. The Training Wing has supported all and be it organising training internally / externally, teaching courses, training area bookings and convening of courses it all happens with constant frictions and it has been no easy feat for the team! this year has seen the team spread between 3 locations and all juggling and wearing several different hats. Although a tight knit team with heavy banter and jokes, there is some questionable in work and extracurricular activities that must be highlighted.

Cpl Cope – The unsung hero at the wing works tirelessly to ensure all SP get on course's and quite often pushes for the "YES" answer when outside establishments say "NO." Any course that any SP finds themselves on, Cpl Cope will have had heavy involvement, he will work tirelessly to ensure that he can get SP trained. Copey has also invested his own time respraying vehicles provided by a Charity for Ukraine to use as battle-field ambulances.

Sgt Turner – Now officially at Uber geek status, has taken on the SUAS Instructor role. Alongside anti-tank capability, painting models, drone racing and



Sgt Canning gas attack



Warhammer He is officially now ready for a transfer to the Royal Signals and is still banned from the dragon's den and nursery side of the Welfare office.

SSgt Petre (AKA Policy perv) has spent a large portion this period ensuring we do things to the right standard. With the constant changes that we face you can only imagine the burden of this role. Clearly this attention was needed when Steve Panks was still the custodian of the MSA account. He has currently booked Chez in for an appointment at spec savers and bought him a calendar. Steve left in 2019...

2024 has been a productive period where we have put the Subunits as the main effort. The heavy lifting done at the wing to make life easier for the subunits to be effective can sometimes go under the radar. Everyone within the team at the



Some will do anything to get out of a conversation with JC



Does my face look big in this?

Training wing is proactive and strives to help others achieve their goals. 2025 will see us focusing on getting A Squadron deployed on Op Elgin and the remaining SQNs deployed in Europe. The groundwork already in motion for Jackal 3 will see new challenges for us at the wing and we will continue to strive to support and facilitate for another successful year!

JC



Welfare

2024 started in ■■■ fashion with A Sqn deployed in Poland and B Sqn preparing to take over from them. This gave the welfare team great opportunity to provide activities for the families. Starting the year with Gravity a trampolining park in Norwich, lots of fun was had by all with a few thinking they were preparing for the Olympics. Trampolining was quickly followed up with a trip to Go Ape, where children and parents put any fears, they had of heights to the side challenging themselves across the ropes and jumps in the treetops of Thetford Forest. We then felt that a more sedate activity would be welcome and with Mother's Day and Easter around the corner thoughts were put into organising an afternoon tea held in the Dragons Den for some very deserving mothers. Families then got into the Easter spirit with bonnet making easter crafts and of course copious amounts of chocolate for the easter egg hunt. Shortly after Easter holidays we said good by to Sgt Kev Young the welfare SNCO and wished him the best for his exit after 23 years to civilian life. Thoughts were then turned to the return of A Sqn so a family's day with a BBQ, the Cpls Mess Bar, bucking bronco and a visit from the BFBS Ice Cream van. Further trips to Africa Alive, Pleasurewood Hills and Bewilderwood were supported well by the families. Into summer stand down and we once again were supported by Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant with funding so we could provide activities on camp for families staying in Norfolk. The support from the covenant is provided if the activities encompass the local community,



Shameless Swanton Morley

so several children were invited from the local schools to attend Norwich City Community Football Skills workshop, as well as a circus skills workshop.

Not lost on the Commanding Officer or the welfare team was the ever-increasing cost of living, with 70% of the houses at Robertson Barracks being only electric a constant thorn in our side that we are unable to have much impact on. In late Nov we were visited by Director Accom-

modation for DIO where he informed the CO that from the 1st Nov 24 until the 1st Mar 25 all rent would be stopped for the electric houses.

Sgt Scott Evans who rejoined after having a break from service life joined the team in Oct 24, a welcome sight for myself and Cpl Bernard. For those families who do not reside at Robertson Barracks but had a loved one deployed, vouchers were sent so they could enjoy a meal out.



QDG Children's Halloween party



QDG Panto



They're behind you; oh yes they are



A Sqn showing their skills on the Bucking Bronco



The big event for the families was around the corner with Polar Express a much sought after ticket around Norfolk, we had managed to book early and ensure we had 64 places on 2 different dates, these were very quickly snapped up and magical fun had by all who were on it. Pyjamas were the order of dress for all, with the CO getting in the festive spirit and a full matching set for his family.

CJE



A SQN SP enjoying free ice cream after Op CABRIT



Santa meeting QDG families on Polar Express

AGC (SPS)

The QDG AGC(SPS) team have had a very [REDACTED] but rewarding year, with the tempo of Operations spreading the team between Op ELGIN, Op CABRIT, Op INTERFLEX and various Exercises showing the adaptability of the team. The now smaller team consisting of 2+12 would be tested in its capability at reach.

Honing our skills as deployability experts, getting the QDG out of the camp gates, in good order, is no mean feat. With a det structure that has now changed, it challenged the way we deliver our capability; this year has seen optimisation and automation thrive with the introduction of future ways of working.

As Op CABRIT tied up two members of the Det, Op INTERFLEX challenged the remainder to deliver G1 technical capabilities in RBSM, in Wathgill, in Poland and in supporting various courses and exercise that remained. Stretched was the word of the day but all personnel managed to deliver, in good order, challenged at times but, within the required standard and beyond. The team also managed to squeeze in some cohesion and team building with go karting, meals out and attendance at the AGC Corps skiing championships, to name a few.

SSgt Jones deployed on Op ELGIN with the HCR and, was awarded a Commander ELGIN Commendation for his relentless pursuit of delivering a wide range of G1 and G8 functions

that underpinned the success of the deployment. Cpl Bain was awarded the CO's coin for his exceptional work on Ex IRON SKIRMISH 6 that, without his input, deliver and hard work would not have been the success it was. Cpl Turner was awarded his L3 diploma in Business Administration, noteworthy on the successful completion of his apprenticeship with the AGC(SPS).

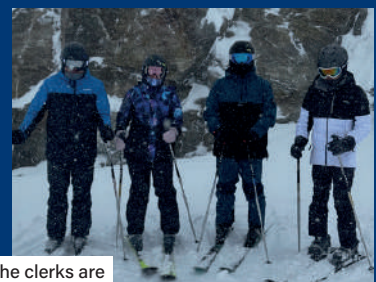
LCpl Thornton was successful on being selected on the Cpls promotion board, a testament to her dedication to the technical detail of the role we play and thoroughly deserved. Pte Limbu was selected to promote to LCpl and this is a reward for the most challenging and diverse welcome to the Army, spending more time deployed honing our warfighting capability, he will be a credit to the branch as he now develops his leadership skills for the future.

Welcomes: WO1 (SSM) Paul Stephen (Det Comd) WO2 (SQMS) Leonard Ireland (RAWO) SSgt Lorraine Nicholson (FSA), Sgt Ayuketang Nelson (SSA) Cpl Danny Bliss (CH MPA) Cpl Dean Turner (CH MPA) LCpl Alex Pun (CH MPA) Pte Stuart Clarke (Sqn MPA) Pte Sydney Hills (Sqn MPA).

Farewells: Capt Jamie Rowe (RAO) SSgt Ben Jones (FSA) Sgt Lamin Sonko (SSS) Cpl Helen Umerah LCpl Leonie Thornton.



That's where the clerks are



Light Aid Detachment

2024 was an exceptionally [REDACTED] and rewarding year for the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards Light Aid Detachment. From operational support to sporting triumphs and technical achievements, we tackled every challenge with determination and pride.

We started the year at full throttle, preparing the Heavy Mobility Tactical Vehicle fleet for deployment to California under Staff Sergeant Tatham's leadership. By May and June, the vehicles were mission-ready, braving the harsh desert terrain. The fleet's recovery in September was a team effort, with the LAD and 6 REME working tirelessly to repair and maintain our aging assets.

Simultaneously, Operation CABRIT kept us on our toes, supporting rotating deployments to Poland. A Squadron's ice-hardy fleet returned in April, paving the way for a much warmer tour for B Squadron. By October, C Squadron was ready to take over, with more adventures to come in 2025.

In July, we began six months on Operation INTERFLEX, supporting Ukrainian trainees in their fight for freedom. Sergeant Jones and the Headquarters Squadron Fitter Section focused on ARM-9F rifle repairs, while our Vehicle Mechanics kept the support vehicles operational—critical work that made every effort worthwhile.

October brought a special task, with Staff Sergeant Wright respraying and preparing two nine-seater minibuses for Ukraine, marking our second year of delivering vital vehicles to our Ukrainian counterparts.

It wasn't all work, though. Lance Corporal Smith shone at the Interservice



Judo Championships, while Craftsman Brookes represented us at the Interservice and Welsh boxing championships. Not to be outdone, Staff Sergeant Aldridge led the Recovery Department to the REME skiing championships, leaving their mark at Exercise SUPREME GLACIER.

The year ended on a high note with a flawless Technical Evaluation in December, earning high praise from the Brigade Equipment Support team. It was a fitting conclusion to a year where we proved, once again, the strength, skill, and spirit of the LAD.

NT

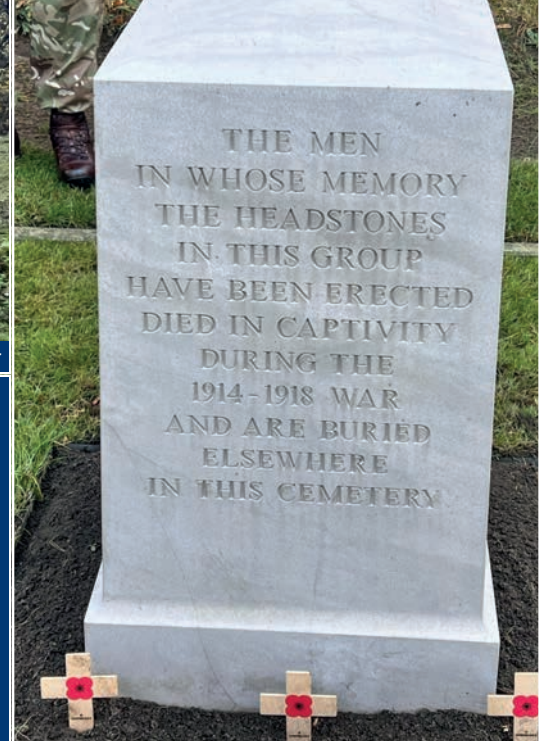




Pre-own-goal



Paying our Respects 11th November



Catering department – we sustain (and endure!)

During the period from March 2024-December 2024 QDG Chefs have had a ██████ year providing Battalion Commitments in and out of barracks. With a small detachment of only 4 Chefs.

In March 2024, 2 Chefs were deployed to OP CABRIT 15 as part of the NSE to provide Catering Assurance and Support for B Squadron QDG. The chefs whilst in theatre sustained their professional abilities providing numerous BBQs and Theme nights to maintain the moral of all members of B Squadron and other attached units.

The chefs supported Squadron commitments for various exercises in and out of camp during Operation CABRIT by providing Composite Rations

and Several container meals.

It was not all work, Chefs had down time to do Cultural visits to Museums in Warsaw and were also invited for a VVIP press conference regarding the UK's Prime Minister Defence speech alongside B Squadron QDG who displayed their capabilities.

Meanwhile whilst chefs were away on OP CABRIT the remaining catering department back at Robertson Barracks Swanton Morley still provided support to the remainder of the Regiment by providing dinner nights / other exercise commitments and also the Christmas functions as well as day to day commitments.

Sgt Mann



The first outbreak of D&V



National support Element OP CABRIT 15



Rations for Ops



BBQs and Theme nights



UK Prime Minister Defence Speech Visit Warsaw

Regimental Aid Post – Faithful in Adversity

2024 has been a challenging but rewarding year for the 1st Queen Dragoon Guards Regimental Aid post. Congratulations went to Maj Pedley (RMO) and Sgt Hanslow (Med Sgt) and the RAP Baby Collection Fund growing a significant investment meant for a gapped nurse PID; with all other medics away on deployments, it left Cpl Green as the highest rank and for vast periods, the only person in the RAP. Luckily, Cpl Green was still able to get away a represent the British Army in Enduro motocross as well as represent the Army Medical Services in Rugby.

LCpl Hiscocks, Cpl Carradus and Cpl Headley have all deployed on separate 6-month rotations on Operation CABRIT in Poland, providing high levels of healthcare and training to Eagle troop. During these deployments, each medic has also worked as long side partner nations, conducting in-operability training, teaching lifesaving skills to local school children and have been tested their clinical skills. However, these deployments have not been without their challenges such as - trying to navigate the Polish medical system, working with over-zealous GDMO's (aka Dr Aero-med) and in LCpl Hiscocks case- keeping a



battlefield ambulance on the road.

In July 2024 Cpl Headley deployed on Ex Diamondback- a mounted joint training exercise between the US and UK taking place in the austere environment of the Mojave Desert. The exercise incorporated complex and bespoke scenarios including first line medical treatment by Team Medics and Combat Medics as well as casualty evacuation, with the purpose of testing and developing the unit's operational capabilities.

LCpl Hiscocks, after completing a winter tour on Operation CABRIT and not wanting to experience the cold of a British winter, volunteered himself for a 'sunshine tour' on Operation TOSCA



in Cyprus. During his time in Cyprus, LCpl Hiscocks has been supporting the UN Flight line by providing emergency cover, been instrumental in helping run the medical centre and has been an assessor on medical validations for both the Slovakian and Argentinian medical teams.

2025 is looking like another year for the Regimental Aid post, but with the arrival of a few new faces in Sgt Nalwoga (Nurse Sgt), Cpl Sanderson and LCpl Galasky, I am confident the RAP will be able to rise to any challenges and will continue to support the Regiment to the fullest its abilities.

Cpl Carradus



Join the army they said; it'll be fun they said...



You can't park there!



Second outbreak of D&V





OP CABRIT (P) 15

Throughout Op CABRIT (Poland) 15, QDG demonstrated interoperability and improved our own operational credibility with the Polish Territorial Defence Forces (the 'TDF', equivalent to our Reserves) and US Engineers, often sharing doctrinally and with practical training to ensure integration of training in Military Load Classification and Bridge Categorisation in order to develop mobility reconnaissance for DRS soldiers, this developed understanding of how to categorise bridges and make an assessment of the weight restriction in order to inform as recce soldiers in the area alongside their attached RE Sgt. Additionally, a three day Operational Demolitions exercise was conducted, where SP learned how to produce battlefield simulations, breach a 100m depth SCATMIN mine-field, construct improvised charges such as claymores and also practice varied Explosive Methods Of Entry charges against walls, doors and wire obstacles to assist with as required during FIBUA operations.

Later a large Field Fortifications exercise was completed involving both US and Polish TDF Combat Engineers alongside our own Eagle Tp RAC Assault Soldiers to create a substantial first line defensive trench system training area with multiple bunker positions which also incorporated a basic, innovative anti-drone screen as a basic idea to help counter the current drone threat in Ukraine using defensive stores we would hold. Later, Eagle Tp conducted two days flat water training on Assault Boats

with the Polish TDF in order to develop additional methods with recce soldiers inserting by waterways. This covered basic operation and manoeuvre, beach assault and water rescue and was an ideal situation to showcase UK SP standards on water training.

Additionally, there was an opportunity and requirement to use my construction trade knowledge to improve an existing welfare area for the REME Light Aid Detachment and additionally to build a shoot-through building for Close Quarter Battle (CQB) Urban Live Fire Tactical training. These additional tasks were a good opportunity to develop low level basic construction skills for untrained QDG troops while assisting me as the qualified tradesperson. This included concreting, basic timber framework tasks for pitched roofing and partitioning and was built in time for the next winter rotation.

In summary, these training exercises and additional tasks were essential to develop and maintain competency, with Op CABRIT (Poland) offering considerable opportunity for Forward Land Forces QDG Assault Soldiers to conduct worthwhile training in practical Mobility, Counter Mobility and Survivability tasks for the continued interoperability with Polish TDF and The US 2/12 Battle Group. Additionally, this also displayed how embedded Engineers can improve infrastructure or training for others by offering our skills as tradesman where possible to develop others safely.

Sgt Foster







Really?



"Pacifiically!"



Gymnasium

Over the past 12 months QDG have been fiercely put through their paces, ensuring that physical and mental fitness is at the forefront of their PT delivery focus. The Regiment's PT culture has continually grown from the newly developed PT strategy, increasing greater knowledge based around human performance optimisation, and fitness ownership becoming more prevalent as ever. This has been noticeably demonstrated by the increasing number of QDG members successfully passing their Regiment's very own 'Fit to Fight' fitness standard.

QDG's Fit to Fight fitness assessment, is an opportunity for members of the Regiment to prove themselves during

routine fitness tests. When fit to fight standards are achieved, members of QDG are awarded the fit to fight t-shirt to wear during PT sessions. This initiative supports and demonstrates the superior PT culture of the Regiment, wishing to create higher fitness standards than the ones set by the Army and when achieved, recognise their soldiers' accomplishments.

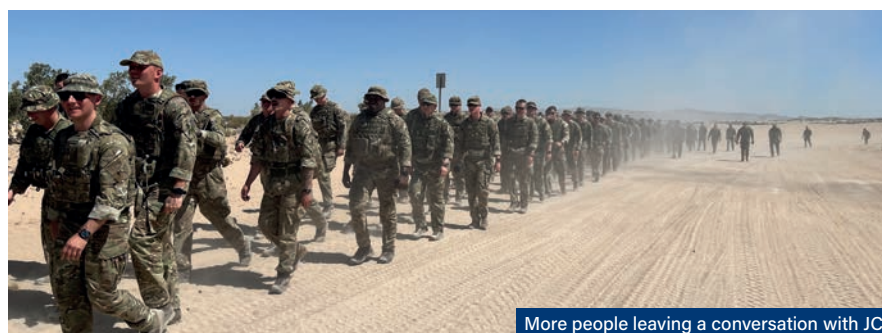
Another PT initiative that has been very well received by the Regiment, has been the issue of individual Heart Rate Monitors (HRM). With incredibly generous and vital funding provided by QDG's trustees, 50% of the Regiment are now able to visually track their



heart rates during PT. Monitor screens around the main gymnasium are now able to display an individual's heart rate, allowing healthy competition amongst members and providing opportunity for the Gym Staff to see who might just need to work that little bit harder. Fun



Circuit training



More people leaving a conversation with JC



MRT press ups

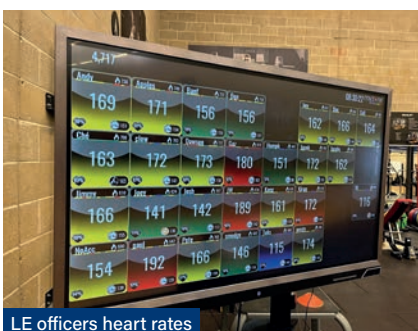
fitness challenges have also been set via the HRM software platform, allowing all abilities and fitness levels to battle it out for top spot. Once a winner is crowned, the Regiment again recognises an individuals' PT ownership and rewards the triumph with varying prizes. Undoubtedly, This PT initiative is sort after by the remaining members of QDG without HRMs, and further funding will secure an all-inclusive and ever-growing dominant PT culture within the Regiment.

Amidst the rigorous training regimen of QDG, a particular arduous training serial is that of mental resilience training (MRT) day. The day starts off with theory-based Mental Skills Training package, followed by a practical session and opportunity to apply these skills, at Holkham Beach during the depths of winter. This

demanding session is designed not only to enhance physical capabilities but also to fortify mental resilience.

With the Commander of Field Army recently releasing his intent and newly written PT direction, QDG are aligned to what Lt Gen M R Elviss CB MBE wishes to harness and demand from the modern-day war fighting soldier.

SSgt Parsons



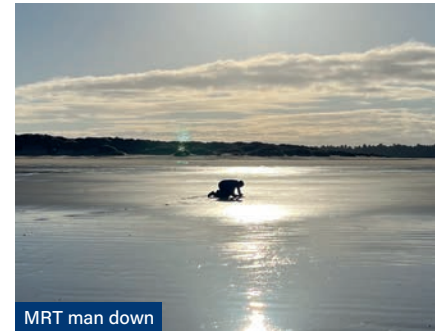
LE officers heart rates



LCpl Hegarty pass off parade



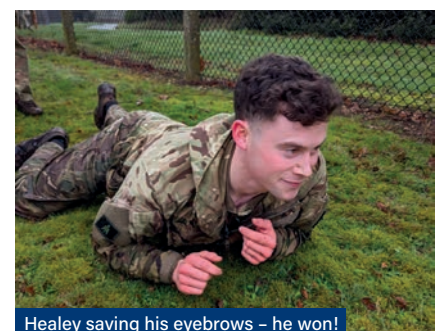
MRT leopard crawling



MRT man down



LCpl Hegarty passing AAPT Cse 80



Healey saving his eyebrows - he won!

Padre – 'Pro rege pro patria'

As I sit here reflecting on the year, 2024, I find myself inundated with emotions as I prepare for my final year with 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. The experiences we've shared, the challenges we've faced, and the camaraderie we've fostered resonate deeply within me. This regiment is not just a unit to which I have been assigned; it has become my family, and it is hard to convey the gratitude I feel for the time we have shared.

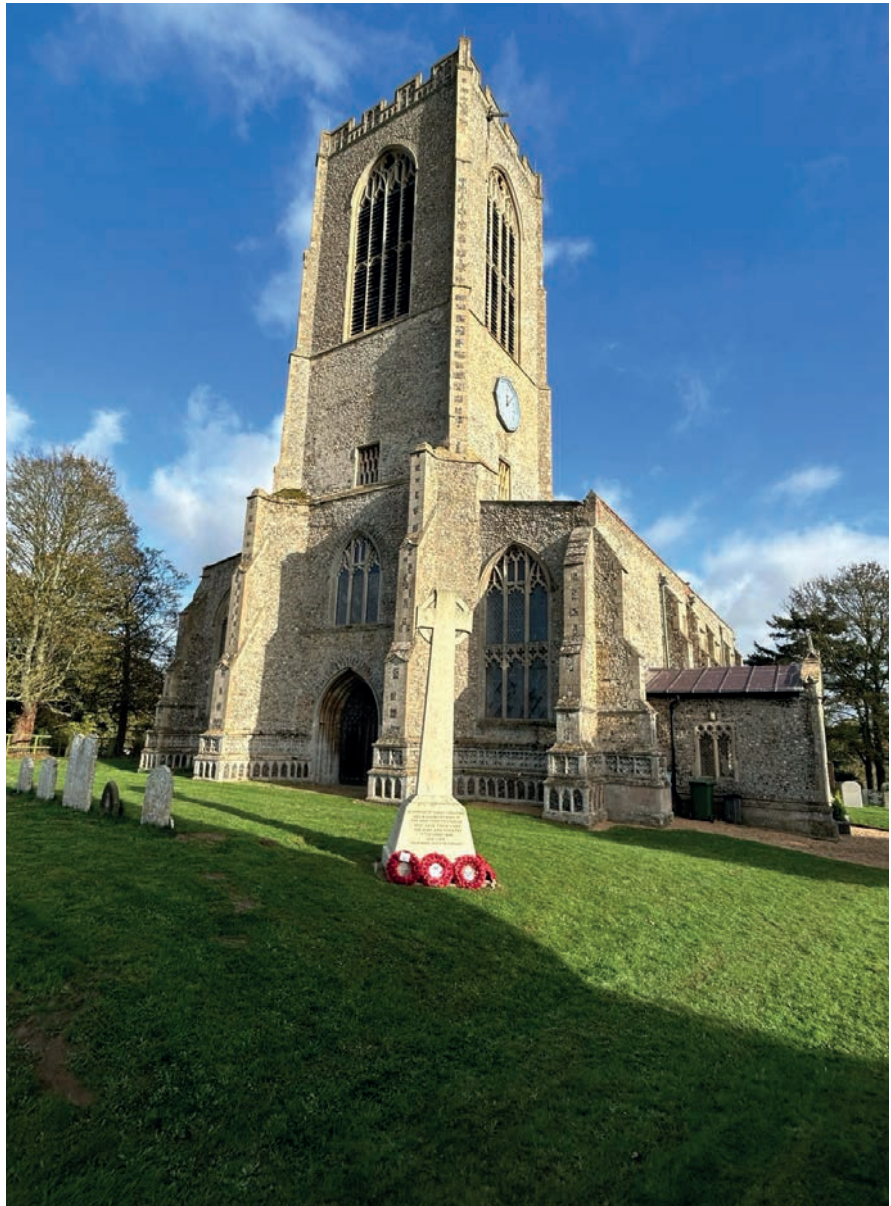
The year began with an undeniable sense of purpose. The world felt tumultuous, and our duty as soldiers went beyond the call of sheer military action; we served our nation while embodying the values of empathy, resilience, and faith. Throughout the months, we engaged in crucial training operations and exercises as well as full squadron deployments, sharpening our skills and consolidating our bonds as a tight-knit family. Each day in the field, or on the ranges, was not merely an exercise but an opportunity to support one another in our spiritual journeys.

My main effort for 2024 was OP CABRIT(P), firstly ensuring A Squadron, out in a freezing Poland, where well supported. Throughout 2024 I was unable to deploy which I found incredibly frustrating but working with the OC Maj James Brockless and his leadership team, we sought together to deliver chaplaincy in a different way and remotely - and this worked well! I was able to support several soldiers and families whilst I remained in the UK.

Upon A Squadron's return home in early Spring, B Squadron were already in full preparation to replace them and travelled to much sunnier and warmer conditions. And the treadmill continued with C Squadron resuming the cold punishing winter tour of duty when they embarked on their journey in October.

I am sure that our participation on OP CABRIT, apart from being vital, brings squadrons and ultimately the regiment together as well as bringing us closer to the communities we serve to support and the partner countries we serve alongside.

The sincerity with which our soldiers engage with all is heartwarming. And I witnessed this firsthand on the couple



of occasions I was able to visit INTER-FLEX and our troops at Whathgill Camp. I saw how each handshake and shared story built bridges of understanding and compassion - even through language barriers - demonstrating and reinforcing the profound relationship between the British Army and her allies.

This connection, I believe, is one of the cornerstones of our existence as members of the armed forces.

As I reminisce about the different



School delivering a talk



Alex Pedley Baptism with Padre



and varied operations and deployments we undertook, I must pay tribute to the extraordinary dedication displayed by our officers and soldiers. Their commitment to duty, exemplified during our deployments overseas, stood as a testament to their character and training. They operated with high levels of professionalism, unwavering resolve, and an indomitable spirit (especially in sub-zero temperatures!) that made me proud to serve alongside them – even from afar! So, yes, some encounters brought challenges, yet the resilience shown in adversity was a source of inspiration for me as their Padre.

The year has not been without its trials, and I faced some myself, but through all of these I am constantly reminded of our strength as a regiment. The support network we've cultivated became a sanctuary for many, allowing us to lean on one another during difficult moments.

In my role, it was humbling to be entrusted with the spiritual care of our troops, to listen, to counsel, and to stand in prayerful solidarity amidst military life – the Remembrance Service this year felt particularly poignant, as my last with the regiment.

In early November I was delighted to baptise Alexander, the son and first child of the RMO Maj Pedley and Seb,



her husband. Any undertaking with our families is always a joy but baptising our children is a real privilege.

As I prepare to leave the regiment in 2025, I reflect on the blessing it has been to witness the remarkable journey of the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. Each soldier, each officer, has left an indelible mark on my heart. I am grateful for every moment spent together, every lesson learned, and every memory forged in laughter and yes, sometimes tears.

As we move forward, as I move on, my prayers will always be with you...

"Lord, bless our officers and soldiers of the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards as they carry forward the banner of our regiment. May they continue to uphold the values of courage, integrity, and unity. Guide them in their paths, grant them strength in their duties, and comfort them in their times of need. May they feel Your presence always, and know the love and support of those around them." Amen

Thank you so much for such a wonderful time, I will never forget my time with QDG.

And I could not possibly leave you without one final blessing from me:

"May the road rise to meet you, may the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face. The rains fall softly upon you. And until we



meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be upon you this day and remain with you always" Amen

Padre ACW





Partners Dinner Night

Officers' Mess

At the turn of the year A Sqn found themselves in Poland while the rest of the Officers' Mess went on the annual Mess Shoot, kindly hosted by the Keiths on the ground around Robertson Barracks. While B Sqn prepared for operations, C Sqn Officers embarked on a trip to the Officers' Ball in Vienna. This, while A Sqn were in the sub-zero temperatures of Poland, securing NATO's border against the 'Great Satan', was all in January. They don't tell you when you join that experiences may differ!

Being a Welsh Mess, a big part of the year is St David's Day, and the Cavalry and Guards Club in London certainly knew about it once a busload of subalterns descended for supper. It is good to see the 23-year-old Operations Officer is mature! While jesting, Felix has finally moved out of A Sqn after being there since joining the QDG at age 12.

Of course, no year would be complete without the Cavalry Memorial Parade. This year was a gloriously sunny day, as usual, a fine start to the summer. A Sqn gladly back on home soil, B Sqn in Poland, and C Sqn on Ex DIAMONDBACK, the summer was at full steam ahead and the next big venture was Waterloo! The Warrant Officers and Seniors may have lost count, but once again it was a white-wash (if I'm still allowed to say that) for the Officers' Mess. The Captain and Adjutant E C C Cooper and just Captain T W Wills carried this victory on the crease, with a century and half-century respectively. Oh, what a day that was!

The blazing sun of the summer also shone upon several notable weddings. Firstly, Captain James Brockless, who got married to the ever-patient Veronika in Germany under the auspicious eye of the online-ordained Captain Zaki Misan Ali Yusuf Hasan Al-Khamiri. Needless to

say, the wedding followed no particular faith. Apart from a wool outfit in the Bavarian sun, the locals were amazed to see how the QDG were the life and soul of the party, as they always are. Captain Zoe Spicer and her very real and not made-up boyfriend Simon got hitched, as did the otherwise decent fellow Lieutenant [audible dismay] George Webster with the delightful Jess.

Another staple of the summer, the ball did have a minor setback in its running this year, due to operational necessity. Proof that the Mess and its inhabitants are business first! Operation INTERFLEX, the training of Ukrainian recruits, was to be the task of the QDG for the latter half of 2024. This did empty the Mess out a little, but did lead to periodic hosting of Norwegian, Dutch, and Ukrainian Officers at Robertson Barracks.

In the autumn the delayed Summer Ball was expertly ran by Lt I MacKenzie and her team. 'Deutschland 1983' (and not a year before) went smoothly, with the Mess being transformed into a scene of Cold War Berlin. Thankfully, not everyone turned up in lederhosen.

It has been a [REDACTED] year for the QDG, and the Mess has remained a welcoming and warm home for its Officers when finally in camp. This is all thanks to the tireless work of Jade and the Mess staff – most notably Jo, Coralie, Debbie, and Ann-Marie, who tirelessly look after us and deal with last minute changes.

ZAK



'What was after 5 again...'



A very smart boyband!



Interflex Dinner Night



'Big man or small bottle...'



A rose between two thorns



Trustees visit dinner night



Livers In



'No one will find my brain in this thing!'



Vienna ball... again



Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess

The past year has been an eventful yet challenging year for the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' mess which due to operational commitments has seen more comings and goings than a cheap hotel [ed: their words not ours!]. At anytime large portions of the mess have been absent supporting operations such as: Op Cabrit (Poland), Op Elgin (Kosovo), Op Shader (Iraq) and Op Interflex (Yorkshire). At times the mess has felt more like a ghost town than the beating heart of the regiment. Yet, as always, we have rallied, laughed, and made the most of our time together. With many of the mess's finest members deployed, those left behind were left with the unenviable task of making their way through the bar stock! As well as stepping up where necessary to ensure traditions were

upheld and maintaining the bonds of friendship that define the mess.

'Tuesday club' remains in full effect with many members regularly making an appearance, if not only to get together but also be schooled at darts and pool by Sgt Dave '180' Watson and Sgt '220 all pockets' Davies. However, the first main event of the year was Waterloo 209 where despite valiant efforts from all present, both the Rugby and Cricket trophies were relinquished to the Officer's mess. As always, the evening was a textbook blend of tradition, history, and questionable games. A fitting tribute to the Regiment's rich history and an opportunity to reflect on the legacy of those who fought before us. Shortly thereafter, the mess bid a fond farewell to the outgoing commanding officer Lt Col Kierstead

during the commanding officers dine out. The occasion, both celebratory and reflective as mess members gathered to honour his leadership and contributions to the regiment. It was an evening to remember, mostly down to the antics of SSgt 'Trig' Trudgill who luckily was carried home by a young officer, much to the surprise of his wife who awoke to them stumbling up the stairs.

After a period of leave and with the return of B Squadron from Op Poland, the mess once again rallied together to host generations weekend which was a standout event. An opportunity to show off the regiment to family members and friends. The weekend began with welcome drinks in the mess on the Friday evening where, all present were treated to a drunken version of Calon Lan by



See no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil...



Heavy coaching was required to ensure the WOs could shoot straight



Beards, no beards and no hair



The officers winning AGAIN

Sgt Canning and his father. The morning after began with a much-needed breakfast before heading off to the customary stands. Despite the weather SSgt Nick Wright delivered the clay pigeon range with clays coming at a much higher than usual velocity due to the wind. There was also some great and not so great pistol and rifle shooting by our guests, SSgt Dave Dale unsurprisingly cleaning up. A dinner night followed which also included humorous yet fitting dine out speeches from the RSM and WO2 'Tails' Taylor bidding a bittersweet farewell from the mess to WO1 Dai Chant, the ASM WO1 Chris Fletcher, Capt Ross Hopkins and SSgt Dave Dale. The weekend was a poignant reminder of the importance of family, both within the Regiment and beyond, and a chance to showcase the values and traditions that define the QDG.

Prior to the year drawing to a close, the Christmas period was still to be celebrated. In one of the most anticipated and favourable nights of the year the mess gathered to rehearse our traditional Xmas Carol and despite the best efforts of Sgt Griffiths we were, as always put in our place when arriving at the officer's mess. What followed was a great night of drinks and laughs maintaining

the close bond between both messes. The final event of the year was the Mess Christmas function which was for the first time in over a decade that has been celebrated outside of the camp gates. Held at Dunston Hall hotel and gave members the opportunity to bring along partners and thank them for all their support in 2024. Testament to the efforts of SSgt Jamie Chater the evening was a great success.

Looking to the new year, the mess looks forward to welcoming C SQN back from Op CABRIT. Also, many mess committee personalities will change over. We will be saying farewell to the RSM WO1 Ruddy who will be handing over to

WO2 Fisher before taking over his role as RAC Sergeant Major. WO2 Taylor and SSgt Casey will take over the roles of PMC and PEC respectively and plans are already in motion for numerous events prior to what will again be a ■■■ operational period with further deployments to OP ELGIN and Op PYSMA looming. Regardless of which theatre of operations mess members will be deployed to their commitment to the mess, regiment, families, and each other will ensure that the Warrant Officer's and Sergeant's mess will remain the beating heart of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards.

KT



Dereham under 15

ADVERTORIAL FEATURE

Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate

Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate in York is home to around 300 Forces students which is approximately a quarter of its student population. As Principal Dan Machin states, "The school is dedicated to creating a supportive and enriching environment for these students, helping them feel at home."

The school offers various initiatives to support military students. The Forces Club led by 25-year veteran Danny Abdy helps the youngest military children form connections, gain identity, and build life skills through activities based on military values like courage, discipline, respect, integrity, loyalty and selfless commitment. The club also empowers the members through reflection on how the games went and creates a safe space to 'check in'.

Years 6 to 9 can join Danny's Woodland Survival Club, learning outdoor skills such



as orienteering and building shelters. There's also QE's Combined Cadet Force (CCF) for Years 8-13, which builds leadership and teamwork through activities like drills, marksmanship, first aid, and adventure training. Former cadet Hannah shares her experience, saying, "I gained new

experiences I wouldn't have had otherwise, from nights in the forest to meeting the King and Queen Consort at the Coronation concert. The CCF program opened up incredible opportunities for me."

For more information, visit qe.org/forces-families.



The Regimental engagement team and Regimental mascot

The Regimental engagement team's 2024 has been one of familiarity but also one that has made new connections throughout Wales.

The year's first quarter saw the return of Tpr Ridgway whose professional demeanour while at the RET will be missed. Replacing in his absence was to be LCpl Murphy and Tpr Thole who both have become imperative to the multifaceted roles at the RET.

Alongside the key events the team takes on we have been fortunate to witness the creation of the first and currently only QDG affiliated CCF situated out of Rydal Penrhos School, Colwyn Bay. We will be close by to offer support and wish them much success for the future.

To round the year off our efforts to support the both the RBL and The Dreams and Wishes Charity were very successful. The RBL surge within Cardiff and the surrounding areas surpassed the previous years for a grand total of £47,769 and the relationship between the regiment and Dreams and Wishes has been strengthened with the hospital and London visits.

The team is looking forward to continuing its work into 2025.

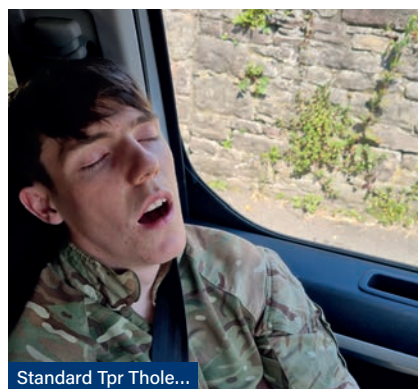
DH



Our debut at the Cavalry memorial parade 2024



Potential Quarter Guard, at least they provide their own red tunics



Standard Tpr Thole...



Alexandra Gardens with 104th Regiment Royal Artillery



Dreams & Wishes visit to the Houses of Parliament



This year has been an amazing year for the Regimental Mascot. He has travelled thousands of miles engaging with members of the public in Wales and the surrounding counties. Taking part in some amazing events like the Royal Welsh Show where he leads the grand parade each day.

2024 had seen some new events and some surprising moments for the Mascot as well as the Regimental Farrier Major. We both took part in the Cavalry Memorial Parade in London for the first time.

But the highlight for the year was seeing Cpl Jones getting his well-deserved promotion by the new Colonel-in-Chief HRH Princess Of Wales. Cpl Jones was also on parade to receive his Kings Coronation Medal for his part that he undertook in Wales.

MH

DIAMONDBACK: C Sqn in the desert

Getting a Squadron's worth of Jackals, Coyotes and supporting vehicles out to the National Training Centre in California by road, rail and sea was always going to be an enormous endeavour. So it was safe to say that there were some pleasantly surprised faces when the main body of C Squadron arrived into Fort Irwin at the start of summer to see an almost working Squadron fleet sitting there. After so much hard work and planning there was an immense sense of frustration amongst the Squadron when we were told that the risk of using Jackals in such difficult terrain might be too high. However, through grit and determination we were able to deliver a driver training package that mitigated the risk and allowed us to fully deploy into the field. This package also provided vehicle recovery training as well as one of the tour highlights when the Sqn 2IC Cpt Wills managed to get his civilian 4x4 stuck in the sand during a training assurance check.

After some more time spent getting used to the searing heat of the Mojave Desert as well as the nutritionally lacking food offered by our American counterparts, it was time for the Squadron to deploy into the field.

The first 36 hours saw the Squadron advance through the aptly named 'Valley of Death', conducting a counter reconnaissance battle before the rest of the Division rolled through. The rather tame evening came to an abrupt halt when the Squadron was attacked by several more heavily armed enemy vehicles. The swift assault by an adversary who had worked in that environment for a number of years left 3rd Troop scrambling to get cam-nets of their vehicles whilst being engaged by a number of armoured fighting vehicles from pretty much point-blank range. The most memorable moment during this skirmish however was watching 2nd Troop Alpha call-sign go round in circles

with an enemy vehicle until the observer-mentors put a stop to the madness by declaring that their American colleagues had won this firefight.

After regrouping and heading back out the Squadron demonstrated the lessons learnt in the previous encounter when they were attacked from the rear by three enemy armoured vehicles. This successful battle set the conditions for a great exercise in which the Squadron provided vital eyes for our friendly forces, and a threat to enemy ground and aviation forces throughout. During the entirety of the exercise, C Squadron demonstrated the QDG's superior abilities in reconnaissance and fighting a larger enemy force on their home turf.

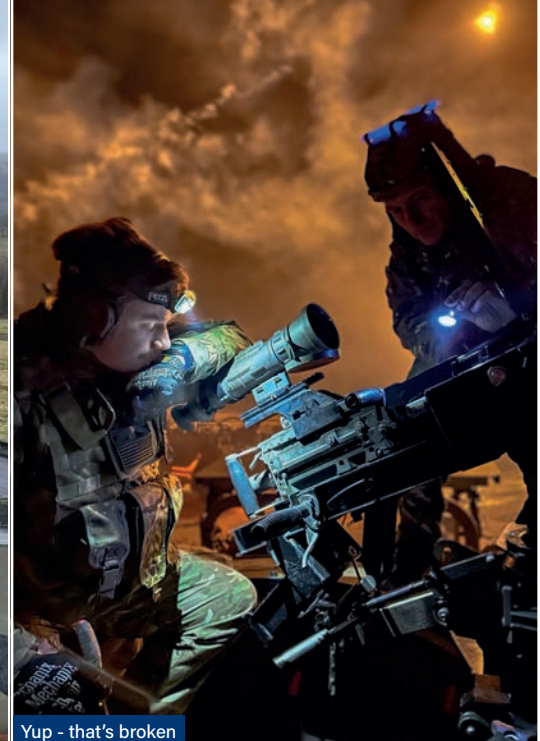
The exercise culminated in an excellent range package which sought not to replicate the frequency of 'blue on blue' contacts demonstrated by our US friendly forces (they pretty much wiped out most of the Squadron in under an hour). The short period following the exercise closedown provided a rare opportunity for the public of LA to witness some incredibly smart mess dress when the Officers and Seniors attended an event



at the United Services Club celebrating the anniversary of D Day. The final act of the Ex DIAMONDBACK saw most of the Squadron trade their body armour for wetsuits and their rifles for surfboards as they hit the waves on Venice Beach in LA before heading back to the slightly more temperate climates of Norfolk.



"So when I say duck, don't say 'what' alright?"



Yup - that's broken

Op CABRIT 15 Pre-Deployment Training

2024 started with a quite literal bang for B Sqn as they completed Ex Dragoon's Fire and Ex Eagle's Fire, their dismounted and mounted range packages held in Warcop and Lulworth respectively, as part of their PDT for Op CABRIT (P) 15.

Having not long returned from Christmas leave, the troops departed for North Yorkshire for a 2-week dismounted range package, progressing from basic static firing and grenade drills, all the way to the Section attack by night.

Following a recent influx of recruits from Bovington, this was the first comprehensive range package for many of the Squadron, but all performed admirably and showed real skill on their weapon systems (bar a few of the attached arms...). Whilst the weather remained

dour throughout, morale stayed high, probably helped by the expenditure of over 400 HE Grenades, a fact which astounded Brigade (It turns out the Gunners, HCR & RL are yet to show their ability or lack thereof with pyrotechnics). For the destruction of 103 Fig 11s, 56 Fig 12s & 82 'Huns head targets', miraculously, and much to the relief of the Range Conducting Officers, the only casualty sustained to B Sqn was 1 x twisted knee, all in all not a bad innings.

With all troops achieving the required standard, and Brigade well and truly assured of B Sqn's dismounted lethality, the focus transitioned towards our mounted prowess, and hopefully a kinder Dorset Climate.

In Today's Army, one will struggle to

recreate the rush experienced by our forebears in the KDG charging at Waterloo, but some would say advancing west along the M25 with your troop of Jackal line abreast is the modern equivalent. Despite Capt Clark's cavalier attitude to manoeuvre, all bar one Jackal made the journey from Norfolk to Dorset without issue, no doubt thanks to the stellar work of the Artificer, SSgt Aldridge, and his fitter section.

Once settled, the SQMS established his tuck shop, LCpl Bateson accounted for his 100,000 Rds & DIO pushed out a ban on illumination, thus beginning two weeks of sunshine, cordite, and range fires.

AW



Nope, no range fires to see here, can't imagine how they'd have started...



Bateson and company





The Battle of Lulworth Gorse Fire
- a new B Sqn Battle honour



Left of arc is that cloud



Another glorious day in NATO's army as
the sun rises over the Lulworth range



No, I'm not cold, I'm practicing stealth



It's called a neck torch



The makings of a terrible Boy Band

Op INTERFLEX Training Delivery Unit (TDU) 3

From June to December members of HQ and A Sqn have been deployed on Op INTERFLEX to provide a Training Delivery Unit HQ in Wathgill Camp, Yorkshire. The efforts of all of those involved saw the QDG and a number of individual augmentees enable the delivery of training to over 2000 Ukrainian soldiers during this time.

The tangible output of Op INTERFLEX has been extremely rewarding, with the QDG providing the framework and support to enable our Dutch and Norwegian partners to deliver training. This was not made entirely clear to all of our individual augmentees, with Maj Fischer (RY) slightly surprised to find that his role primarily consisted of discussing the power usage of the average laptop rather than crawling through trenches.

As ever, the delivery of a seemingly simple task is never such. During their time in Wathgill the G7 cell led by WO1 Wilson ably assisted by Sgt's Turner, Lunness, Howells and Rose have produced almost 200 exercise instructions, dealt with the ever-changing demands for training estate from the TDSUs and managed (with varying degrees of success) relationships with DIO.

The QM's Department led by Capt Thomas, WO2 Navunisaravi and WO2 Fisher have worked tirelessly to ensure that the equipment and materiel vital for the delivery of high-quality training was always to hand. MT, under the leadership of WO2 Ewbank and Sgt Powell have become adept at ensuring that upwards of 600 personnel were in the right place on a daily basis, all whilst trying to explain to the Dutch that in Britain trees do not just jump out into the middle of the road to destroy 4x4s and attempting to track down Norwegians to issue speeding tickets. Lastly, and by certainly no means least a plethora of QDG JNCOs and Tprs provided the sometimes mundane but absolutely critical General Duties personnel, driving PANTECs, BFAs, conducting checks of the accommodation and all of the work behind the scenes to allow TDU 3 to



continue to function. As ever, the positive attitude, work ethic and professionalism of all those who deployed has been a massive credit to the quality of soldier that the QDG continues to produce.

The delivery of INTERFLEX has primarily been split into two parts. As expected, the delivery of training to turn civilians into soldiers, taking them from weapon handling through to trench clearances, C-UAS and a live fire package was delivered by the G7 cell and supported by the G4 team. The second, and far more mundane element has been the management of the various issues that arose with infrastructure management, policy constraints and the inevitable frictions of working with nations with differing safe systems of training.

The Dutch Ops Room was one of the significant issues that arose. Following a blown fuse DIO immediately assumed that the six laptops being used in this room presented the most significant risk to training estate within northern England. After weeks of back and forth, offers of compromise, counter offers and diplomatic engagement from the

Dutch Ambassador the issue was finally resolved through a rebrand of the room to the Welfare Room.

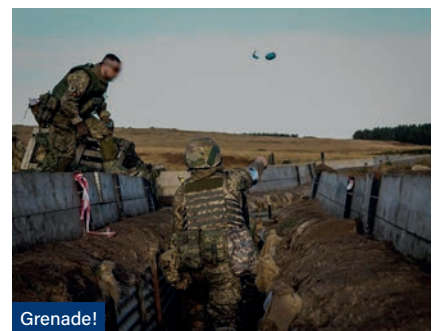
We have dealt with everything from drone sightings to the delivery of Russian Bibles, a number of Ukrainians taking part in the unofficial high jump over the fence in the early hours of the morning and the unpredictable Yorkshire weather throwing plans into disarray. It has not been without entertainment, with the revelation that the Team at South Cerney runs to Brize Norton in fleets of PANTEC provided more opportunity for enjoyment than the HQ had initially assumed.

Op INTERFLEX has been immensely rewarding for the QDG, with a tangible output that was evidenced by the progression of civilians to soldiers of the Ukrainians time in Yorkshire. It has been a pleasure to work alongside our Dutch and Norwegian counterparts throughout. The success in the delivery of training comes down to the hard work of all the individuals involved in TDU 3, and is once again a credit to the calibre of individual within the QDG.

FLJH



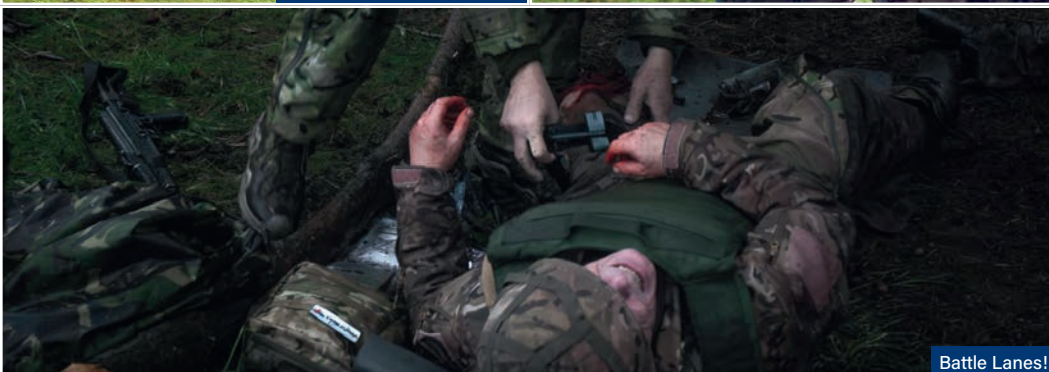
WO1 Wilson's diplomacy at its finest



Grenade!



Those pesky trees at it again



Battle Lanes!



Give me 5mins with Vlad, I'll get this all sorted out

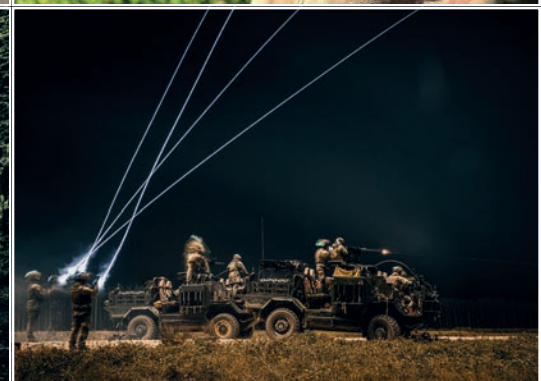


COTR Visit





Quick, bacon butties for breakfast boys!

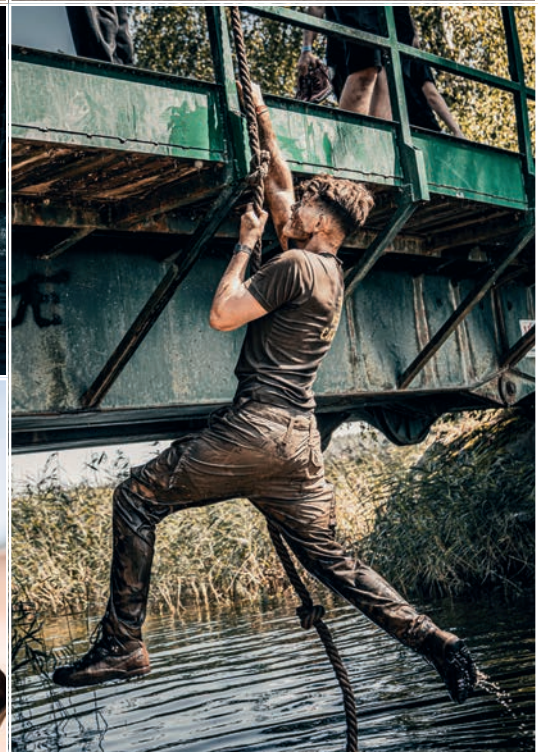




Saving Capt Maltman

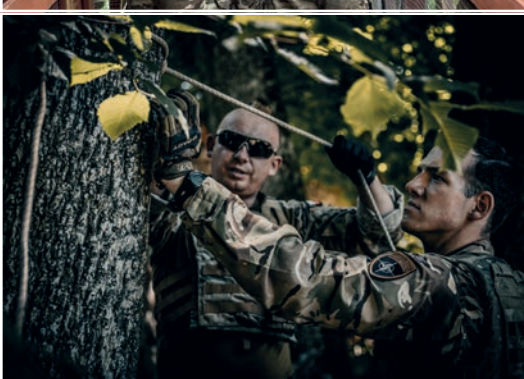


Some of you may die, but that is a sacrifice I am willing to make





So what should this lake look like on the map?





That's an odd place to keep your combitool

Dragging Capt Maltman out of the DFAC

2Lt J Clark?



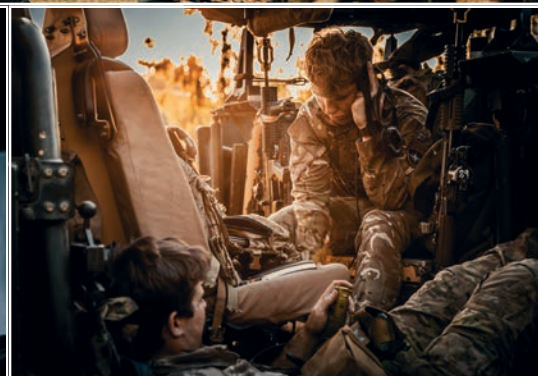
American Pistol Weapon Handling Test



White Monster is back in the NAAFI!







Admiral Pitka Challenge

B Sqn sent a two four-man teams to the Estonian/Russian border whilst deployed on Op Cabrit 15 to compete in what is known to be the hardest patrol competition in the world.

The Admiral Pitka Challenge is a premier international patrol competition named after Admiral Johan Pitka, a key figure in Estonia's fight for independence in the early 20th century. This annual event, held in Estonia, brings together elite military units from various nations to test their tactical skills, endurance, and teamwork in demanding environments. The challenge honours Admiral Pitka's legacy of resilience and leadership, emphasizing principles of national defence and cooperation among allied forces.

The competition is structured to simulate real-world military scenarios, focusing on reconnaissance, navigation, and survival skills. Teams must navigate vast wilderness areas while completing tasks that mimic combat and operational conditions, such as gathering intelligence, setting up observation posts, and executing missions under stress. The physically and mentally gruelling event pushed to the QDG soldiers to their

limits, fostering a spirit of camaraderie and mutual respect among soldiers and other nations. The patrol takes about 72 hours, with limited opportunity for rest. The terrain despite little relief was made challenging by a number of bogs and dense woodland in which teams were channelled through by an active enemy force.

A key aspect of the challenge is its emphasis on interoperability and cooperation between NATO member states and partner countries. By working together in realistic training environments, participants enhance their ability to coordinate and execute joint operations, which is critical for modern military engagements.

In addition to its military objectives, the Admiral Pitka Challenge serves as a showcase for Estonia's commitment to defence and its role as a vital NATO ally. It also highlights the importance of maintaining strong defence capabilities in the Baltic region, especially given the evolving security landscape in Eastern Europe.

For the public, the event is a reminder of the dedication and skill required to protect national and regional security, it was enthusiastically supported with the



stands attracting crowds of cheering locals. The Admiral Pitka Challenge is not only a test of military prowess but also a symbol of unity and shared responsibility in safeguarding freedom.

TC







Sgt Casey, man of the forests;
Tpr Mansbridge, never know
what he'll say next



They call him Tank-Killer

Ex ARROW 24

Bemowo Piske, Poland, is sometimes a desolate place, and those deployed there are always looking for means and ways of escaping. As such, only 3 weeks into their Op CABRIT rotation, a Section from Support Troop, accompanied by the Sqn's JTAC, made the long journey to Niinisalo, Finland to take part in the Finnish Conscript test exercise, Ex ARROW 24.

The first step in getting Jackal's to Finland was getting the vehicles to Gdynia port, achieved through the NSE Commander's frugal negotiations with the local fixer, 'Polish Nick', some questionable low loaders, and the diligence of Cpl Gatfield towards the tiedown scheme. Having driven through the night, the Coyotes were unloaded in darkness and driven to the port gate, or at least one of the 36 gates in Poland's largest industrial port... slightly different to the P&O experience from Dover. The broad assumption that everyone in Europe speaks a basic level of English, sadly failed to be true for Port Security, but with the sections combined 145 minutes on DuoLingo and some fairly wild hand gestures, we eventually found our way to the correct entrance and were loaded onto the Ferry.

With the Coyotes successfully parked amongst hundreds of HGV Trailers, the troops got to grips with being on a

Cargo Ferry for 24 hours. Without phone signal, and entertained only by a TV with 6 channels (all in Finnish), most of the troops decided to think twice about using their C licence in their post Army career plans. Much to the relief of myself and Sgt Casey customs when entering Finland was all but non existent (praise be the schengen zone), and with that the Section pushed on to Niinisalo.

Ex ARROW was a Battlegroup on Battlegroup exercise, used as the final validation of the year's intake of Armoured conscripts. It involved over 2500 troops, an array of soviet era and western armoured vehicles, and air assets including fixed wing and UK AH-64 Apache. The Section's role in the exercise was to act as a Joint Fires Manoeuvre Cell AKA, the JTAC's taxi service. Although the opportunity for reconnaissance taskings were limited, the troops managed deploy dismounted with the Finnish Joint Fires Observers and caused havoc with the enemies Armoured assets.

The Finnish Army is entirely conscript based, with a regular force of only 5000 soldiers, but an active reserve of 300,000 that can be fully mobilised in just over a month. At the age of 18, Finnish Men are conscripted for a minimum of 12 months service, in which they are trained for a

specific role which they would adopt in a time of war. You can therefore imagine the surprise on LCpl Upton's face, when witnessing a Squadron of Leopard Main Battle Tanks, crewed entirely by 18 and 19 year old boys, performing an extremely well drilled advance to contact. This surprise was cemented when our first set of QBOs was delivered, not by radio (as the thick pine forests all but made VHF unworkable), but by 18 year old boys and girls on dirt bikes. Even more surprising was when on the Distinguished Visitors day, a young man dressed in Finnish uniform with an NLAW slung over his shoulder approached Tpr Edwards and addressed him in the thickest Yorkshire accent any of us had ever heard. Despite speaking only 5 words in Finnish, this young Conscript had a Finnish mother and had willingly taken up his mandated service.

Many experiences on the Sections deployment to Finland were novel, and almost all were extremely enjoyable (saunas on exercise are a great addition). Our time in Finland left us with nothing but respect for the Finnish people and their attitude to Defense, and I know that all the troops would happily return in a heartbeat.

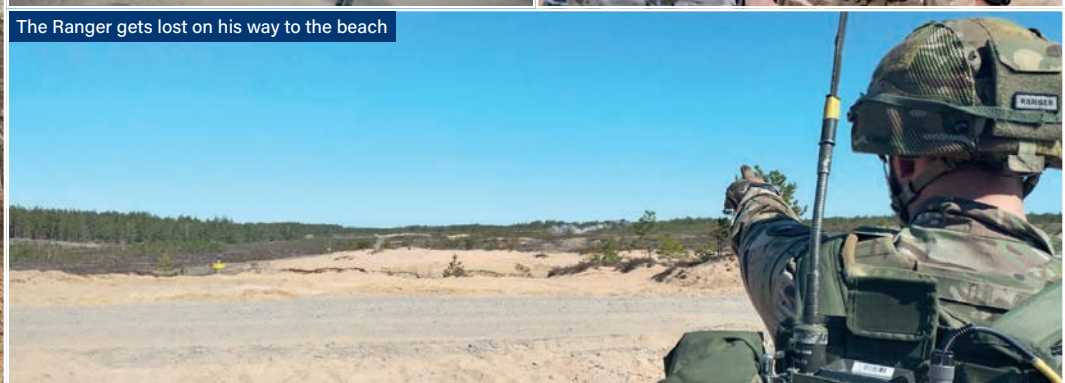
AW



So which end is the business end?



The Ranger gets lost on his way to the beach





Nothing says metropolitan-NATO like a Yorkshire lad, fighting for Finland, wearing a Welsh Cavalry TRF, carrying a Swedish anti-tank missile, with a British AFV made in Devon in the background



The OC is distracted (again) by an old friend



Jackal 4?



Nothing says recce by stealth than some deliberate Union Flag waving at the right moment



Anyone might think he was compensating for something with that antenna



Ex Resolute Warrior

Exercise Resolute Warrior saw C Squadron conduct a road move from Poland to Latvia, through the Suwalki Gap, before operating as enemy forces for the NATO Multinational Brigade, Latvia. Whilst a free-thinking enemy was requested by the Canadian forces, they soon realised that the combined manoeuvrability and lethality of the Sqn was too much for the Brigade to handle. After a number of smaller skirmishes against the Danes, a coordinated attack was mounted against the remaining defensive forces, resulting in the capture of the Brigade's logistic element, resulting in the complete collapse of the logistics echelon, some 10 kilometres beyond the main 'defensive' line. The Canadian Brigade RSM was furious at C Sqn's success, remarking how unacceptable it was that they were 'driving around at night.'

After a continued exchange of fire over the following days, the squadron was directed to assume the defence to allow our Canadian cousins to test their assaulting capabilities. Whilst 1st Troop harassed likely enemy crossing positions, 10 soldiers from 2nd Tp, heroically made their last stand against the might of the Multinational Brigade's armour in a hastily dug trench system. Meanwhile, the remainder of the Sqn assumed main defensive positions and successfully held off the Brigade for several hours until instructed to tactically withdraw.

The exercise provided the opportunity to demonstrate the Sqn's capability to rapidly

The Canadian Brigade RSM was furious at C Sqn's success, remarking how unacceptable it was that they were 'driving around at night.'



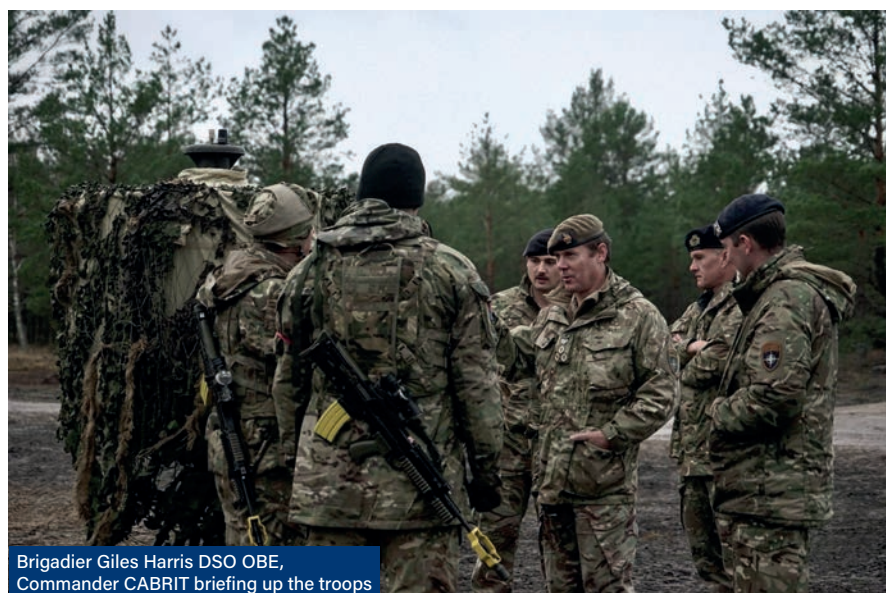
deploy at full scale, as well as the chance to develop new kit and tactics. Support Troop focussed on utilising UAS capabilities as well as linking in with Spanish Light Electronic Warfare Team (LEWT) to find and prosecute targets. 1st and 2nd Troop used the our brand new Fused Target Locator Recce to great effect on recces and offensive actions and all troops used the time to develop the interoperability with attached arms. Of note was the use of radar to detect enemy UAS, from which launch recovery sites were identified providing direction for the Sqn breakthrough. Throughout, the Sqn demonstrated the adaptability and manoeu-

vrability that is characteristic of any good recce Sqn. At one point, the in-role 2IC, Lt William Asquith, reacted with the upmost speed to a compromised code word, utilising 'meow' to initiate the Sqn move and asking the OC to 'release the dogs' on H-hr.

Whilst deployed on the ground, the Sqn was visited by the British Ambassador to Latvia, Commander CABRIT and the British Defence Attaché. They spoke to the Sqn and were given a tour around the new equipment being tested by the soldiers.

As the exercise concluded and the troops withdrew South to Poland, C Sqn's efforts against the brigade passed into Adazi legend and C Sqn personnel were left with a hankering for Tim Horton's that will last long before the end of tour. Long after the exercise, there was talk of the Sqn 'turning over the Canadian Can-Doo's' and 'completely turning over one of Canada's premier mechanised infantry regiments'. Less than a month after the Sqn's deployment to Poland, they had successfully completed a Sqn level move and exercise, demonstrating, and proving the capability we offer to NATO and exercising with partner nations.

JF



Brigadier Giles Harris DSO OBE, Commander CABRIT briefing up the troops



C Sqn driving through the Suwalki Gap. Take the next right into Kaliningrad

Op CABRIT (Poland) 16

After a successful showing on Ex DIAMONDBACK, C Sqn enjoyed some time with loved ones before deploying to Poland on CABRIT 16. The Sqn had the regiment's third turn of the handle on this tour and took over from B Sqn under the US battle group. Despite the fair weather in mid October the Sqn knew that winter was coming and they needed to train and prepare accordingly.

In less than two weeks of being in theatre the squadron was set to strategically project up to Adazi, Latvia. The tight turnaround meant all had to work hard to get the fleet good to go and we all had our bets on how many breakdowns we'd experience. No one bet on zero, which is what we would have had if Sgt Hutchings had remembered that his Coyote needed diesel to move, instead he broke down 200m from the destination. Nevertheless, the Sqn all made it and had a couple of days to reset to go up against the multi National brigade as enemy. The Canadians and Danish who made the majority of the brigade were shocked that a relatively small outfit could paralyse them quite as much as we did. They were even more shocked when 4th Tp, led by Lt Mower, conducted a hasty raid on the brigade CP which left the COS very upset.

In a lull, the Sqn welcomed a visit from HM Ambassador to Latvia, Comd CABRIT, the CO and RSM.

Back in camp, a small group of the squadron joined the Americans in



C Sqn driving again

earning their spurs. Spurs ride consisted of a 36 km endurance March with command tasks.

Soon after returning from Latvia, C Sqn left their vehicles in camp to deploy on their Cold Weather Operators Course. The highlight of which saw everyone's kit stripped for the survival phase. Groups built survival shelters, build fires and despatch and butcher chickens to make a cold night a bit more bearable.

On Christmas Day C Sqn troops awoke to Christmas parcels that were gratefully received by all. Thank you to all that organised sending them out.

After the excitement of opening their gifts they moved to the football pitch. Beginning with some carols, the Officers

& Seniors played against the Junior Soldiers. A closely fought, end to end match finished with the Juniors on top winning 9-7.

After some well deceived R&R C Sqn is now shaping up to go one step further than Latvia. In the depths of winter we will drive up to Estonia, via Lithuania and Latvia, to train with the RDG Battle Group on Ex WINTER CAMP. This will certainly test who paid attention on Cold Weather Operators Course.

The Squadron will continue to train closely with the Polish Territorial Defence Force, plans to conduct a PNCO cadre and further exercises and ranges before they finish the tour.

HS



Ex RESOLUTE WARRIOR



Poland National Armed Forces Day

Whilst B Sqn were deployed on Op CABRIT ROTO 15, they were involved in the Warsaw Armed Forces Day Parade. More than 2500 Polish troops alongside NATO allies took part in a dismounted and mounted parade in Warsaw, the Polish capital, on the Armed Forces Day holiday. The mounted element from the QDG consisted of 2 jackals and 2 coyotes, a rather stressful experience trying to get them into Warsaw City Centre without breaking down for the overnight rehearsals! Thankfully with

REME on standby and with only 3 out of the 4 breaking down over the 10 day rehearsal period they did in fact make it to the actual Armed Forces Day parade. Some questionable feeding and sleeping plans, overall the troop in attendance did a fantastic job and presented themselves alongside the NATO BG allies incredibly well.

Lt Logan





RAC Parachuting team? Ask the OpsWO



B Sqn flat out

Ex Paladin Strike

A Second World War veteran from my hometown in Herefordshire once offered a tidbit from his time in Europe: "When the Germans fired, the British ducked. When the British fired, the Germans ducked. But when the Americans fired, everybody ducked!"

This anecdote was firmly at the front of my mind as we deployed to Latvia alongside elements from the US 2-12 Cavalry Battlegroup. 2nd Troop, B Squadron was chosen to be the tip of the armoured spear with their jackals leading a force comprised of US M1 Abrams, M2 Bradleys and M109 howitzers. Our enemy? A lethal cocktail of Canadian armour and infantry, Spanish Leopards, Italian Arietes, Polish Abrams, Montenegrin recce and Albanian engineers from the NATO battlegroup in Latvia.

The exercise started with a bemused US BGHQ asking why the QDG insisted on dismounting and walking across the battlefield into their observation posts – wouldn't it be much easier to drive there? As the battle raged, the US armour had to beat a steady retreat southward until all that was left of the FLOT were four concealed British teams watching enemy armour, enemy engineers and eventually enemy command and control systems slowly rolling through key junctions. The Canadians, in their hubris, felt that they were safe and began to let their guard down. It was at this point that the many hours training with the FST came into their own – Corporal Donna-chie and Corporal Whiteing called for so much artillery that the US Battlegroup Headquarters had to start rationing fire missions. Even Sergeant Thomas in the troop hide, surrounded for several hours but thus far undetected, was able to notch up a few arty kills.

As with all good things, this fortune came to an end. An enemy vehicle broke down ten metres in front of one of the



hides and the crew, utilising their newly acquired free time, stretched their legs in the direction of Corporal Donna-chie's position. With artillery offline, the QDG OPs SA80s were no match for a 40mm cannon and for them the war was over... (pending a reset by the OM). Elsewhere on the battlefield Sergeant Thomas' coyote fell foul of a different kind of enemy action – deceptively deep mud. Thanks to a daring dash from the attached fitter section, he was out within no time and able to continue the battle.

At the end of this short but brutal action, the QDG reigned supreme. Despite their limited numbers they had (as always) inflicted a disproportionate effect on the enemy and enabled the US to see the true utility of recce by stealth.

DF



Operation Elgin

Having grown up in Switzerland, a nation which housed a large number of Kosovan refugees, I always took an interest in the region and how it had developed since the war officially finished in 1999. However, I had absolutely no idea what to expect when I was chosen to lead a four-man Human Engagement Team (HET) for three months. It very quickly became clear to me that the job was going to require patience, adaptability and an acute ability to read the subtle cues of people living in a fragile peace. Kosovo is a place of contradictions. On the surface, many towns seemed to be getting on with life—markets bustling, kids playing in the streets—but beneath that normalcy, tensions simmered. The HETs primary focus was exploring the Northern part of the country and gathering information on social dynamics, atmospheric tensions and the ways in which illegal smuggling take place.

We were attached to 5th Regiment Royal Artillery (5RA) under the command of Major Aaron Hollyoak. As a QDG Officer I naturally had a distrust of Gunners that dated back to the Napoleonic wars. However, working alongside 5RA turned out to be an absolute pleasure and we made many friends that we will keep with us for our careers and beyond. My team wasn't large—just four of us—but we had a dual role, serving not only as an HET but also handling all of the small unmanned aerial surveillance (SUAS) for the unit. It was a demanding mix of work, but it kept us busy and allowed us to venture into some of the most remote pockets of Kosovo.

Leading my team on Op Elgin was a test of everything I had learned as a light cavalry officer. It wasn't glamorous, but it



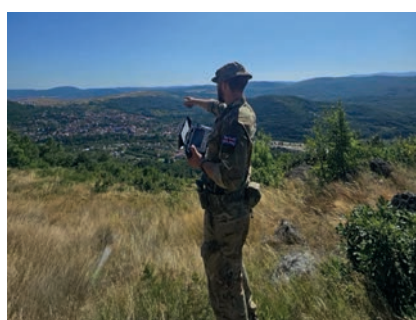
was important. Each day brought a new set of challenges—sometimes logistical, sometimes interpersonal, and sometimes just the grind of keeping morale up in a remote area far from home. But we knew why we were there. We weren't just gathering information; we were helping to keep the peace, however fragile it might be.

The work we conducted also gave me hope in humanity in some respects. Whilst the news was constantly being dominated by Ethnically Serbian and

Albanian Kosovan politicians trying to reignite ethnic tensions for their own political gain, the reality on the ground was that people wanted to live and work together despite their ugly past as neighbours. A personal favourite memory of mine was getting out of our vehicles in a remote ethnic Serb village to talk to an old farmer. This kind soul immediately started kissing the Union Jack on our sleeves and started showing his frighteningly large homemade Raki operation (disgusting Balkan super strength alcohol). We ended up staying for the whole day with him on the farm as he introduced us to his family and friends; all of which had differing views on the past, present and future of Kosovo.

Three months felt like a lifetime at times, but in the end, it passed too quickly. Still, the lessons I learned—and the bonds forged with my team—will stay with me for much longer.

DS



Ex CERBERUS

Ex CERBERUS took place in Oct 24 with nine QDGs deploying to Sennelager, Germany to act as LOCONs. The exercise took place during a [REDACTED] period in the FOE, including the CABRIT 15/16 RiP, the delivery of Op INTERFLEX and the return of the FLF fleet from DIAMONDBACK. In the face of this competing activity QDG, bolstered by the HCRs 'AJAX Consultancy Group' delivered the LOCON for three DRS battlegroups, a LOCON for the 12X FLF Sqn and a DRS Battle Major.

The deployment commenced at midnight on a cold October night, cars were loaded with personal equipment (and critically the battle box after a quick dogleg through Swanton Morley) to travel down to Tidworth. Upon arrival in Tidworth the journey was only just commencing with the long coach trip to Sennelager proving as enjoyable as ever.

Upon arrival at Sennelager Camp the inevitable brief on accommodation from the R Welsh RQ was delivered, during which time he made it extremely clear that there was to be no movement from the bedspace that you were assigned. What followed shortly afterwards was a mad scramble to find a free bed space in a transit block that appeared to have not received any maintenance since at least the 1970s.

The next few days were filled with RSOI briefs, ABACUS training for puckster operators and the inevitable fight for information to understand the divisional plan, the PACE plan, attempting to establish what the JAGIC actually does and the difference between a General Support Reinforcing and General Support gun battery.

During this period of time Maj Cowen discovered the dangers of deploying late as he found himself assigned to the night shift as DRS Battle Maj during which he



spent most of the exercise being told to sign off on amendments to the AB545B. These amendments were almost inevitably followed by a conversation with a RA Commanding Officer querying why he was now in a Reinforcing role as opposed to a General Support Reinforcing role.

The exercise ramped up rapidly with the DRS BGs pulling the Division south, dealing destruction to the enemy throughout. At this point Maj Wales as the BGLO began tearing his hair out as the ABACUS system kept killing, regenerating and replacing vehicles and manpower with seemingly no rhyme or reason. This inevitably resulted in a number of frank conversations with the Brigade ES team, who held firm in their belief that there is no such thing as a 'simism'.

Credit must go to the QDG and HCR JNCOs and Tprs who suddenly found themselves acting as Commanding Officers as the Officers were glued to combat terminals and map boards. LCpl Williams and Tpr Lewis performed

admirably with little direction as the 12X recce Sqn Ldrs, and Tpr Paterson stepped up ably to command the QDG. Lance Corporal of Horse George and LCpl Calloway appeared almost too comfortable in their command of the HCR, raining fire down on the enemy throughout.

Following a hard fought battle 3UKXX, with the DRS BGs at the forefront, once again achieved a glorious victory which signalled the end of the exercise and some well deserved trips to the local all you can eat Chinese restaurant or steak house, depending on your persuasion.

The QDG performed to a high standard throughout the exercise and have set the conditions for success on Ex WARFIGHTER and future deployments.

FLJH

Ed: As part of the annual Journal competition, if anyone can decode all the initialisms and acronyms in this article, please write the editor to receive your free prize!



A week with the French Foreign Legion

On 9 Jul I flew to Marseille to spend a week with our partnered French regiment, 1er Régiment Étranger de Cavalerie, a mounted regiment within the French Foreign Legion. The intent was to re-establish the relationship between our two regiments in order to develop a more tangible partnership and create opportunities to work together in the future.

The visit began with a familiarisation of the brand-new weapons and vehicles used by the 1er REC; in particular the Jaguar, the new armoured reconnaissance platform, akin to Ajax but lighter and wheeled; Griffon, the armoured command vehicle and VBL, the light reconnaissance vehicle. Luckily I had asked a lot of questions because the next morning I found out I was going to be assisting in the briefing of 15 two-star generals from across NATO who were visiting the Legion to get a better understanding of its capabilities. They seemed pleasantly surprised to find a British junior officer on hand to field their questions on the latest French armoured vehicles.

I was then lucky enough to be given a tour of the spiritual home of the Legion at Aubagne. This included a visit to the extensive Foreign Legion Museum which tells the story of the Legion's exploits in every French conflict since 1831. Aubagne is also home to the 'Hall of Honour' where every Legionnaire killed in service is memorialised and in which every Legionnaire swears his oath of allegiance.

Towards the end of the week I took part in a kayak to a beach where the 1er REC practices amphibious infiltration by kayak or RIB. The visit culminated in a trip to the Legion's own Commando Training Centre in Marseille to watch a platoon pass out.

The visit was a fantastic insight into the history and culture of the French Foreign Legion. It is hard not to be impressed by the esprit de corps of men who sing on their way to lunch. Hopefully this marks

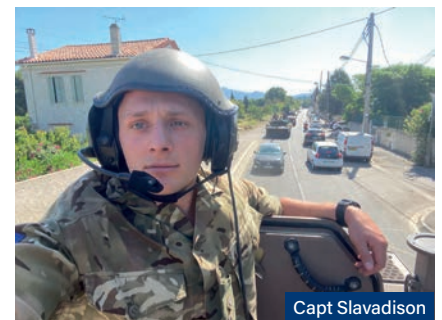


Je voudrai un kayak

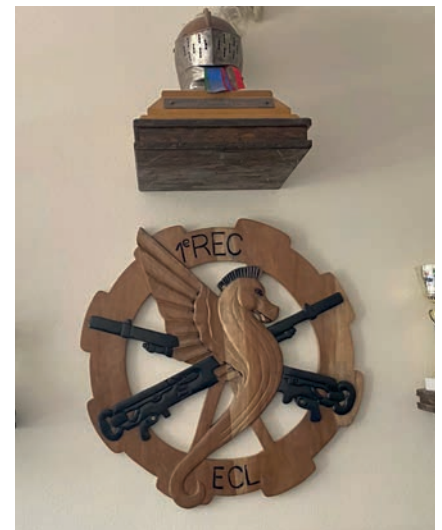


the beginning of a new era in our partnership. In January 2025, Dragoons will be travelling to the Legion's Commando Centre in Marseille to conduct their Basic Commando Course. Later in the year we will be welcoming a French officer to Robertson Barracks where we will teach him a bit about the proud (and slightly longer) history of our regiment, with particular emphasis on Waterloo!

FM



Capt Slavadinov



Cold Weather Operators Course (CWOC) = Military Cold Weather Training: Essential for Operational Success

Cold weather training is crucial in enabling SP to operate effectively in extremely cold weather and harsh environments. As climate conditions become increasingly unpredictable and military operations expand into more diverse regions, soldiers must be equipped with the skills and knowledge to survive, adapt, and succeed in cold weather conditions. This specialised training ensures that troops can maintain operational effectiveness, safeguard their health, and achieving mission objectives in environments that challenge both human endurance and technological systems.

The need for cold weather training stems from the unique challenges posed by extreme cold conditions. These challenges include hypothermia, frostbite, snow blindness, and the overall difficulty of movement and communication in a cold weather environment. Such environments can severely impair the performance of equipment, including weapons, vehicles, and communication devices. Further, the cold can cause rapid exhaustion in individuals, impair decision-making, and reduce a soldier's physical and cognitive abilities. In such environments, the margin for error is incredibly slim, and soldiers must be prepared for a wide range of scenarios and conditions.

One of the primary aspects of cold

weather training is teaching soldiers how to protect themselves from the elements. This includes learning how to properly layer clothing for best insulation and moisture control, use the appropriate equipment, and identify early signs of frostbite or hypothermia. Soldiers are trained to adapt to changing weather conditions by learning to monitor their bodies for signs of cold-induced illnesses, ensuring that they can take swift action to prevent further deterioration. Additionally, the training focuses on building resilience to the cold through acclimatisation. This process involves gradual exposure to lower temperatures, allowing the body to adapt to the physical stresses of cold environments.

Survival skills are another critical component of cold weather training. In case of extended isolation or in emergencies, soldiers are taught how to build shelters, start fires, and ration supplies. They learn how to melt snow for drinking water and hunt or gather food in an environment where resources may be scarce. One soldier may or may not have fainted after his first experience killing a chicken, overwhelmed by the sudden, raw reality of taking a life, even in the context of preparing food. Navigation skills are also developed in these conditions, as cold environments can be disorienting and difficult to traverse. Soldiers are trained in using compasses, maps, and GPS

devices to maintain orientation and avoid becoming lost, even in white-out conditions.

Another key aspect of cold weather training is the development of tactical strategies for operating in harsh environments. Cold weather operations often require specialised strategies, as traditional military tactics may not be effective in snow-covered terrain or areas with limited visibility. Soldiers are trained to move efficiently over snow, using snowshoes to traverse difficult ground.

Cold weather training fosters teamwork and mental resilience. In isolated, harsh environments, soldiers must rely on each other for survival and in order to achieve mission success. Cold weather training challenges troops physically and mentally, helping to strengthen bonds between team members. This shared experience enhances morale and highlights the importance of cooperation in adverse conditions. One officer, submerged in the cold-water immersion drill, quickly turned into a human popsicle, where upon he quickly found himself wondering if he'd signed up for boot camp or an accidental Arctic expedition. Shivering in the freezing cold, He couldn't help but wonder if he'd made a huge mistake; perhaps he should've joined the RAF!

Sgt Pugh



The Sqn 2IC and SSM "Clink" to another successful night of making C Sqn SP miserable.

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**Telegraph Independent Exam Results, 2024*



Recce Cadre

Op CABRIT (P) 15 provided a perfect opportunity for B Squadron to conduct a Recce Cadre for their most junior personnel. Constructed into a two-week package, Ex EMERGING EAGLE, looked to provide soldiers with information and experience on the core skills of reconnaissance and tasks that they may have to conduct in the future.

14 QDG, 2 REME, and 4 Polish TDF students attended the course, delivered by 6 staff members. Week one saw students in and around Bemowo Piskie Camp (NE Poland) conducting tactical PT sessions, having lessons taught in the classroom on the fundamentals, and having some time on the back door training area to put into practice what they had been taught.

At the end of the first week, all students deployed onto Kepno Training Area, which is bolstered onto the back of the Bemowo

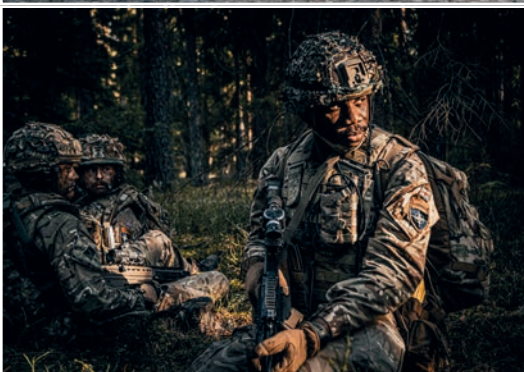
Piskie Camp, to complete the test phase of the course and have some exposure to the actions they had been taught.

Throughout the exercise phase, the students were given the opportunity to practice their own command style through being a section commander or 2ic, this was designed in the hope of setting them up for success once they embark onto their LCpl ALDP course in the future.

Once the course was complete, all students took part in a small parade to celebrate their hardwork over the fortnight and to award some prizes for those students deserving of them. The prizes were as follows: Top Student, Tpr Wright; Student's Student, Tpr Thapa; Most Improved, Tpr Bosley; Best Fitness, Tpr Wright; Best Navigation, Tpr Wright.

MJ





Binos are always awarded to the top student

Must have been a tie



Exploring the Commonwealth War Graves Commission site on the Coriano Ridge, where 22 Queen's Bays are buried



QDG Officers and Soldiers pay their respects at the memorial to the Queen's Bays



Ex OLIVE EAGLE

As the gloom and cold of November arrived in Norfolk, 21 intrepid soldiers and officers left Robertson Barracks to travel to the Apennine Region on the Eastern Coast of Italy, to conduct a Battlefield Study on Operation OLIVE, where the weather was decidedly more civilised.

For 4 days, Colonel (Retd) John Wilson RA guided us through the stage of Op OLIVE, which saw the British 8th Army working in tandem with the US 5th Army in September 1944 to fight their way up through the 'soft underbelly' of Italy. While not the most studied campaign of WW2, not only did it provide useful lessons to the soldiers and officers, but also reminded us of the Queen's Bays actions in this campaign.

At the tactical level, we studied actions that involved cunning use of terrain and significant moments of personal leadership, which was of much interest to all, especially the JNCOs. At the operational level, we examined the simplicity of BG orders and how the scale of the war necessitated such simplicity and trust, as well as difficulties that commanders faced which resonate to the current day such as battlespace deconfliction with neighbouring formations, and detailed handover of friendly forces and enemy forces during a forward passage of lines. At the strategic level we studied how General Leese fought this operation, and what could be learned from the mistakes he made, such as choosing Corps and Divisions suitable

for the ground, and which battles he should have fought when.

The group also visited the Museum of the Gothic Line, which brought to life what life would have looked and felt like during the war. Happily, all soldiers and officers managed to experience a bit of Italian culture, although whether Cpls Brewster and King will want to remember the finer points of their cultural adventures remains to be seen...

Whilst hopefully fun for all, the Battlefield study also served as a poignant reminder during the Remembrance Period to understand the personal sacrifice of our forebears and bring home some of the harsh realities of war.

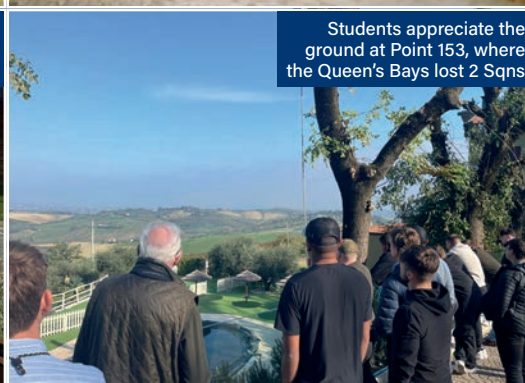
TWW



Students examine the Coriano Ridge from San Clemente



Students appreciate the ground at Point 153, where the Queen's Bays lost 2 Sqns



Lethality Development

– the future is near

Lt Cav operations face an evolving threat landscape, requiring innovation in battle space management, intelligence gathering, and interoperability. With electronic warfare (EW) threats on the rise, the ability to securely pass timely and accurate information about both physical and human terrain becomes paramount. This article examines solutions trialed and proposed to enhance Lt Cav's operational effectiveness, focusing on digital situational awareness (DSA), intelligence and information activities, interoperability, and fires.

Currently units often rely on voice-only communication for passing situational updates, a practice increasingly vulnerable to EW threats. To address this, B Squadron trialed the Mantis Mobile System, a digital solution installed on issued burner phones over an LTE network. This "fight tonight" capability mimicked features of ATAK, used during pre-deployment training on Ex Diamondback. Mantis significantly enhanced situational awareness, enabling real-time information sharing and reducing the risk of compromise. Long-term solutions lean toward integrating bearers like the PRC-167, MPU5 or even Starlink for reach-back communications.

The introduction of enhanced optics, such as vehicle-mounted FTLRs, offers a "fight tonight" solution to improve the effectiveness of screens and enhance the ability to collate, process, and disseminate actionable intelligence. During Op CABRIT 15, Spy Point trial cameras were also tested, showcasing their utility as a stay-behind option. These solar-powered cameras can operate autonomously for months, providing long-term surveillance in critical areas.

Furthermore, equipping each vehicle with organic Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) could revolutionize the Lt Cav's intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance (ISTAR) capabilities. Systems like the Parrot Anafi UKR offer a cost-effective, off-the-shelf solution for over-the-horizon intelligence, especially when integrated with battle space management tools like Mantis to

Fused Target Locator Reconnaissance – a step change in Light Cavalry Capability



The reality

share real-time imagery and video feeds.

Transitioning to a singular battle space management tool, such as Mantis or ATAK, could streamline interoperability, enabling direct communication between reconnaissance elements and follow-on forces. Simplifying these processes ensures timely situational updates and improves multinational operational cohesion.

Enhancing Lt Cav's capabilities requires a multi-faceted approach that leverages advanced technologies, improves intelligence systems, and fosters interoperability. The trials of systems like Mantis and Spy Point cameras demonstrate the potential for low-cost, high-impact solutions to improve operational effectiveness. By



The present

Is this the future?



What we could have won



A Jackal Wolfram – it's not real

addressing current limitations in communication, intelligence, and training, Lt Cav can maintain its edge in the face of modern threats.

TC



A Jackal 3 – we don't have these despite much promise from RHQ!



No one knows where any of our shiny things have gone



Future Mortars

Celebrating St David's Day

On St David's Day 2024, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards marked the Welsh national day with a mix of pride and tradition. In sunny Norfolk, the regiment commemorated St David's Day with a more traditional approach. The St David's day challenges started as ever with the Commanding Officer issuing the tasks and the Sqn getting hurriedly broken down to apply troops to task. Rumours were abounded with what the challenges could be, and knowing how much Sqn pride hangs in the balance everyone was keen to do their bit, whatever it took and wherever it would take them, regardless of where they are in the world.

In Poland, A Squadron soldiers were stationed alongside their NATO allies to enhance deterrence and support regional stability in Eastern Europe. Though far from home, they made sure St David's Day did not go unnoticed. The squadron marked the occasion with a traditional Polish Breakfast, before they dialled in to the remainder of the regiment to accept the Commanding Officers challenges. Though stationed thousands of miles away from their families and home country, the soldiers of A Squadron showed that no matter where they serve, the spirit of Wales and the traditions of their forebearers remain strong. With St. David's Day celebrations on Op Cabrit 14, 2024

Back in Robertson Barracks, the rest of the regiment commemorated St David's Day with a more traditional approach and this included a good old Rugby match of Wales vs the rest of the World and we also marked the day with a special regimental parade to honour some special achievements throughout the year especially the QDG Alpine Ski team for their achievements of coming 2nd in the Army Championships the best result in over two



Lt Logan awarded the 2023 Gomer Lloyd Trophy

decades. One of the highlights of the day was the performance of the most Welsh Trooper in each squadron battling it out singing the Welsh national anthem whilst dressed in a traditional Welsh rugby kit.

Whether deployed overseas or based in the UK, the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards continue to uphold their Welsh roots, celebrating St David's Day with honour and unity.

MAR



Welshest Trooper awarded to B Sqn



Regimental Christmas Day and Coronation medal parade 2024

December 4, 2024, was a day to remember for 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, as they pulled off a Coronation Medal Parade and Regimental Christmas Day with military precision and festive flair. Guests of honour Brigadier Dave Glendenning and Brigadier Alan Richmond were on hand to present Coronation Medals, Long Service and Good Conduct Medals and Regimental Awards.

Despite the biting cold, the parade was a spectacle of discipline and grandeur. A mix of A Squadron, HQ Squadron, and the full might of B Squadron fell in under the flawless leadership of Cpl Jones and the Farrier Major. The setup, impeccably organized by QM Capt John Davies and his team, was made even more stirring by the band, who played on valiantly as fingers and toes froze.

Brigadier Glendenning's speech was a rousing highlight, confirming the QDG's status as the busiest and most deployed unit in the British Army. Adding an international note, Col Volodymyr of the Armed Forces of Ukraine expressed heartfelt gratitude for the Regiment's contributions to OP INTERFLEX—a poignant reminder of their global impact.

The day shifted seamlessly from military precision to festive fun with the Regimental Christmas Dinner. In a time-honoured reversal of roles, Officers, Warrant Officers, and Seniors donned aprons to serve JNCOs and Troopers. The VIPs joined in, and Padre Whorton's rendition of *The Twelve Days of Christmas* left everyone breathless with laughter—save for a certain CoR group, who needed an encore to redeem themselves!



Meeting up for the first time since basic training

The evening descended into merry chaos as traditions came alive: Troopers belted their way into the Cpls' Mess, Seniors sang their way into the Officers' Mess, and Officers had to croon their way back.

Meanwhile, those deployed on OP INTERFLEX weren't forgotten. Thanks to QM(T) Capt Dale Thomas, they enjoyed a Christmas feast at Wathgill, complete with civilian supporters.

All in all, the QDG proved they can juggle drill and revelry with equal flair, showcasing the camaraderie and dedication that define them. Here's to another year of making it look easy!

MAR



1DRS Bde Commander speaking to Dragoons



Eyes right!



Regimental Awards





King's Coronation Medal Parade

The QDG had the honour to host Colonel Vlodomyr from the Ukrainian Armed Forces, and Brigadier David Glendenning, who awarded the KCM to those who had earned it in 2023. Extract from Col Vlodomyr's speech:

"Steel is forged in fire, and warriors are forged in battle. In the darkest of moments, we hold the line for each other – not just as soldiers, but as brothers and sisters who refuse to break."

The Brigade Commander awarded KCMs and Long Service and Good Conduct medals to those on the parade. It was freezing cold, but a proud moment for many. His speech conveyed the true fulfilment of professional soldiering by all.

"We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no blackguards too, But single men in barracks, most remarkable like you; An' if sometimes our conduct isn't all your fancy paints, Why, single men in barracks don't grow into plaster saints."



Sgt Hugo awarded the QE trophy



Tpr Terise, the Mann Trophy



Waterloo 209

The WOs' and Sgts' mess once again commemorated the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo along with the Officers Mess on the 4th July 2024. In the best of traditions, the days events started with a competitive game of rugby. It was a decidedly once sided game this year, with the Officers mess enjoying the less physical but faster aspect of 10s touch rugby.

A younger mess and enjoying a constant supply of fresh legs, the Officers decidedly came out on top and claimed the rugby trophy. The much coveted cabbage was this year awarded to Lt Maddison in honour of his petulant attitude towards the opposition. With the conclusion of the rugby, next on the agenda was the more gentlemanly game of cricket. Aided by the slippery hands of Sgt Watson, the Officers walked away with their second trophy of the day. High tea was served in the pavilion and spirits of both messes where high as each retired in preparation for the Waterloo 209 dinner night.

Waterloo dinner night was once again a memorable event and celebrated with good cheer throughout. The evening saw much of the Regiment dispersed on Op CABRIT and INTERFLEX which resulted in a more intimate affair, however this did not dampen the occasion. With passionate readings, lively skits washed down with good food and wine, the dinner topped off another successful Waterloo. To conclude the evening, bar games were played and the true sporting prowess of the WOs' and Sgts' mess was put on display, with no obvious advantages.

The annual Waterloo commemoration is an important event in the QDG calendar, allowing both messes to remember those that came before in fitting fashion.

ARD



Swanton Morley under 12



RUNAWAY!





Capt Fulloway laughing at his own jokes again



Lt Logan managed to sit next to a Soldier who served during Waterloo



"And I told him, DEMs don't cause fires"

Waterloo CABRIT

This year Waterloo 209 was celebrated by the regiment in 2 separate locations. The traditional celebration took place in Robertson Barracks and an additional celebration took place in Elk, Poland. B SQN Seniors and Officers came together on Op CABRIT to continue our 209-year tradition of two messes coming together to dine and compete at Rugby Volleyball.

The day started with a volleyball tournament where the Seniors were hustled by Lt Col Kierstead who arrived in MTP and opened with "how do we play Volleyball". No shorter than 3 minutes later the CO was seen spiking balls aggressively towards the senior's team and was by far the Officers leading scorer. Unfortu-

nately, due to this ungentlemanly tactic, the Seniors took many losses, and the Officers took the Thomas Barlow Volleyball certificate.

After refreshments the Officers and Seniors dined together in an old, restored Prussian Barn in Elk. The venue was the perfect setting for the evening. The regimental dinner night was executed immaculately by the stand in mess manager for the evening Cpl Donna-chie. Skits continued and speeches were read to remind mess members of the importance of the dinner night. The evening almost took a turn when Capt Clark decided that he had memorised his speech and did not need the aide of his

printed sheet. He decided to burn it on a candle and leave it on the table while he completed his speech. It was a great performance, but only 50% correct. After putting out his smouldering table he was applauded by all, minus the owner of the 300-year-old barn!

The evening was then finished off with a game of cornhole, Polish cheese and port. The Seniors quickly regained their credibility by thrashing the officers at cornhole. I am still unsure if this is due to the Seniors ability to play cornhole or the fact that some of their key players had written themselves off at dinner!

HM



"Sir's I think you will find this bottle is not for attached arms"



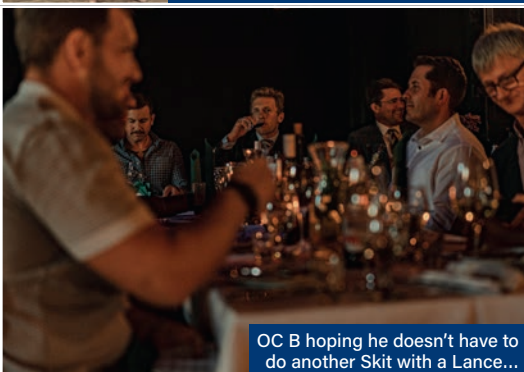
Lt Logan showing her certificate for most improved



Group photo of ROTO 15 Op CABRIT



Lt Logan (playing a sport that isn't skiing)



OC B hoping he doesn't have to do another Skit with a Lance...



The point of no return! In moderation...



Sgt Rose about to score a winner!



The Parker pen celebration



Capt Ark giving a visual demonstration on how his career will end as RSO

Alpine

Exercise White Knight saw an enormous change in this iteration, the dreaded move from Verbier. Sölden, nestled in the Otztal Valley, in Austria was the new resort which was selected to host Ex WK 41, the annual ski race training package for the AAC and RAC.

The QDG team was formed of ten Dragoons, most had been on a previous WK and so we had some experience going into the exercise. Capt Clark and Sgt Maj Williams were on the Exercise Committee as Ex 2IC and Ex Sgt Maj, respectively, meaning that the QDG had formidable representation for their four week deployment.

The first two weeks are centred on 'piste training', for the likes of Lt Seales, Cpl Brewster, and LCpl Alston this means racing down black runs, practicing carving, completing drills, and getting some good speeds. On the other hand, for Lt Johnson and Tpr Edwards, this looked like pizza'ing down a blue slope and getting a lot of practice at putting on your skis while still midway down a run.

With the daily ski training coming to a halt, the team moved into gate training, honing our skills by manoeuvring down an icy course in the best time possible. Each day, different racing disciplines were laid out to test our abilities in the Slalom, Giant Slalom, and Super-Giant Slalom events. In true QDG fashion, the team put in some promising efforts, with LCpl Eyles showing real physical courage by going so fast he managed to take out a good portion of the course crash net - setting a new record, of sorts.

Finally, before we knew it, race week arrived. Lt Seales used his experience from last year's Army Championships to guide the team on and coach as best as possible before each race day. The experience of the QDG team began to show as the week went on, with individuals placing consistently well. Overall, the QDG did very well before moving onto



the Qualifying Championships held in January 2025. In the Slalom Team events, the QDG secured 3rd in both the A and B team competitions, and in the Super G Team event, the A team came 3rd.

On an individual level, congratulations must go to Lt Seales who was awarded an RAC Team Jacket (awarded to those who came in the top 9 of all RAC competitors), which he managed to retain for the entirety of the racing week. Lt Seales also managed to gain: 3rd Slalom Individual, 3rd Giant Slalom Individual, and 3rd for Overall Skier.

POSTSCRIPT: EARLY 2025 RESULTS Divisional Champs

Having seen success at Ex White Knight, Lt Seales and LCpl Eyles went on to represent themselves and the QDG at the Divisional Championships in Les Contamines. With gravity being a natural ally to Lt Seales, he managed to showcase his skills on the speed events finishing 8th for both Downhill and Super G. This made up for a potential lack of agility on the technical races and left him finishing 9th out of 144 racers in the overall standings. Having had quadruple the number of crashes as weeks on the snow prior to the championships, LCpl Eyles finished an impressive 28th out of



the 144. Whilst he might not have had the gravitational potential of his teammate and alpine mentor, he certainly made up for this in blind courage.

Army Champs

The weather conditions at the Army Championships were stark change in comparison to the blue skies and firm pistes of Les Contamines. Nonetheless, Lt Seales and LCpl Eyles competed against a much stronger field of skiers as part of the Royal Armoured Corps team. Despite skiing through rain, sleet and powder snow, Lt Seales managed to secure 36th out of 100 skiers. LCpl Eyles was the real success story ending up the to 49 skiers in the British Army which only gives hope to the future of QDG Alpine.





The Dream Team



LCpl Eyles with the Courage Cup



The WORST skier on the mountain



Big air



Nordic Skiing 24/25 Season

The QDG Nordic Team returned to Bietostolen, Norway for the annual RAC Training Camp. The team for the 24/25 season consisted of: Lt's Maddison and Logan, LCpl's Healey and Henry, Tpr's Lewis, Thapa, Wright, Jacobs and Smith.

Lt Logan and Tpr Lewis headed out a week earlier than the main body of the team to take part in the Elite Skier week, which took a particular focus on technique and video analysis along with preparing them for the BASI XC Military Instructors Course. The qualification is a professional pathway for instructors to enhance performance within the Corps. Separately, the main body experienced a battle with Dutch Customs that nearly saw them miss the overnight ferry from Kiel to Gothenburg but thankfully with Lt Felix Maddison's Cavalry charm and persuasion they were able to make it onto the Kiel Ferry with all of about 1min and 30 secs to spare.

This year the team had a strong return to the Nordic Season, being all the more educated from last year in waxing, range drills, ski technique, training and recovery. This year also saw the introduction of the QDG Nordic Instagram Page (QR Code below for those who wish to follow), allowing the team to keep their avid fans up to date with all of their progress. The RAC Championships were held in Norway this season, offering a more demanding race course and climatic conditions compared to the previous Serre Chevalier. Throughout the race week, the QDG donned their new lycra Welsh Cavalry race suits and made a name for themselves, winning the following:

- Overall Team 3rd Place
- Overall Top Female Athlete
- 1st Place 7.5km Biathlon Team Relay



They keep ducking ma'am

- Individual Gold Medal 10km Classic
- Individual Silver medal Biathlon
- Individual Bronze medal 10km Classic
- Individual Bronze medal 10km Biathlon

With the RAC Championships complete, the team returned home to the UK for 10 days over the Christmas Period. In the New Year, the team departed for Serre Chevallier, for 5 days of Corps Training at a higher altitude in preparation for the next stages of racing; The Army Qualifying Championships. Results from Ex PIPEDOWN as follows:

- 1st Junior Individual 10km Classic
- Top Overall Junior Athlete
- 4th Place 4x7.5km Biathlon Team Relay
- 5th Place 4x5km XC Team Relay
- 6th Place 10km Classic Team
- Overall Team 5th Place (ensuring qualification to Ex RUCKSACK)

With the team's fantastic efforts at QC's, they confidently qualified for a place at Ex RUCKSACK – The Inter-Services and National Championships 2025, held in Ruhpolding, a Biathlon World Cup Location in Germany. Ruhpolding brought along a whole new set of challenges with a more demanding course and fierce competition. Not only this, but mental and physical challenges as race fatigue began to set in, as the team were now 7 weeks into the season.

Ex RUCKSACK race programme consists of 8 races in multiple different disciplines over a 16-day period. This is the first time throughout the season unit teams are expected to be mostly independent without instructors and coaches to assist them. RAC were lucky however to have two of their head coaches from the RAC Training Camp in Norway come out to Ex RUCKSACK, Marc Walker and Spence Hogg. Both went above and



Uphill uphill uphill



The haul just from RAC champs



Patrol inspection

beyond to support the 5 RAC teams who qualified (providing all the wax secrets), ensuring the RAC formed a cohesive front and supported each other through all the racing, training and administrative preparation that came along with it.

The first few races were held in Austria, providing icy conditions on the race days which the team were not used to and saw several wipeouts and impressive bruising to show for, in the days to follow. However, the team quickly got back into it and re-found their skiing feet, settling into the icier conditions that do not provide a soft landing when step turns round corners do not go according to plan! Returning to the Stadium for the Biathlon events, the team provided some phenomenal shooting results across the Individual Biathlon and Biathlon Sprint races. The most demanding race of the Inter-Services Championships however, would be The Military Patrol

Race, split across two days covering a distance of 30km on classic skis carrying a minimum of 40kg between them. The team memorise Orders, complete both physical and mental command tasks throughout the route and fire their weapon systems. Troops were inspected by Major General Mead, they must be well turned out in their appearance and kit, and are often asked questions regarding the details of the patrol and general military knowledge.

Notable results from RUCKSACK:

- Tpr Lewis – 5th in 15km Men's Junior Individual Biathlon, 7th in Junior Men's 10km Mass Start Biathlon, Fastest lap of the day in the 10km Classic Race and placed 3rd in Junior Men's category, Top shot overall in Junior Men's Category, Awarded Junior Men's BB (British Biathlon Union) Champion.
- Lt Logan – 9th in 12.5km Women's

Individual Biathlon, 9th in 7.5km Women's Biathlon Sprint and 12th in 10km Women's Mass Start Biathlon

- Tpr Wright – 7th in 15km Men's Junior Individual Biathlon, 10th in Junior Men's 10km Mass Start Biathlon.
- Team 10th place in the 4x5km XC Relay
- Team 11th place in The Military Patrol Race
- Team 10th place in the 4x7.5km Biathlon Relay

Congratulations go to Lt Logan, Tpr Lewis and Tpr Wright who have been selected for the Army Nordic Performance and Development Squad 2025/6. A hugely impressive feat from the QDG, coming 11th Place in the final combination standings out of 24 teams. Now we rest, re-set and go again next season!



Judging by the number of empty cases those targets were putting up a fight





Downhill is downhill



Maddison didn't get the don't smile memo





It'll be worth it one day...



B Sqn Hyrox Gdansk

BAWF 2024

British Army Warrior Fitness (BAWF) has unfortunately had to take a back seat during 2024 due to a deployment year for The Regiment. That being said, however, members of QDG haven't been shy to participate in fitness events wherever possible. LCpl Williams and Tprs Njoya and Hamlet, from A Sqn, went to Birmingham and attended the "Battle for Centre" sports festival. They competed in a 4 stage multi fitness event ranging from the curve runner and power bag carries to deadlifts and shoulder press. As a team of 3, within a 4-man team competition, they finished a very respectable 3rd place overall! During Op CABRIT 15, B Sqn SSM WO2 McKinnon and Sgt Thomas created a fitness challenge to keep the Sqn motivated, aptly named "Elite Dragoon". Which included; 2km row, 5km run, dead lift,

squat, shoulder press, bench and pull ups. Weights and times required were dependant on the age and weight of the competitor on the day. All exercises were to be completed within a 24hour period. During the 6 month tour, only 1 person was successful! Furthermore, 20 members of B Sqn took part in Hyrox Gdansk. Hyrox has taken the fitness world by storm, a very popular fitness event completing 8 different exercise stations separated by 8 1 km runs. Running the competition in pairs, Sgts Bould and Thomas set the best time of the 10 groups with a very competitive time of 1 hr 8 minutes. Although this year has unfortunately not contained any BAWF specific events, Sgt Casey and Cpl Phillips have now taken the reigns and keen to hit the ground running in 2025.

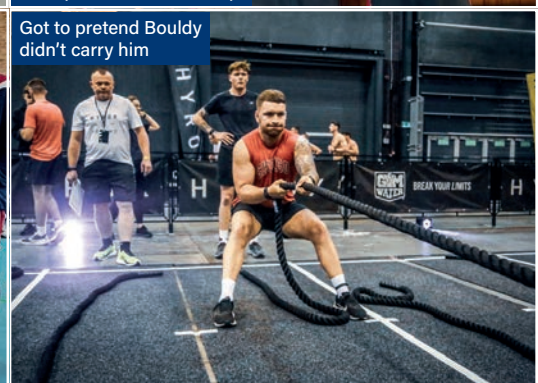
Sgt Casey (Rugby type)



B Sqn best pair



Tpr Njoya LCpl Williams and Tpr Hamlet from A Sqn



Got to pretend Bouldy didn't carry him

The 27th Edition of Waterloo Ride

Most people reading this would know that Waterloo Ride is a weekend held biennially where the Dutch, Belgian, German and British Cavalry come together to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo. This year was a slight twist. Just as the Ancient Greeks at the Dionysia paraded soldiers from conquered nations, we were joined by two officers from the French Army. The outcome of the battle 209 years ago, however, as began in their Gala Dinner speech an assured conviction: "It's not often, the French are considered the enemy when sitting in a room full of German officers."

Waterloo Ride this year was attended by Captain Zaki Al-Khamiri, and Lieutenants Will Asquith, Louise Gamman and Freya Logan. The weekend is incredibly surreal as we first we all are hosted by the Dutch Ambassador to NATO before being guided through battlefield by Lt Kol Corstiaan, a man with prodigious knowledge. The day ends with a spectacular Gala Dinner, hosted by Le Club Royal des Officiers du Régiment des Guides. This is very merry event where we, adorned Mess Dress, eat delicious food and drink delightful wine. Time is a fickle villain as the warnings of the early start were drowned out and dismissed by entertainment on a major scale.

Nonetheless, with a few sleepy eyes, the highlight of the weekend had come upon us: to mount our horses and ride around the very battlefield in which our antecedent regiment had charged countless times to defeat the resurgent Emperor Napoleon. Events such as this are rare: there are few occasions where Cavalry regiments are able to ride alongside their now NATO partners. The event has been running since 1968, a year which saw a disjointed Europe littered with protests and anti-war sentiment. None-



Human representative of a graph display of morale over the weekend



A German explaining to a Brit and French man why Waterloo was decisive – the irony

theless, Cavalry Regiments managed to gather together and find commonality. I hope this tradition will last and the QDG continue to find importance in sending soldiers to it.

WA



Abbey Road



Heels down



The likeness is uncanny



Lt Will Asquith shows how he bearily knows whats going on most of the time

Equestrian Sports – putting the Cavalry into Dragoons

There are more horses in Journal 2024 than ever before which is great, because we are, after all, a cavalry regiment.

Lt Will Asquith led the Waterloo ride this year – I warned them of the monumental hangover they'd have on Sunday as they pilgrimed the advance on horse back under the European May Sun to the battlefield. The Belgians did not disappoint. Lt Bella McKenzie and Lt Mark Johnson led the *Military Performance Tour on Horse* to the Netherlands this year. Having dressed down at the direction of the CO I note that their camouflage not only deprived them of 'Best Dressed' award but also no doubt contributed to them *not* doing as well as we did in 2023 in Prince of Wales Order. There's a message there, methinks.

Polo – for a regiment that thrives on 'hating polo' (see 'CROP'), the QDG have done exceptionally well. We not only fielded the majority of the players on the inaugural RAC team, but then also fielded a proper QDG team. The first time in 4 years! And we won both tournaments to boot. Well done Maj Campbell for staying on this time; Lt Clark owes me 4 bottles of champagne for every time he changed down a gear into trot; and I ended up pinned behind the cantle of the saddle somehow, in the goal mouth, and became the laughing stock of the entire TPC. Had it coming I suppose.

Lastly, the photos of Ex Guardian Spear will speak to the reader in a way that no others will. LCpl Wellington leading her patrol up the slopes (note in the back-



ground someone quite horseless) at the gallop was a highlight for all troops from A to C Squadron from their time in Poland. The excellent collaboration of the Polish Territorial Defence Forces and Enhanced Forward Presence [Ed: or whatever it's called tomorrow], developing mounted patrol skills, patrolling the border area of the Suwalki is extraordinary. Akin to those pictures we have all grown up with

in our messes and perhaps has a lesson we can learn about mobility and lethality. After all – when a horse runs out of fuel you just point it's head at the floor and tell it to eat.

Well done to all, and I have no doubt we shall see more of the regiment, all ranks, on horseback being True Dragoons in 2025.

AP



Lt Gamman spent almost a week getting that mane like that



**Army
Benevolent
Fund**

We help former soldiers improve their quality of life.

Matt lives in Hampshire with his young family. In 2009, in Afghanistan, he sustained a long-term ankle injury when he risked his life to save the platoon, which had come under attack during an operation.

Unfortunately, due to complications that arose from his injury, Matt was medically discharged in 2022 and had to have a below left knee amputation.

We were there to support him when he needed help and provided £1,000 towards the cost of an electrical adjustable bed to improve his quality of life and aid recovery. Matt now works as a head mechanic for a local company and is keeping the same positive spirit that he demonstrated throughout his 17-year Army career.



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VE80

CELEBRATING THE 80TH
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Suddenly there was a whole new standard to live up to



This riding malarkey isn't as easy as it looks



Welsh Cavalry returns to its roots

JO1 Scott A. Fleming

Kljuc - The U.K.'s Welsh Cavalry is taking its operation back in time. Sure they are holding onto their Challenger 1 Main Battle Tanks and their fleet of Land Rovers. However, at the Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG) Battle Group Headquarters in Kljuc, the motor transport office is calling on four-legged resources to accomplish a mission beyond the capabilities of its tracked vehicle and flying machines.

The Welsh Cavalry, which gave up horses for tanks in 1938, is returning to its equine heritage for the first time in over 30 years. The last time the Welsh Cavalry used horses was in the Far East in the 1950s.

One of the QDG's primary concerns before it snows has been finding a way to resupply troops camped at a remote radio rebroadcast station atop a nearby mountain. The answer was a combination of nostalgia and operational practicality: Hire pack horses that can hoof it where military machines cannot.

Where vehicles dare not tread.

The "rebro" station is reached by a single, unimproved road that climbs steeply out of Kljuc. Even before winter's entire onslaught, the route was washed out; the usually sure-footed tracked vehicles couldn't make it to the top. In August, rain reduced the dirt road to a surface of loose roots and rocks, leaving a three-kilometer stretch impassable and the QDG soldiers without resupply.

"We went to a helicopter resupply," said

U.K. Army Warrant Officer Steve Jones. "Unfortunately, because of the height of the mountain and the lowness of the clouds, helicopters couldn't easily get there either. The ridgeline breaks all the weather so the clouds just sit there."

"We managed a resupply with a Czechoslovakian HJP helicopter, but after three consecutive days of helicopter failure, we had to look seriously at other ways of getting supplies up there," he added.

Hooray for the mule patrol.

Then, Jones got an idea: "In our mess, we've got a painting from (World War II) of a mule patrol going out of Monte Casino. I thought, 'Why not? Let's try it.' If all these millions of dollars worth of technology can't get us there, we'll go back to our roots and try the horses."

Jones' plan was approved by his chain of command, and he was given permission to try to reach the stranded men by packhorse. They acquired a team of horses from a local farmer and tack and mounting equipment from the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The horses (dubbed "Lucknow" and "Waterloo") carried loads of ration packs, five-gallon fuel/water containers, and military webbing kits to the remote site without difficulty.

"There will be times this winter when we will have to employ these horses to resupply that rebroadcast station," said WO1 Howard Smith, Regimental Sergeant Major for the QDG and co-conspirator of the plan. "When we can't get up there by vehicle or by helicopter...we'll go by horse."



A soldier of the Welsh Cavalry leads a packhorse along a mountain path near Kljuc. Photo: JO1 Scott A. Fleming.



Lt Webster horse riding



Maj Purbrick gets stuck where no man wants to get stuck

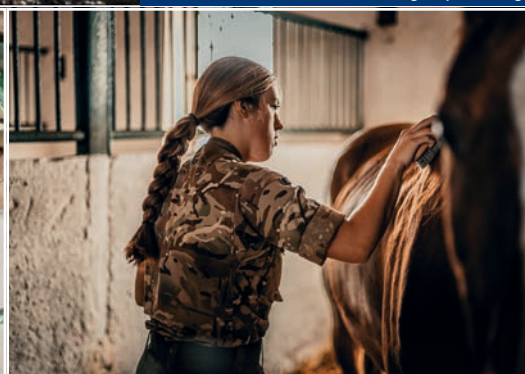




Transferable skills – from hunting to patrolling



Come on, just one kiss



Harsh Balkan winters take their toll on four-wheel drive vehicles and multi-million pound tanks and helicopters . . . but frontline troops of the 1st Queen's Dragoon Guards have looked to their history to find an answer

Cavalry returns to real horse power

By Malcolm Handley Daily Post Staff

THEY were an integral part of the British Army 50 years ago – light, fast and sure-footed to keep soldiers' supplies and the horses that carried them safe in a modern problem of supply and transport in a modern war zone.

It is all the idea of light and fast – the idea of the 1st Queen's Dragoon Guards, the 1st QDG, who have been called upon to help solve a modern problem of supply and transport in a modern war zone.

The problem is that we have troops on top of a very high mountain and about 100 miles to go to get to the top of the mountain. They are in a very difficult position.



PROBLEM SOLVED: Sgt Mike Jones and his team have found a way to get supplies to the top of the mountain. The problem is that we have troops on top of a very high mountain and about 100 miles to go to get to the top of the mountain. They are in a very difficult position.



Two mustaches – one better than the other





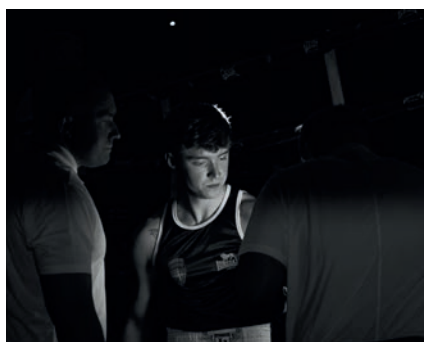
Boxing

The QDG Boxing Team has gone from strength to strength this year. Bouncing off the success of the previous year, the QDG minted three wins at the converted RAC Boxing Championship finals and the team were crowned overall RAC Champions.

The team consisted of Tpr Lawson (Light Middleweight), LCpl Flood

McCann (Welterweight), Tpr Jeffery (Cruiserweight) and their Coach SSgt (SSI) George Parsons.

On prelim day Tpr Lawson lead the way and was pitted against the HCR. A patient but strong performance was delivered over the three rounds, punishing his opponent with calculated and hard shots giving him a win by split points decision.





On to finals night, LCpl Flood McCann won on a majority points decision. Tpr Lawson 2nd round TKO. Tpr Jeffery 2nd round TKO.

A testament to the hard work and effort they all put in and a special thank you to their coach for providing a diverse, hard but rewarding training program.

So what's next for QDG Boxing? Now that the team has had 2 good showings at the RAC championships, it is now time to find the boxers of the regiment.



2 Apr 25 will see the QDG host its first inter Sqn boxing competition and their training has already started. This is with a view to formulate a team to take to the Army Individuals and get QDG Boxing back on the map.

A special thanks to everyone that has supported the growth of this sport over the last two years, please continue and enjoy the success the team is already having.

GP



GOC 3(UK)XX Driven Shoot

On Friday, 29th November 2024, the picturesque Wiltshire countryside served as the backdrop for the GOC's 3UKXX Driven Pheasant Shoot, an event steeped in tradition and camaraderie. Representing 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG), SSgt Wright and Maj Cowen donned classic tweed shooting attire to join this prestigious gathering, blending military precision with the age-old tradition of driven shooting.

The day began early, with the sharp winter air carrying the anticipation of the participants as they assembled at Tidworth's cricket pavilion. Known for its rolling hills, wooded valleys, and expertly managed game reserves, the location was the ideal setting for such an event. SSgt Wright and Maj Cowen were honoured to represent their regiment, standing proudly among senior officers, dignitaries, and representatives from across the Iron Division.

The shoot itself consisted of four drives, each meticulously planned to

present challenging yet ethical shoots. Pheasants, expertly flushed by the beaters and their dogs, soared high over the line of guns. The participants, including SSgt Wright and Maj Cowen, demonstrated remarkable marksmanship and composure, embodying the discipline and focus that are hallmarks of military training. Their efforts did not go unnoticed, with other firers praising their performance and representation of the QDG.

One of the highlights of the day was the traditional elevenses. Nestled in a scenic clearing, participants gathered for a well-earned break, enjoying a spread of hearty refreshments that included sandwiches, Macaroons, Welsh cakes and steaming cups of tea or mulled wine. The atmosphere was one of camaraderie and conviviality, as stories were shared, and laughter echoed across the countryside.

As the day drew to a close, participants reflected on the success of the event with a sit-down meal. For SSgt Wright and Maj Cowen, it was a proud



moment to represent 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards at such a prestigious occasion. Their presence and conduct exemplified the values of their regiment, ensuring that the QDG name was held in high regard.

The GOC's Driven Shoot was more than just a sporting event; it was a celebration of heritage, camaraderie, and excellence, and a day that will be fondly remembered by all who attended.

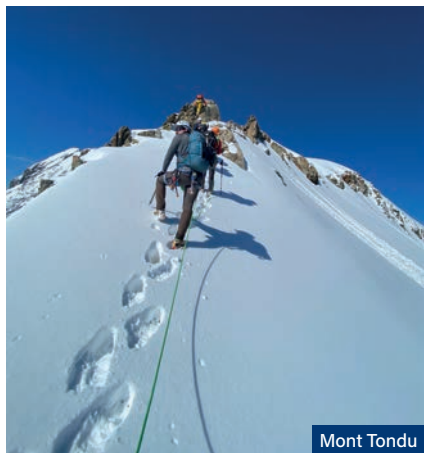
SSgt Wright, REME

Ex DRAGON GAUNTLET AIGUILLE

In June of this year, Ex DRAGON (unfortunately dictated by AATG, not a spelling mistake) GAUNTLET AIGUILLE saw 6 Dragoons head to the Chamonix Valley for two weeks of Alpine Mountaineering. The planning for this expedition started in late 2023 and saw several redrafts due to funding and twice came phone calls away from cancellation – thank you to Major Matthews and Capt Rowe. So, it was to my relief, and everyone else's surprise, when we stepped into the Chamonix chalet we would call home for (most of) the next two weeks. 5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, a sauna, hot tub and a garage to store kit. No complaints from the troops!

We were lucky to get hold of three outstanding instructors. Even luckier, they bought into our relaxed but professional approach to climbing. Alpine Mountain Leaders (AMLs) are becoming fewer and farther between. As the Army tries to do more with less the "woolly hatters" among us have fewer opportunities to move through the AT schemes to instructor level. This leaves Reservists holding the majority of higher-level qualifications and even they are now being limited further in the number of days they can work.

Chamonix for mountaineering in June is a little like the rest of the Alps for skiing in December – you never know exactly what you are going to get. This produces one of the two key planning considerations, weather. The second is hut bookings. The long-term forecast did not look overly promising for our planned itinerary of increasing altitude and severity. Nevertheless, we would make do. Starting with our first morning, which was rained off. Rope skills and refreshers hanging from the wooden beams inside the chalet filled the morning, and by the afternoon the skies had cleared. We walked the short distance to Gaillands crag in Chamonix Sud – an afternoon of rock climbing in the sun dried out the morning's damp spirits. Which were wet again by a pint in the local afterwards.



Mont Tondou



The second day saw another thorough skills-based day. This time we were up the mountain and in the alpine. Crampons were donned. Ropes were tied. Ice axes wielded. Crevasse rescue, abseiling and glacial travel techniques were taught. As were a number of other tips to avoid injury from all the pointy things and much to everyone's entertainment, glissading – sliding down snow on your backside in order to descend rapidly.

Though stunted by the weather the first two days were key in teaching all the skills needed for the remainder of the trip. Now time to put them into practice. Starting with the SE Ridge of Index – the first of a number of Chamonix classics climbed. It was on this route Cpl Rugen, along with a few others, realised alpine mountaineering wasn't quite hill walking or rock climbing as hanging off a belay at 2600m with nothing but fresh air and a few clouds below, he found himself in "stretch". A perfect choice of route to introduce the novices to the discipline.

As day 3 had been a perfect alpine rock route, day 4 gave us a classic traverse. Crochues Traverse on a clear day was a highlight for one or two, topped off by a lunch spot with views across the valley to Mont Blanc whilst Al (instructor) regaled us with stories of climbing in Bolivia, and on Mt Everest.

Towards the end of the week, after rescheduling a hut booking the team set off to Conscrits hut – a hefty 6 hour,

1550m walk in under cloud and rain. By the early hours it had cleared, ready for an alpine start. Descending back down onto the glacier as dawn broke, surrounded by the peaks and ridges of the Mont Blanc Massif really was a memorable moment.

We climbed Mont Tondou that day and the Domes de Miage the following. The altitude and technicality of the latter made it the most arduous but rewarding climb of the trip. At times the route was as narrow as your boots with only sheer rock faces dropping away to the sides. Few failed to concentrate on the task at hand.

The culmination of the expedition saw all members summit Gran Paradiso (4061m), the highest in Italy. Whilst the highest of our trip and an excellent mountain to finish on, the unique, but commercial, one-way

system at its summit detracted from the enjoyment. All agreed the quieter, more challenging routes had been brought more enjoyment and satisfaction.

The team worked well to climb around the changeable weather of the early alpine season and limited hut bookings. It was noted by all three, highly experienced instructors that the soldiers worked far harder than expected at the novice level, choosing to limit their rest days to make the most of good weather windows and complete all of the planned climbs. A testament to the endurance and professionalism of QDG soldiers, long may it continue.

All agreed the quieter, more challenging routes had been brought more enjoyment and satisfaction



Domes de Miage



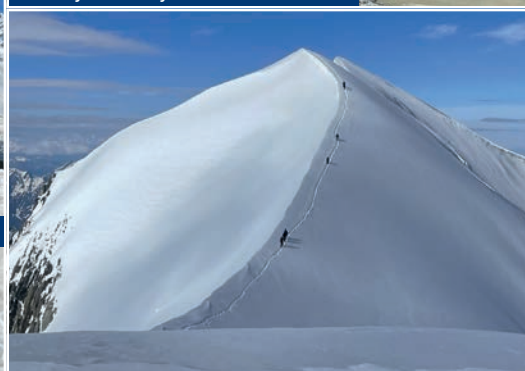
QDG massive on the massif



The Mont Blanc album



Himalayas or early season in Chamonix?



Golf

During 2024, it was a very quiet year for QDG golf team this as due to FOE & operational commitments. But we had did have the opportunity to enter a QDG team into most AGA (Army Golf Association Eastern Region) throughout this current year. On the first AGA event at Elton Furze golf club, WO2 Hughes (RQMS) refused to pay his AGA membership. This is the requirement which you need to be enter in the prizes which AGA eastern region, WO2 Hughes "said he never win anything and not wasting my money on that" this soon backfired hard on WO2 Hughes as he came first under his division on the golf competition which meant he didn't come back with any prizes, just a well done and join AGA membership next time. The QDG golf team has played a few more AGA event over the current year, which has help develop and give them the experience at playing in golf competition to the golf team and, give them time out of work to play a sport which they enjoy.

LCpl Parker, once return for OP CABRIT has continue to play and represent the ARMY golf team during the rest of the year. LCpl Parker over this last year has played at the follow events Armed champs at Staunton GC, Inter Corp at Staunton GC, Army vs Police and Inter-Services at Frimley where she



Golf is a sport

came Second place. Due to LCpl Parker dedication and comment within Army golf team, she has now been asked to be apart of the RAC golf committee moving forward.

This year was the first time since Covid-19, that the RAC Golf championships has been able to go ahead. This event goes towards (Hodgson's horse), Which we were able to enter an QDG golf team into this two-day golf competition. It was a very testing course and challenging weather condition, which doesn't surprise you for been by the coast in Bovington. On this RACs Golf Championships Capt Thomas (QM) dislocated

this thumb, whilst try to smash the golf as hard as possible thinking he is Bryson DeChambeau. Which he has now been put on remedial golf practice until the next golf event.

Unfortunately, we weren't able to get away on a golf tour this year due to a FOE and operation deployments but moving forward we have recently put in the request to get a golf simulator for QDG. This will be able to give plenty of practice in during winter months and encourage more QDG personnel to gain interest into playing golf for either AGA/ RAC events in future years.

Sgt Watson

Motorsport

The QDG motorsports teams and personnel have competed all over the country this year, representing the regiment from Corp level all the way to Tri service. Tpr Day started the season strong as the first to take home silverware for the motor cross (MX) enduro team by coming second in round one of the Army's ICXC championship. The rest of the MX team continued to develop round after round, building a good foundation to work on in 2025.

The next podiums came from LCpl Tyrrell, as co-driver whilst competing in the Armed Forces Rally Championship. LCpl Tyrrell took home third



Cpl Green

at the Jim Clark and Reivers Rally, followed by second place at the RSAC Scottish rally, where he went on to win the David Leedhams trophy, making it a good rookie season for him and the rest of the team.

Unfortunately, 2024 was the last



You can't park there! LCpl Tyrrell demonstrates his best corner technique

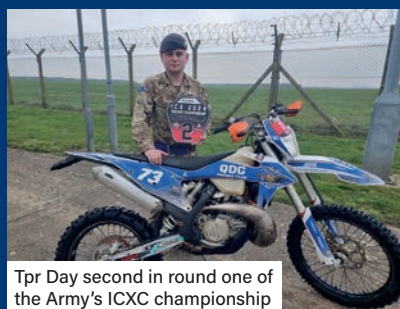
season for Tpr Day and Cpl Green. As key characters within QDG Motorsport, they will be both missed but we wish them both luck for the future with Cpl Green in his new posting and Tpr Day who is heading into the civilian world. We hope they both continue their passion for MX Enduro.

Looking forwards, we are hoping to expand our numbers in 2025, finding new talent and representing QDG in more disciplines. If you want to get involved and win more silverware for the regiment, please get in contact with either Sgt Hutchings for two-wheel sports or LCpl Tyrrell for four-wheel.

LCpl Tyrrell



Sgt Hutchings



Tpr Day second in round one of the Army's ICXC championship

Rugby

Sadly 2024 has been another year in which the regiment's considerable operational commitments has limited the opportunities for the rugby team to a cameo appearance at the Midlands 7s tournament. However, the spirit and strength of QDG rugby has been upheld in the outstanding performances of our personnel.

Tpr Roper, who had spent two years out of the game with a gruelling shoulder injury sustained in an Army U23s game, made his come back this year. He took no time at all to earn his place in the senior squad, making his debut in Pau against the French Armee de Terre. Roper went on to a starting position in the centre for the Army v Navy game at Twickenham in which he helped the Army over the line to a close 43-42 victory. Tpr Roper's outstanding performances over the



It seems Tpr Roper has a face made for Rugby and Radio



Fine dragoons in fine display

course of the season saw him rewarded with a full-time contract at Championship side Nottingham where he has been playing consistently this season.

Given the horrific nature of his shoulder injury a few years ago, requiring multiple surgeries, Tpr Roper's professional contract is a testament to his character.

More recently, Sergeants Thomas and Casey proved the rule that form is temporary but class is permanent when they represented the RAC just weeks after returning from 6 months on Op CABRIT, helping them to a whopping 76-13 victory. 2025 looks to be a more fruitful season in which we hope to send a team back to the Flanders 10's tournament this coming May.

FM



The Babcock Trophy 2024 winners with Tpr Roper QDG

Baltic Osprey

Sailing presents a unique opportunity for team-building and personal development. The Masurian Lakes in Northeast Poland is a region celebrated for its natural beauty and interconnected waterways. It provided an ideal setting for a five-day expedition, the first sailing AT to be conducted on Op Cabrit. The goal of the trip was to introduce as many soldiers to the sport as well as strengthen teamwork and boost morale among the 40 soldiers involved.

The journey began in Mikotajki, often referred to as the "Sailing Capital of Poland." The soldiers were introduced to a 34ft sailboat, a squeeze for 10 people. Initial briefings focused on the basics of sailing, safety protocols, and the importance of cooperation. As the boats set off toward Lake Śniardwy, Poland's largest lake, the soldiers quickly realised the physical and mental demands of managing sails, steering, and responding to the skipper's commands.

The second day was characterised by early challenges as the soldiers rotated through roles such as helmsman, navigator, and deckhand. Strong winds on Lake Śniardwy our ability to work cohesively under pressure. Through trial and



error, the teams learned to anticipate one another's needs, reinforcing the importance of clear communication and trust.

The expedition brought a new set of challenges to an experienced skipper, navigating narrow canals by collapsing the mast and avoiding submerged obstacles. This required precision and patience, qualities often demanded in military operations. There was plenty of opportunity to get ashore and sample the local produce with some views to rival the Mediterranean. Warm weather gave the soldiers plenty of excuse to practice their swimming improve their ability to be dragged behind the yacht and swing off a fender swing which only resulted in one cracked rib.

TC



CASR

The QDG team at this year's CASR consisted of the CO, Capt Clark, and Sgt Simms. On paper, it was the most experienced crew we had sent to the regatta in years, raising hopes of bringing home some silverware.

Capt Clark confidently assured the CO that the sun always shone on Seaview Yacht Club, advising against wet-weather gear: "A linen shirt and swim shorts will suffice." However, unlike previous years, the weather proved more challenging. Strong winds of up to 25 knots combined with spring tides made for choppier conditions in the Solent, delivering three days of thrilling but soggy sailing.

The QDG team secured two first-place finishes on the regatta's opening day, boosting their confidence to compete strongly against an experienced fleet. Their toughest competition came from a team representing Army HQ.

By the end of the event, the QDG team achieved the title of Best Regimental Team for the first time since Maj David Hoey skippered in 2019. Capt Clark was also recognized with the trophy for Best Skipper Under 27.

TC



OJAR moment



Squash

Despite the numerous commitments undertaken by 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, the regimental squash team has managed to build on the successes from previous years and has continued to excel on court.

The team's dedication came to fruition whilst competing in the annual 2024 Royal Armoured Corps (RAC) Squash Championship; not only did 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards claim their second consecutive victory in this highly contested event (gaining the maximum points to contribute to the Hodson's Horse competition), half of the team were selected to represent the RAC for the Army Inter Corps Championships and beyond. During the closing ceremony, the Team Captain Cpl Newbold was presented with the



The QDG's Adj on court at the Army Inter Corps Championships

most improved player award, mainly for his enthusiasm/diving on court, whilst Sgt Stafford claimed the coveted title of RAC Individual Champion.

Under the guidance of the RAC Sgt Maj at the Army Inter Corps Championships, Capt Cooper's, Capt Spicer's and Cpl Newbold's efforts on court resulted in the Corps team promoting to the next division. There was noted improvement of all player's standard,



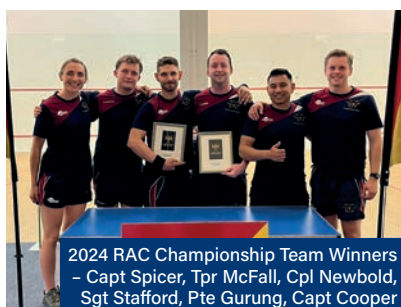
Army Squash Awards Night Capt Spicer receiving her Army Colours

after being rigorously tested during the three days of solid competition.

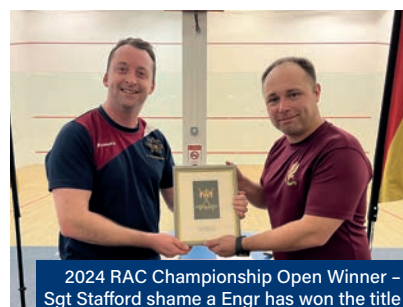
British Army Squash provides amazing opportunities for budding athletes to develop both on UK soil and overseas. Good luck to Capt Spicer, who has been selected to represent the United Kingdom Armed Forces team when touring the Miami circuit in Florida next year.



2024 RAC Championship Most Improved Player - strange way to receive an award, what's with the claw hand?



2024 RAC Championship Team Winners - Capt Spicer, Tpr McFall, Cpl Newbold, Sgt Stafford, Pte Gurung, Capt Cooper



2024 RAC Championship Open Winner - Sgt Stafford shame a Engr has won the title

Field Sports

2024 has proven to be another great year for field sports in the QDG, with officers and soldiers enjoying a variety of outdoor pursuits wherever and whenever possible within a particularly ██████ operational period. Fishing has continued to increase in popularity and it has been fantastic to see so many junior soldiers improve their shooting on regular basis, making use of the Regiment's clay traps and guns.

Milborne Wick Shoot, Dorset

In November, several officers, both serving and retired, gathered in Dorset for the much-anticipated Milborne Wick shoot, kindly organised by Jono Beatson-Hird. The day was a massive success, offering the rare opportunity for QDGs to gather and enjoy a good day's shooting in the scenic South West. By all accounts it was a shoot to remember and those who attended have already marked their calendars for next year. Notably, Capt. Ed Carter (retd.) taught Capt. Zaki Al-Khamiri how to breast and crown a pheasant, which unsurprisingly Capt Al-Khamiri took to like a natural.

The Officers' Mess Shoot

The Officers' Mess enjoyed another superb shoot on the Hoe Estate in January 2025, thanks to the great generosity of the Keith family. Improving on our bag from the previous year, the Officers' Mess definitely benefited from the extra few hours on the clays in the days leading up to the shoot. That is not to say that the Officers were greedy, as Capt. Toby Clark put it "I just didn't think it was sporting to shoot at such close range",



The Polish fields and chief of police out stalking near Bemowo Piskie – the European hat wear is an obvious distinction

having already fired both barrels... seemingly as warning shots in the direction of the pheasant, good drills Sir.

Discombobulated by the initial ride in the game keepers gun bus, the Mess took some time to warm-up to the day of shooting. Maj. Arthur Purbrick was quick to dish out the banter on the land where he had doubtlessly shot more times than every other Officer combined. Yet, it was on the second drive where he too proved his ability to miss a bird just as effectively as the remainder of the QDG RSPB Swanton Morley Division. It didn't take long however, with the sun shining, a pleasant breeze, and a quick elevenses, for the Mess to return to its natural form. With at least 20% of our shots on target, the Officers were gaining confidence by the second and the bag was slowly



inching in the right direction. In the heat of it all, and with that glorious sunshine... which by this point was overwhelmingly bright might I add... the inevitable happened. No the beaters were fine, but Lt. Thibaut Petitjean, on exchange from the French Army, had shot his first pheasant. Proudly blooded and ready





Tiddler: fish also in photo

for some more, the CO then arrived for one final drive before lunch. Presented with his side-by-side, Colonel David Landon was quick to make up for time lost in the morning. With ease he blasted his first hen-bird of the day. BAM. And the head was gone. Marksmanship is a driving principle in the QDG, and the CO perfectly demonstrated his intent to his junior Officers: one shot, one kill – for which he was quite rightly awarded the Pillow Case Trophy later that evening [Ed: OC A, Maj Cowen, was awarded the RSPB Trophy despite considerable competition – he knows why...].

A superb day enjoyed by all, a particular thanks must go to Mr James Keith for yet again allowing us to shoot in the village. Moreover, a humungous thanks to Mr John Hassel, the Game Keeper, for all his hard work in facilitating one of the most enjoyable days in the Officers' Mess calendar. Thanks also to all those that beat the day, your consistent berating



The safest place in Norfolk for a Pheasant

of us Officers, irrespective of seniority, really kept us sharp. I'm sure the Adjutant would agree.

GJMW

Rendlesham Estate Shoot, Suffolk

In 2024 the QDG has once again been hugely privileged to shoot on the Rendlesham estate in Suffolk, hosted by Andrew Sheepshanks. Several serving officers have enjoyed numerous days throughout the season on Andrew's estate with more QDGs heading back to Rendlesham in early 2025. Always a day of great shooting and fantastic company, it is a pleasure to maintain the QDG's longstanding relationship with the Sheepshanks family.

Wednesday Afternoon Clays

SSgt Nick Wright has continued to provide many opportunities for those interested in shooting. His Wednesday afternoon clay sessions offer QDGs the

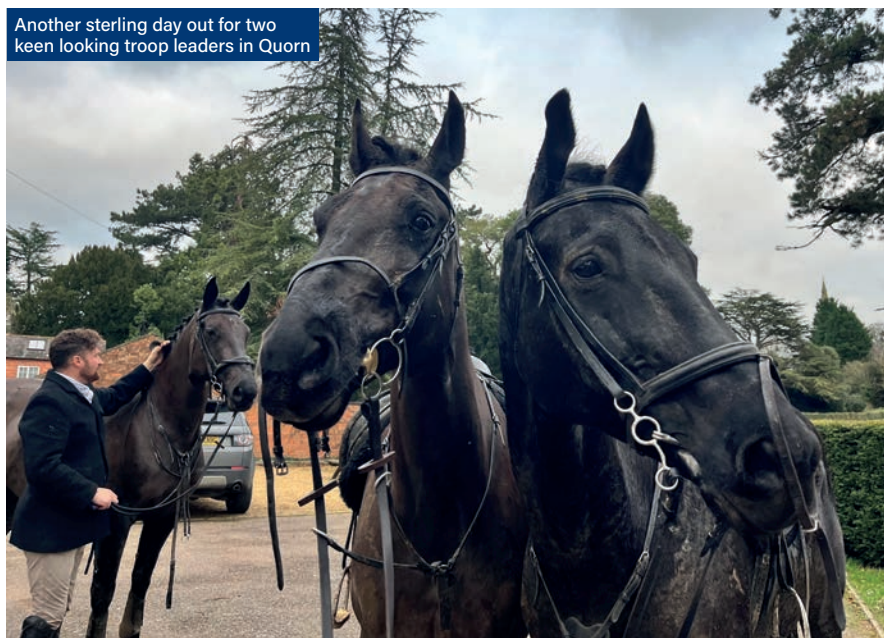
time to fine-tune their already supreme marksmanship skills. SSgt Wright himself continues to enjoy the sporting pursuits that Norfolk and the wider military circuit has to offer, including attending the GOC 3UKXX's shoot in November with Major Cowen.

Fishing

Fishing has continued to be a favourite Wednesday afternoon activity for both officers and soldiers. The tranquil lakes at Swanton Morley and Billingford have provided the perfect setting for fly and coarse fishing respectively, and competition has been as fierce as ever. Tprs Baker and Gilkerson of A Squadron have continued their healthy rivalry, with Tpr Baker emerging as the dominant force in fly-fishing; though Tpr Gilkerson remains the perch-catching champion on the Wensum. We fully encourage such noble pursuits!

The Officers have continued to seek out opportunities to perfect their fly cast wherever possible. Capt. Ed Dillon, or more accurately Capt. Dillon's fiancée Sophie, has done very well to represent the QDG on the Test throughout the season. In the summer months, attendance to the Swanton Morley lakes remained a steadfast component of the Officers' Mess afternoon routine, offering ample opportunity to relax after long(ish) days of work.

Another sterling day out for two keen looking troop leaders in Quorn





Andrew Campbell, Charlie Byrd, Justin Stenhouse, David Warner, Johnny O'Brien, Paddy Bond, David Sheehan, Johnnie Brooke, Jonno Beaston-Hird, Guy Briselden, John Whelan, Chris Sprake

In all, field sports remain a crucial part of routine life in the QDG. Not only continuing in the footsteps of many that have gone before us and enjoying the outdoor pursuits often associated with military life; the skills required to shoot a pheasant in a fast wind has undoubtedly improved our ability to take-out an FPV drone.

Hunting

Maj AJ Purbrick, OC B Sqn, continued to lead the field hunting with the Cottesmore and Quorn. A quiet year due to operational deployments, but nonetheless fun. Enjoyably this year a fun half hour chase near Ingarsby saw one of the officers fall off, and, catching up the rest of the field display some textbook concussion symptoms by introducing himself to the entire field one by one, including his colleagues. Always a delight, never a chore, truly the trail-hunting sport around Norfolk and Midlands only continues to refine our Recce skills.

Stalking

Whilst C Sqn continue their stalk for an elusive wolf, B Sqn were able to also take some stalking in the Polish forest. Moose are seldom taken, but Red often. Always come at the distinctly un-British stalking risk that leaving your quarry once culled for more than 15 minutes will see it eaten by a wolf. LCpl Jack Nicholls continues

as the Deer Defence Management representative for Swanton Morley and has had a very good year with 4 good Red Stags taken as part of a wider Defence plan to manage our Deer population to ensure the survival and thriving of the most worthwhile. As always, such sport gives our core recce skills further depth and a new edge and helps us become even better at our job whilst taking the opportunity to understand our natural environment as well.

A brief insight on the link between Andrew Sheepshanks, friend of the The Regiment, and the QDG.

Lieutenant Richard Hassell Sheepshanks Born 19 Feb. 1885, son of the Rev. T. Sheepshanks, M.A., and Mrs. Sheepshanks, daughter of Andrew Gleave, W.S., of Edinburgh. He was educated at Harrow, and Trinity College, Cambridge, becoming Second Lieutenant ROI-1 1st Devon Yeomanry, ID 1904. He joined the 12th Cavalry Indian Army, 19 Jan. 1907, as Lieutenant: He saw active service in the European War in Mesopotamia near Awaz. He was mentioned in Despatches 25 June, 1915.

The following is the record of his service in General Sir A. Barrett's Mention:

"Lieutenant. R. H. Sheepshanks, 12th Cavalry, attached 33rd Cavalry, was conspicuous for his gallantry and skillful handling of a small body of cavalry 3



The rule of no use of white fleet cross country did not apply to the MTO

March. Re-forming his troop, he repeatedly charged the foremost lines of the enemy and inflicted heavy losses on them."

The late Richard H. Sheepshanks. Cavalry Brigade Commander wrote: "There was no one with that force, cavalry or infantry, who did better. His skillful leading, energy and dash were talked of by everyone." Another wrote: "Sheepshanks has been doing wonders on the other side of the Tigris with 22 men of the 33rd Cavalry; His last effort was when the Arab Horse got into the guns. He charged with eleven men, buckled his sword in an Arab, took a heavy toss, picked himself up although much hurt, and killed fourteen men with his rifle and saved a wounded gunner. Thirty-three men of a British regiment stood, and all the guns were saved, except one. The tales of Sheepshanks' prowess are like fairy-tales, only true."

He was created a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order [London Gazette, 29 Oct. 1915]: "Richard Hasell Sheepshanks, Lieut., 12th Cavalry, L.A. For distinguished service in the field." He was promoted Captain and was appointed A.D.C. to the Viceroy of India in 1916, whose third daughter, the Hon. Bridget Thesiger, he married, 25 June 1919. Capt. Sheepshanks was subsequently invaded home suffering from severe attacks of fever and neuralgia, the result of the Mesopotamian wars.



No the photo is not wonky, that's the guns

Bovington Dragoons

Bovington continues to be the beating heart and centre of gravity for the Royal Armoured Corps (RAC). While it may appear unchanged on the surface, the creation and implementation of the Land Training System (LTS) by DLW, coupled with the imminent introduction of three new platforms AJAX, Challenger 3, and Boxer have necessitated significant changes to our organisational structures and training delivery methods.

Within Bovington the Regiment has numerous talented representatives positioned in key roles within the garrison. Maj Robert Mansel serves as SO2 Armoured Trials Unit previously ATDU, accompanied by LCpl Young. The Gunnery School is now led by Maj Jason "Bongo" Davies, with Capt Samuel Upward as his 2IC and SSgt Aaron Morgan leading the AV Wheeled group in Lulworth delivering gunnery excellence to Field Army.

Sgt Rowlands is a Schools Instructor

(SI) within the Combat CIS School, delivering training to both Infantry and RAC students as part of the Battle Group Advanced Signaller Course. Sgt Retalack is now employed as a Tp Sgt within RACTR, administering and training ITTs, having previously been an SI at the Combat Wing. Cpl Kenny also works within RACTR in the JCC Wing.

The RAC Corp Sgt Maj role will now see its first-ever QDG take over, with the selection of WO1 Martyn Ruddy, who is moving on from his current role as RSM QDG. He will join WO1 Tom Hamilton as one of two QDG WO1s in Bovington.

In the coming months, we will start receiving Infantry Initial Trade Training (ITT) soldiers earmarked for Armoured Infantry Units. Where they will now receive more formalised centralised driver training and some CIS training whereas previously, they would only receive distributed training.

Another major change is Troop leaders' courses. They have seen a significant shake-up, with their tactics phase being moved to OP CYCLONE events. This has dramatically reduced the training pipeline in Bovington by around 20%, but it brings with it other frustrations. Such as Troop leaders not being qualified until they complete a OP CYCLONE event.

While the tempo at Bovington can't be compared with the hyper pace of Regimental duty. In recent years Bovington has seen a significant increase in activity. There is still plenty of fun to be had through Adventure Training (AT) and opportunity career courses, but Bovington is steadily becoming more streamlined and efficient. Despite this it still remains an incredible opportunity for soldiers, Dorset during the summer is attractive to both those with families and singles alike.

WO1 Hamilton

Grantham Army Training Regiment – the joys of Platoon Command

Between February 2024 – February 2025, the QDG filled a Platoon Commander position within Salamanca Coy at the Army Training Regiment, Grantham. Lt Mower took the first 6 months, with Lt Gamman taking over the final 6.

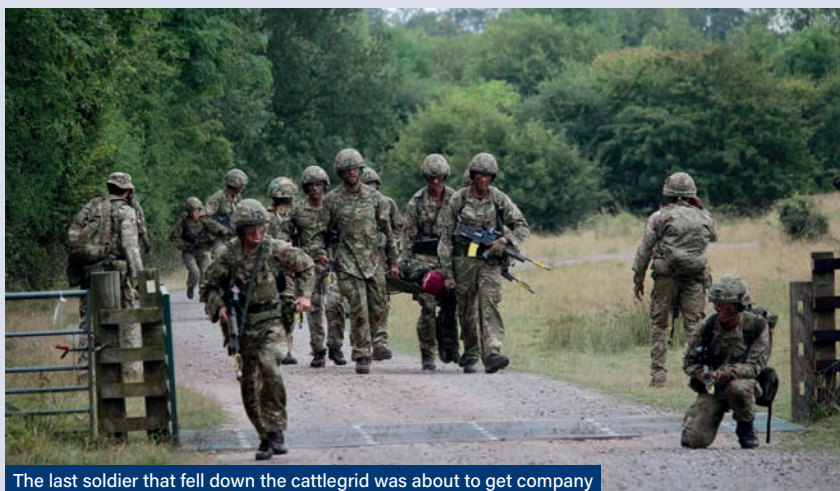
During this time, they ran 11 Battlecamps, which saw 440 Reservists successfully through their Phase 1 training, ready to progress onto their Phase 2. The Battlecamps lasted a duration of 2 weeks and trained individuals from all capbadges.

Due to the limited amount of time available, and volume of training that had to be completed, the recruits were put through their paces and tempo was high.

The training was varied and challenging, especially though the winter months, involving a comprehensive range package, culminating in an ACMT, and a 5-day dismounted exercise, introducing them to the wonders of operating as soldiers in the field.

This was a varied and enjoyable insight into what it is like in a training establishment, offering a valuable insight into the reserve space.

LG



The last soldier that fell down the cattlegrid was about to get company



Are we getting off or getting on?

Centre for Army Leadership

Podcast recordings, a visit to the US Embassy, Adventure Training, The Premier League, darts at the Lakeside and countless presentations-it's fair to say this probably wasn't the best year to bow out of the British Army. The year kicked off with the Centre for Army Leadership (CAL) being invited to present at the Global Followership Conference at Strathclyde University. Our task was to deliver a 30-minute keynote to over 150 academics from across the globe. I took a 10-minute slot, and we divided the remaining time among the team.

Speaking about the relationship between the Troop Leader and Troop Corporal-and bringing that leader-follower dynamic to life (in a recce context) was a great experience. My main takeaway from the whole process was simple: we are followers all the time, and leaders only some of the time. While the relationship is symbiotic, the key difference is the shared outcome that both parties work tirelessly together to achieve. I've seen countless examples of this playout throughout my career, which is why I jumped at the chance to spend a week in Edinburgh back in January, even if it meant braving blizzard-like conditions for a bit of respite, and eating a deep-fried pizza, it was worth it.

As the year progressed, we reached out to Warren Gatland, who thankfully agreed to record a podcast for our main channel. Within two months, the CAL team hit the road, delivering briefs to various stakeholders. We started with the Welsh Guards, followed by a trip to Brecon, then and wrapped things up with a recording session with Warren Gatland at the Welsh Rugby Union headquarters, followed by a trek up Pen-Y-Fan and a



Chatham House – Annual Conference

visit to Cardiff Castle. Shortly after that whirlwind road trip, my SO2 moved on, and my SO1 was posted. While it wasn't an ideal situation, the arrival of a new WO2 helped us push forward with preparations for the CAL conference. Planning for the conference began in April, and without going into too much detail, I'll just say that as a team, we delivered a world-class event. It catered to a wide audience, showcased intent-based leadership, and ensured that no stone was left unturned.

Of course, it wasn't all work. We balanced things out with a solid dose of "play hard." Sports afternoons may have been rare, but I did manage to sneak away on a ski trip to Val Thorens. Alongside that, I visited the US Embassy,



No. 10



AFC Richmond, Number 10, attended the Premier League Manager of the Year awards and conference in London, and conducted outreach with several companies, including HSBC, DHL, and the Welsh FA, to name a few. Life at ERE definitely has its perks!

Looking back, my final highlight from two years at CAL must be returning to QDG to deliver my final leadership brief in November. It was a genuine privilege to be welcomed back, and I've watched in admiration at everything you've achieved over the past two years. I wish you all the very best for the future and hope 2025 is a fantastic year for everyone. All the best, and Diolch yn fawr.

DC



Pen Y Fan



Premier League Managers Association



Premier League Awards



Chanty only plays 4-4-2

MOD Main Building – Euro Atlantic Security Directorate

After a ■■■ two years as Operations Officer, battling off daily trawls for our talented cohort of officers and NCOs, I finally received the green light to trawl myself to the dizzying heights of the fourth floor in the Ministry of Defence. Blue eyed and bushy tailed, I zipped off to Whitehall where I thought an 8 year stint at Regimental Duty had prepared me well for a 6 month tour in the Euro Atlantic Security Directorate... With Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine well over two years in, I joined a department that was at the height of operational tempo.

Daily meetings with the great and the good from the MOD, Cabinet Office, FCDO, as well as engaging with

our Defence Attaches and international partners, taught me an incredible lesson in humility and the value of Defence Engagement. I witnessed first hand the incredible work that policy advisors and military officers were doing in the building as the UK remained steadfast in its support to Ukraine.

I was also fortunate enough to get a huge amount of travel around the world, including Japan, RoK, Sweden, Brazil, Nigeria, Malaysia and Kazakhstan, briefing our partners and allies on what Ukraine is facing. They are in a fight for survival, something that the United Kingdom has not had to do since the second world war. The exis-

tential crisis faced by them should not be underestimated, and they continue fight on in the face of incredible odds.

It is not all doom and gloom however, the MOD has some of the most talented, intelligent, and capable civil servants, military officers, and government officials who all uphold the values we in NATO we all stand for. The importance of human life, the sheer bravery of the Ukrainian people and the right that every country has to self-determination in the wake of Russian aggression is abundantly clear now more than ever.

JK

Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

The high numbers of Queen's Dragoon Guards represented on the staff at Sandhurst continues, with Maj David Hoey as a company commander, Capt Bertie Lewis as a platoon instructor and SSgt Tom Warner as a platoon assistant instructor. There are also a number of sergeants on forthcoming instructor cadres too so this good level of presence should persist.

The Academy is going through one of its periodic changes, this one named Project Adair. One of the focuses is to make life more sustainable for the instructors, so it deheats the programme slightly with more private study done online (some officer cadets are surprised to find this is tracked and chased up if not done!) and the AT week brought forward into the middle of term. Another part of the intent is to introduce more combined

arms and digital elements to the syllabus to acknowledge the ever-increasing pace of battlefield developments and give young officers a grounding from which to develop themselves once commissioned.

Having said that, much of the course will remain familiar to those who have undergone or instructed on it, with log races round Barossa, long afternoons in Faraday Hall and platoon attack sets and reps up and down Sennybridge, not to mention weird and wonderful plans presented with absolute confidence on 'PRACTAC'. The new Commandant Maj Gen Nick Cowley is a cavalryman, which can only be a good thing – albeit he is also taking the Soldier Academy under command so Sandhurst itself is back under a brigadier again. There are plenty of RAC instructors too which is excellent.

Sport took a bit of a hiatus but is widely acknowledged as needing to be re-introduced so is steadily coming back.

Appetite among the officer cadets for a career in the light cavalry remains highly popular, with interest often at 30 or even 40:1 for spaces. Such competition means we have the luxury of selection in the Choice of Arm process, with hopefully good effects felt at Regimental Duty as a result.

Life here can be ■■■ during term time but has lots of protected downtime to compensate, and as a job is hugely enjoyable and incredibly rewarding. We would all encourage officers and NCOs to think about applying here and would be happy to talk to anyone interested.

BL



The good, the bad, and the ugly

CAMS Light Cavalry (Crew Commanders)

2024 down at the Combined Arms Manoeuvre School (CAMS) has been a fun and interesting yet challenging year. The Light Cavalry Crew Commanders Course has internally focussed on modernising in course content, equipment, training and delivery whilst externally focussed on the implementation of the new Land Training System and delivery of TRADEWIND, CYCLONE and STORM.

Unfortunately the QDG were unsuccessful in getting a SNCO down to CAMS into an instructor role on the course this year, but CAMS certainly looks forward to

2025 and having another Dragoon flying the Hapsburg down at the school of excellence. CAMS was however graced with the presence of Sgt Ethan Jones for one of the course deliveries as the Sergeant Instructor who was an absolute pleasure to have teaching on the course and whom was very highly regarded by fellow staff and students alike during his remarkable tenure at CAMS.

The training team at CAMS has successfully delivered multiple Troop Leader and NCO Commander courses along side various Tactical Navigation Cadres down in SPTA with QDG soldiers

and officers leading the way and holding the standard high as usual. Notably Lt Fearn, Lt Johnston and Cpl Williams being awarded top student awards throughout the year.

2025 looks to be a promising year at CAMS with the Light Cavalry Courses finally entering their final stages of Land Training System implementation and hopeful integration directly with the QDG on CYCLONE level events. All the best to up at RBSM and best of luck to all future QDG Crew Commanders!

SM



RMAS: Leading the way in military excellence

In 2024, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst continues to stand as a beacon of excellence in military training, shaping the future leaders of the British Army. Known for its rigorous standards, exceptional leadership development, and commitment to excellence, Sandhurst remains at the forefront of preparing young Officers for the challenges of modern warfare.

The representation of the QDG at RMAS has grown in strength and numbers in 2024. Sergeant Major Warner, Captain Lewis, and Major Hoey have been integral members of the Academy's permanent staff, helping to uphold the high standards for which the QDG is renowned. Major Hoey commissioned Blenheim Company in December 2024 as the OC and has now taken on a new Company in Junior Term. Captain Lewis commissioned a Platoon in August 2024 and went on to be a Platoon Commander in Intermediate Term. Sgt Major Warner, now on his fifth term in the Academy, has done Junior Term back-to-back while also competing in the Sandhurst pace

sticking competition. Particularly noteworthy are the achievements of Sergeant Major Warner and Captain Lewis, both of whom were selected to instruct on the prestigious Sandhurst Instructor Aptitude Course (SIAC). They will form part of the team that will select the next intake of SNCO instructors at RMAS.

Officer recruitment has also been highly successful in 2024, with the Regiment attracting high-quality and motivated individuals. These Junior Officers come ready to meet the challenges of Troop Command and Regimental Duty, bringing a diverse range of skills and experiences that will enrich the Regiment. The success of this recruitment drive highlights the strong appeal of a career in the QDG, where the promise of exciting deployments, true mission command and an ethos of excellence draws the most talented candidates.

Sandhurst has also embraced an exciting shift towards a focus on combined arms manoeuvre. This approach is aimed at preparing cadets for the complexity and reality of modern combat, based off

real time lessons from Ukraine where careful coordination between different units and assets is essential. In addition to this, Sandhurst has integrated drones and technology into its training program. These innovations offer cadets hands-on experience with cutting-edge systems that are reshaping warfare. The introduction of these tools aligns with the army's broader push towards technological superiority, equipping future officers with the skills to operate and command in a tech-driven battlefield.

Sandhurst remains a place where job satisfaction and professional challenges converge. It offers a unique opportunity for those seeking to make a difference, teach and mentor motivated individuals, and have a lasting impact on the next generation of Officers. Through its combination of proud tradition and forward-looking training, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst stands not just as a training establishment, but as a leadership and military training role model to Armed Forces around the world.

DH

Ministry of Defence

Throughout the year, the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall, London has welcomed a number of QDG personnel, with several stationed at desks within the vast and confusing complex, while others visit for various purposes.

Among the regular attendees at the MOD are notable figures such as the former QDG Commanding Officer, Brigadier Justin Stenhouse, overseeing a finance team, and (Acting Lt Cols) Majors Ruggles-Brise and Williams contributing to the Operations and Commitments division. Major Kite briefly joined the team supporting and coordinating efforts in Ukraine, while Major Owen, on posting, works in the Army Strategic Centre in a team offering strategic advice to Army seniors on our European Allies and Partners. All will have a plethora of stories of interest, bureaucracy, and confusion but I am assured most will have enjoyed their time in the building.

Headlines from the Ministry of Defence this year encompass our ongoing support for Ukraine, the positioning of forces to assist in the event of a crisis in the Middle East, continued

bolstering of our commitment to NATO, government transitions, and preparations for the upcoming Strategic Defence Review. At the time of writing, we await announcements regarding the Department and the future of the Armed Forces. The papers will do a much better job than me at summarising the decisions and issues we face, but safe to say it results in lots of briefings, analysis, and excessive PowerPoint presentations at staff level.

Around the time of the Cavalry Memorial Parade, members from across the Regiment were hosted in the Cabinet Office by former QDG Officers – Major (Retd) Harry Pilcher and Capt (Retd) Christopher Beaver. Alongside the MOD-based officers, insights into the inner workings of Whitehall, procedural intricacies, and key issues were shared to enhance the Regiment-wide understanding. This event, now a recurring fixture in the annual calendar, coincides with the cherished Fish and Chip Fridays tradition at the MOD, followed by convivial evening gathering over a few drinks.....

At intervals throughout the year, MOD based QDG Officers have returned to Robertson Barracks in Norfolk, and other locations to provide comprehensive briefings on their respective portfolios and decision-making processes. These sessions, covering updates on the Ukraine situation and the Polish policy overview, aim to illustrate how ministerial decisions and senior policy advice cascade through the various command levels, ultimately leading to personnel deployed on operational missions. Given this year's dual deployments to Poland, these sessions sought to offer valuable context to officers and soldiers preparing for deployment.

Looking ahead, the coming year promises a continuation of such engagements and activities. Should you find yourself in the vicinity, we extend a warm invitation to drop by for a visit, where we will strive to accommodate you, navigate the nuances of the building and maybe even treat you to a coffee!

BW

Defence Digital – a Defence Digital bore

The past 18 months in Defence Digital's Tactical Systems team have been nothing short of fascinating. Tasked with delivering tactical communications to the British Army, the challenges of Project MORPHEUS and Evolve to Open (EvO) are well known to many [Ed: no they're not!]. Navigating these complexities has been an eye-opening introduction to the 'Capability & Acquisition' career stream.

Based at MOD Abbey Wood, with outstations in South Wales, Corsham, and Blandford, the 400-strong team is predominantly composed of contractors and civil servants, with military personnel making up just 7% of the workforce. Adjusting to this dynamic takes time, but the deep expertise these civil servants bring is invaluable—some have been developing tactical communications since the early days of Clansman!

Sometimes viewed as a back-office function within the MOD, delivering new equipment to the Field Army is critical to maintaining and enhancing operational capability. The process can be slow and bureaucratic, but the dedication of civil servants and industry experts ensures soldiers have reliable and secure means to communicate vital intelligence back to decision-makers.

Riding the Severn Bore

An added perk of being in Bristol is access to the River Severn and its famous tidal bore. First surfed by Colonel 'Mad Jack' Churchill in 1955, the bore is a bucket-list challenge for many cold-water surfers, offering the chance to ride continuously for many kilometres. However, it's not for the faint-hearted—strong currents, underwater hazards, and a surging wave make it a highly dangerous undertaking.

Keen for the challenge, I recruited Maj Jack Pullinger, a characteristically sporty Light Dragoon. With the blessing of two very understanding 1*s, we set out on a chilly March morning to surf the first 5-star bore in two years. After scouting access and exit points the week prior, we launched from Epney—conveniently home to a well-placed pub where we could wait for the wave. With updates coming in from friends further down-river, anticipation built among the 20 or



Ross McKellar – and the brains of the operation

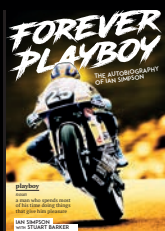
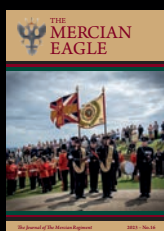
so surfers gathered. Then, we heard it—a distant rumble that grew into a roaring crescendo as the bore surged around the bend.

Larger than expected, it spanned the entire width of the river, a rare sight. Timing was everything—miss the wave, and you'd be left in the churning white-water behind it. Paddling hard, Jack and I popped up early, claiming a clean

section of the wave. We rode for nearly a kilometre before it dissipated as the river widened. Ecstatic, we scrambled up the muddy bank and rejoined our fellow surfers for a well-earned celebratory pint. Now initiated into the Bore Riders Club, we have plans to tackle a few 4-star waves before moving on to our next postings.

RM

This is what we do...



and who we are...



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Ross McKellar

The Royal Yeomanry

The Royal Yeomanry's year has been characterised by the ever-increasing set of demands, opportunities and pace of work, which has been a key feature of recent years within the Army Reserve. 2024 has seen the Regiment continuing at pace on the 'RY Road to War' cycle. This consisted of MCC and DCC training, both of which are crucial to maintaining the license to operate for all six Sabre Squadrons. In addition, the RY band remains the busiest sub-unit within the Regiment. Often performing abroad, as well as providing routine support to LONDIST.

The Regimental focus for the start of the year was Ex TEBEGA TESTER. The exercise was held on Longmoor Training

Area with an established BGHQ (light) and EXCON. Soon after conducting battle-prep, troops of Yeoman deployed on a 48hr patrols lane. Akin to Ex MULLENS CUP, the troops would be tested in both mounted and dismounted skills at various points on the patrol. This ranged from CIS to more deliberate operations like the raid. However, no patrol competition is complete without a March and Shoot. So, there was one. A 2.5Km march with burdens, culminating in the tactical application of fire at 100m. Troops were then afforded a hot brew, but not before picking up the brass!

After the successful pilot of the revamped Light Cavalry Tactics Course in 2023, The Royal Yeomanry were



Troops stop short during Ex TEBEGA TESTER

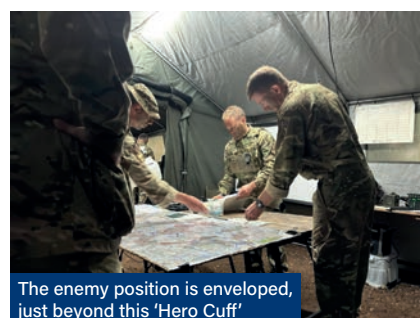
determined to maintain the momentum into 2024 and deliver another MCC based tactics course to the Light Cav Res community. The RY training team, led by QDGs own WO2 Beal, deployed to Salisbury Plain with 10 students from RY, QDG, SNIY and QOY to conduct the AA MCC tactics course on Jackal and GS Land Rover. The summative phase of



The Cambrian Patrol team getting to grips with "What 3 Words".



A junior commander 'jockeying' into cover on the Light Cavalry Tactics Course



The enemy position is enveloped, just beyond this 'Hero Cuff'



Green Snake



CO HOTO

the arduous course ended with a 5-day FTX. Despite the logistical challenges of its delivery, the course demonstrated the strength and bond within the Light Cav Res and regular communities. These bonds are conducive to force generating tactically qualified vehicle commander capability to the Field Army on operations in 2025 and beyond. This was the first deployment in command for newly appointed Lt Col Mathew Bonner who joins us from the RTR.

The last quarter of 2024 saw the



"Disregard everything outside of the logs"

Regiment in its entirety deploy to Stanley Barracks in Bovington to complete the Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE). Utilising the resources and real estate of CMC, the Regiment conducted a career courses concentration. There was also an M-Qual and PNCO Cadre running concurrently. In addition, this was the first time the 2024 CAMBRIAN PATROL team had the ability to train together for a protracted period. The team went on to compete in the 'reconnaissance soldiers' pilgrimage' and were awarded silver

medals by Comd 160X: No mean feat! In October, twelve RY soldiers were mobilised for OP CABRIT(P) and deployed alongside their regular counterparts in C SQN QDG.

On reflection, 2024 has reaffirmed the importance of the Regiment's vital ground: Its people. 2025 will find us on a solid footing to meet the challenges that will no doubt be leveled at us throughout the year.

RD

Leathersellers' year in review

This year we have started to see the benefits of a root and branch review that was set in hand some seven years ago, when we moved into our seventh Hall. This process culminated in a presentation of the Leathersellers' Strategy at the biennial Common Hall in January 2024, an event at which all members of the Company are invited to learn more about, and engage with, our work.

Simply put, we aim to manage and grow our assets in the widest sense, including those that are cultural, historical and relational, as we build on the benefits of both new and long-term partnerships, and financial assets, with an ambition to maximise our grant funding capacity by targeting areas where we can make a measurable and lasting impact.

Our strategy aims to increase charitable giving across the Leathersellers' Company and Foundation, sustainably, year on year. Next year, using surplus funds generated by

the Company, we aim to give away around £4m compared to £3.5m this year, across our grant giving areas of charity, education and leather.

Use of the Hall, our network and other assets to further our Added Value focus has continued to flourish, enabling our schools and Foundation partners and individual grantees to raise more funds, learn from one another, train staff and revise for exams. These contacts also enrich our understanding and experience, enabling us to improve our work.

Membership engagement has continued to enhance this further from the many formal governance roles of committees and across our partner organisations, through to the mentoring programme and less formal or one-off opportunities such as careers events and welcoming grantees to the Hall.

We have also continued to foster and expand our alumni network, aiming to engage with all those we



have funded over time, providing a pathway to bring diverse talent and experience into the Company.

One of our distinguished alumni and members, Liveryman Alderman Gregory Jones KC, has now become the 18th Leatherseller Sheriff of the City of London having taken office in September 2024. We all look forward to supporting Greg during his year of office.

Our new strategic focus alongside the shared endeavour of our members, staff, partners and wider community, will ensure we can continue to fulfil our historic purpose as a platform for opportunity.



IV(AC) Sqn

IV (AC) Sqn is based at RAF Valley on Anglesey and currently operates the Hawk T2. The Sqn's role is to 'Train World Class Fighter Pilots' for RAF and RN. There are currently 9 Qualified Flying Instructors and we typically have 6 trainees at any one time. The Tactics and Weapons course taught by IV Sqn takes about 4 months and includes all aspects of frontline operations from Beyond Visual Range Air to Air Combat to Air to Surface roles such as Close Air Support. On successful completion of the course graduates progress to fly either the Typhoon FGR4 or the F-35 Lightning.

Aside from the Sqn's primary role of training ab-initio pilots, this year we have also supported frontline training. A first for the Sqn was fighting against the F-35 Lightning for Dissimilar Air Combat training and we also supported qualification and currency Close Air Support training of Forward Air Controllers.

The Sqn is pivotal to the innovation for future flying training and are currently involved with projects in augmented reality and improved VR.

RAF Valley, nestled between Rhosneigr and Trearddur Bay with the Snowdonia Mountain Range a few miles east, offers many distractions throughout the year with many of the Sqn's Instructors to be found wing foiling or windsurfing – it is a rush to get the sorties flown and on the water when the conditions are good.



Celebrating Success: a year in review for the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment – 2024

As 2024 draws to a close, the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment reflects on a remarkable year of achievements, leadership transitions, and community service. With a blend of operational success, athletic victories, and significant contributions to national efforts, the regiment continues to strengthen its legacy.

In a year filled with pride and honour, the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment had the privilege of participating in the 75th Independence Parade, an event that marked a significant milestone in the nation's history. The parade, which was attended by dignitaries and citizens alike, gave the soldiers an opportunity to showcase their discipline, pride, and the enduring spirit of the armed forces.

The regiment's sporting prowess was on full display when they clinched the title in the Inter-Unit Rugby Tournament 2024. This victory not only highlighted the athletic ability of the regiment's personnel but also served as a symbol of their teamwork, determination, and competitive spirit.

In addition to their rugby success, the regiment also proved their versatility and competitive edge in badminton. The 1st Reconnaissance Regiment triumphed in the Inter-Unit Badminton Tournament 2024, further showcasing the diversity of talents within the unit. The victory in this tournament added another layer to the regiment's legacy of excellence in both physical fitness and skill-based competitions.

Following their badminton triumph, the regiment held a poignant "Legacy of Honour" event, a gala tribute to past Commanding Officers who have shaped the regiment's history and success. This occasion allowed the regiment to reflect on the invaluable contributions of its former leaders while reinforcing the enduring values that have defined the regiment through the years. The event served as a reminder of the sacrifices made by those who paved the way for the regiment's present and future, as well as the continued dedication to upholding their legacy.

The regiment hosted a groundbreaking



75th Independence Parade

symposium titled "Future Forge", focusing on the important topic of "Social Media Misuse and the Dignity of the Army". The event aimed to raise awareness about the challenges posed by social media in the modern military context. Through engaging discussions, the symposium emphasized the need to maintain the dignity and integrity of the armed forces in the digital age, encouraging soldiers to be mindful of their actions both on and off duty. The event was a testament to the regiment's forward-thinking approach to modern military challenges.

In times of crisis, the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment once again answered the call to serve the nation. During the devastating floods that affected the western province in 2024, the regiment provided invaluable assistance in flood relief operations. Their efforts included coordinating logistics, providing manpower for evacuation, and distributing essential supplies to affected communities. The regiment's swift response highlighted their commitment to the people of the nation, reinforcing their role as both defenders and protectors of the public.

Drill competitions are a core aspect of military training, and in 2024, the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment emerged

as the champions of the Inter-Unit Drill Competition. The victory demonstrated the regiment's discipline, precision, and ability to execute complex manoeuvres with the highest level of professionalism.

A significant leadership change took place within the regiment as Maj MAD Bandaranayake psc assumed duties as the 39th Commanding Officer of the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment. His appointment marks a new chapter in the regiment's history, as Maj Bandaranayake brings with him a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to the regiment's continued success. Under his leadership, the regiment is set to continue its tradition of excellence and service to the nation.

The year 2024 also saw the continued pride and strength derived from the affiliation with 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. This enduring bond between the regiments continues to inspire and elevate the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment, fostering a sense of shared purpose, camaraderie, and pride. The 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards have played an instrumental role in the regiment's initiation, and the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment looks forward to maintaining and strengthening this relationship in the years ahead.



Assuming Duties by CO



Badminton Champions



Disaster Relief Ops

1 Special Service Battalion

– Unity and Fire

On 1 May 2023, 1 SSB, celebrated its 90th year of existence.

1 SSB is not only a training (internal) Regiment, but mainly responsible to deploy inside the borders of the Republic of South Africa and at the various borders and border posts between RSA and his neighbouring countries, like Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Transkei.

The unit had 2 full companies and a tactical HQ deployed at Musina from March 2024 until September 2024. It was a very successful deployment in terms of all the contraband and stolen vehicles and weapons and ammunition confiscated.

At the end of April to 6 May 2024, 1 SSB were part of the larger military exhibition at the BloemShow (annual show in Bloemfontein, Free State). This show is the largest agricultural and cattle show and exhibition in South Africa. Large numbers of civilian members visited the 1 SSB exhibition and were very impressed with the standard of our Prime Mission Equipment as well as the professionalism and expertise of the Communicators.

In South Africa, on the 18th of July, it is a day dedicated to former State President Nelson Mandela, and the custom is to spend 67 minutes on charity or community duty. Members of 1 SSB participated in cleaning parts of the central business district (CBD) of Bloemfontein, by means of putting on coveralls, protective gear and gloves and picking up litter and filling refuse bags and place them on central pick-up points for the Municipal trucks to load and dispose of it.

For the 50th year of existence, the

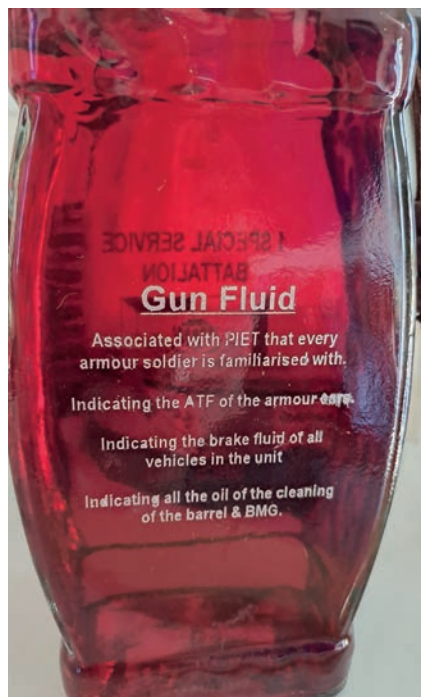


command cadre launched various projects in 1983 to celebrate and commemorate this milestone in the units' history. One of the projects were using spend cartridges of the 7,62mm Browning machine guns and melt and mould it into ten ashtrays. As time went by, these ashtrays "disappeared" from the units Bar and the last ashtray went "missing" in 1996. A project was launched by Major Martin van Wyk (Unit Second in Command) and Captain Johann Prinsloo (Communication Officer) to revive this tradition. Spend cartridges of the Eland 90mm Armoured Car and the

76mm Rooikat Armoured car was send to a nearby foundry, which melted these cartridges and moulded 10 ashtrays from the original mould!!

1 Special Service Battalion is the oldest full time force in the South African National Defence Force. This proud unit is commanded by Lieutenant Colonel David Madolo and Master Warrant Officer Andy Mafata. The members of 1 SSB is very proud of their unit, their heritage, their customs and traditions and the black beret and badhe with the spray of 3 King Proteas.

JP



Panzergrenadierbataillon 35

– Lead, Follow, Fight

At home just 35 kilometers south of Vienna, the 35th Mechanized Infantry Battalion ("Panzergrenadierbataillon 35") was honored to receive a high ranking delegation of the distinguished 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards with whom the common history is stretching back more than 100 years when the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Franz Josef II. has been made colonel-in-chief in 1896.

Nowadays both the 35th Mechanized Infantry Battalion, which forms an integral part of the Austrian Armed Forces only Armoured Brigade, and the Regiment specializing in mounted reconnaissance have more in common then one might expect.

Being demonstrated the battalions main weapon system, the IFV ("Schützenpanzer") ULAN, with its long ranging, precise and fully stabilized 30mm autocannon that is capable of instantly switching between armor-piercing sabot and multi-purpose rounds, solid armor protection and excellent mobility by experienced troopers, the officers and NCOs of the delegation were able to get a good picture of the battalions capabilities and it's equipments quality. The Austrian "Grenadiers" also showed their proven small arms and squad-level heavy weapons that are part of every infantry squad that can rapidly dismount from the IFV and engage the enemy in close combat, protecting their tanks in vulnerable terrain from getting ambushed, scouting ahead of the main formation, breaching obstacles and clearing areas to seize and hold critical objectives.



RSM with his commission firmly in his crosshairs

The IFV, of which roughly 50 are assigned to each of the two battalions, has been introduced in the early 2000's and is now being subjected to an extensive life extension program which has already been initialized and should be concluded by the end of the decade. In this time a possible successor to the vehicle might be selected, and a likely candidate is the ASCOD 2 in a similar configuration as in the British AJAX programme.

After getting briefed on the IFV, the visitors had the opportunity to mount

the "ULAN" themselves for an extensive and enjoyable roundtrip on the extensive and quite tricky training ground surrounding the barracks that is home to the 35th Mechanized Infantry Battalion. Quite a few challenging obstacles and interesting terrain features in amiable weather condition gave the visitors a good impression of the Grenadiers daily work as well as a good helping of dust which is the reason why the home of the 35th Mechanized Infantry Battalion is often referred to as the "Wüstengarnison" ("desert barracks").



RSM showing his officer dress style



QDG visit the Regiment





"Savoia Cavalleria" activities

In the last year the regiment was engaged largely in homeland security operation in significant and prestigious Italian cities particularly in Milan, Florence and Rome, a constant contribution of troops that will involve SAVOIA CAVALLERIA throughout 2025.

In Hungary, within the framework of the NATO operation Enhanced Vigilant Presence, platoons spent an intensive training period with "Centauro" heavy armoured vehicles; the same personnel participated in airborne activities together with their Hungarian paratroopers.

Our paratroopers were committed in continuous training activities also abroad in interesting exchanges with allied or

cooperating troops. In one of the most important, a combined task group was deployed to Jordan where, in the month of June, the pathfinder platoon carried out profitable training with Royal Jordan army, USA, and a company of 2nd Bn "The Royal Gurkha Rifles" in FIBUA, joint snipers training and hely assault.

During the annual major field exercise of the Airborne Brigade, SAVOIA CAVALLERIA deployed its Task Group Hq by leading an ISTAR task force in the training areas of Tuscany for a two weeks intensive and continuous training.

In October a patrol of the regiment participated in the 2024 edition of the "Cambrian patrol" deserving silver

medal. In December, another team of SAVOIA CAVALLERIA carried out a training session with colleagues from the 2nd Irish Battalion in the training areas of the Magilligan Cadet Training Centre in Northern Ireland.

At the same time horse mounted training activities and equestrian competitions were also hosted at the facilities of the regiment's Military Riding Centre 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 activities.



Dyfed and Glamorgan Army Cadet Force

E Squadron Dyfed and Glamorgan ACF have had a phenomenal 2024. All of our cadets and CFAVs have shown perseverance and just how much can be achieved with a positive attitude. On top of completing their regular non-residential training, joint training weekends with fellow companies, and community engagement events, the cadets attended several extraordinary experiences.

We kick off the highlights with 10 x E Squadron QDG cadets attending "Cavalry Cadet 100" to assist with the Cavalry 100th Anniversary parade in Hyde Park, London, and support the event through handing out programs. Dyfed and Glamorgan ACF submitted a team that E Squadron Cadets solely represented for the Cadet Skill At Arms Meet (CADSAAM). The CADSAAM team achieved Silver Medals in the Falling Plate Shoot and was only pipped to the post by one second! The Duke of Edinburgh Award is a nationally recognised award for challenging young people to learn new skills, support the community through volunteering, improve personal fitness, explore new areas from expeditions, and make new friends. 2024 saw three Bronze award passes and one Silver award pass. Back in March, we attended Techniquist, which is a science and technology discovery centre. Cadets from E Squadron got stuck in with over one hundred interactive challenges that included every element of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Throughout the year we have been visited by members of the 1st Queen Dragoon Guards (QDGs) Engagement Team to support E Squadron through detachment visits, interest talks, kit demonstrations, and assisting with



teaching. It was also a pleasure for the Farrier Major to be in attendance at our end-of-year awards dinner. Thank you for all of your help! Dyfed and Glamorgan (D&G) also entered a team for the Cambrian Patrol Competition. Our Cambrian Patrol section comprised a team of eight cadets, two of whom were E Squadron. The competition is a 36-hour exercise conducting a patrol across the Sennybridge Training Area. Where the cadets demonstrate navigation, teamwork, fieldcraft and tactics completing tasks over 26 km against other Counties Cadet Teams. The team from D&G placed 3rd out of 22 teams. Our cadets were given the opportunity to attend the Royal Military Academy (RMA) Sandhurst to support the upcoming Sovereign Parade. The lucky cadets were given a guided tour of the Old College at RMA Sandhurst and got to witness Officer Cadets who had completed their training to become newly appointed 2nd Lieutenants within the British Army. Four E Squadron cadets were selected to visit London to view the Colonel's Review at the Royal Horse Guards. They witnessed the incredible parade of the soldiers, multiple bands, and horses that participated. Cdt Staff Sergeant

Measey and Cdt Sergeant Lemon were appointed Lord Lieutenant Cadets during an awards ceremony presented by His Majesty Lord Lieutenant Dyfed Ms. Sara Edwards. Both of these cadets represent the ethos of the Army Cadet Force, and will carry out their Lord Lieutenant Cadet duties over the next twelve months. As well as being appointed a Lord Lieutenant Cadet, Cdt Staff Sergeant Measey was promoted to Sergeant Major and has since been appointed the first QDG Sergeant Major since 2016.

We could never have achieved this without the tireless effort of our CFAVs and commitment from the cadets. We look forward to the challenges that 2025 brings!

JB



Regimental Comrades Association

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

Wow! Where has the year gone? So many events parades and reunions.

Over the coming pages you will see just how ██████ the Branches have been. This of course is all down to our members participating in some way or form. No matter how large or small you have all contributed to maintaining the success of the RCA.

Membership has slowly been increasing in particular from the serving Regiment. We all know how important it is to maintain the RCA ethos and many of our younger members will no doubt assist in carrying this forward.

I shall not dwell on what has been happening as you will see from the Branch reports below.

Before I handover to Dave Way in March 2025 I would just like to take this opportunity to thank all the members for your continued support over the past seven years. The RCA has grown into what is now a well organised and supported association.

The Colonel of the Regiment, HHQ, the Committee and Ollie Larminie (RIP) have been an inspiration to me in helping transform the RCA into what it is now, long may it continue.

I'd like to thank you all again for 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



Chris hands over to Dave

Valley's Branch

As a newly formed branch in our second year, we have continued to reach out and reconnect with former members of the Regiment who have been out of touch for a long period of time. Our success is now paying off with our branch numbers steadily growing.

Over the last twelve months we have met up as a branch for Sunday carveries in local venues within the Valleys. We have also met up for some social drinks again in local establishments. In June we had the opportunity to visit General Dynamics in Merthyr with the assistance of Lt Col (Retd) John Smith, where we received a very comprehensive brief from former members of the Regiment on the Ajax programme. This was followed by a tour of the factory and finally to the

mobility testing ground. Where we saw the Ajax being put through its paces driven by Beast Jones and commanded none other than Bill Rees both former members of the Regiment. This new ISTAR platform is completely different to what we were used to.

In October the branch had the honour of receiving our official branch flag at the Regimental dinner, in the Masonic Hall Cardiff, so we now have our own identity. In November members of the branch paraded in their hometowns for remembrance parade, in Aberdare alone we had 8 Dragoons on parade. It must also be mentioned that we had the privilege of one of our branch members Gareth 'Tic Tac' Jones, representing the RBL at the Royal Albert Hall London. In

December the Valley's Branch organised the Christmas and Kosovo 25 year reunion party which was held at the Masonic Hall in Cardiff. It was a great evening, with many former members of the Regiment attending who had been away for many years. The food was superb, the dance floor did not empty and the bar staff eventually asked the last remaining members if they wouldn't mind going home as it was early hours of the morning! A great night was had by all and as I am drafting these notes, I am already in the process of organising a St David's Day evening meal to be held in a local country mansion in the valleys, so the Valley's Branch is looking forward to 2025.



The Valleys Branch Fluorescent Vest Display Team

Germany Branch

The RCA Germany Branch has had a few changes made in 2024. Firstly, the Branch was restructured with Ralph Hanning as Branch Secretary, Roger Harrison as Branch Accountant and Martin Ruscoe as Branch IT & Merchandising.

During 2024 the Branch hosted several drinks nights in the Stadt Keller Wolfenbüttel for the local lads, needless to say those that attended had some fantastic evenings, astonishingly enough for everyone was the fact that we discussed air fryer recipes on a number of occasions.

Our main event was in June where we held our yearly Waterloo gathering in the Stadt Keller Wolfenbüttel, this year the fancy dress theme was - anything French! In Total we had 42 people attending, the majority of whom travelled across from the UK.

We also had a Christmas Market gathering where it was nice to see so many of those living locally attend. A Special mention goes out to Roger Harrison who spontaneously jumped on a plane to attend this function. During the weekend



Germany Branch Welshmen, dressed as Frenchmen, in Wolfenbüttel

we also made the draw for the fancy dress day for 2025s Waterloo gathering - Vikings it is!

With regards to 2025 the Branch has several events planned. We will continue the regular drinks nights for the locals amongst us, but we also have dates of interest open to all RCA members

of the Regiment that will be advertised on Facebook. However, you can look forward to, Waterloo Battlefield Tour 18 April - 20 April 2025, Annual Waterloo Gathering 19 June - 22 June 2025 and to finish off 2025 the Wolfenbüttel Christmas Market meet up 19 December - 21 December.

South Wales Branch

The South Wales Branch held its annual Black Tie Dinner on 7th September at the Masonic Hall in Cardiff. This year, the Battle Honour being celebrated was Lucknow, with excerpts from war diaries brought to life by enthusiastic volunteers (victims). Hannah Searle, the Regimental Assistant Curator, delivered an in-depth and captivating presentation on the battle. Having visited Northern India and Lucknow earlier in the year as part of her research for an upcoming book on the subject, her insights provided a vivid and personal perspective on the historic event.

The evening featured an excellent four-course meal with everyone so full after pudding most of the cheese course was left! The celebration extended into the early hours, with some of the diners even continuing the revelry in Cardiff's pubs and clubs.

Looking ahead, the Branch will hold a social event early in the year, and the annual dining tradition will resume in September or October 2025.



South Wales Branch, Lucknow Dinner attendees

East Anglia Branch

East Anglia branch is slowly getting stronger in number over the last year with around 30 members, however it has been hard to set dates for all to get together. Our first event of 2024 was three members going over to RBSM for the visit of the Colonel-in-Chief, it was a great day meeting the Regiment and the Colonel-in-Chief. The Regt put on warm welcome. it was great to meet up with the serving Regiment.

We have had two nights with drinks and a BBQ, the first was in July with 5

members on parade, we chatted about what we should be doing as a branch and how we can move forward with dates for the rest of the member to be able to attend, the second drinks night was held in Lowestoft with 5 members. We are looking at having two events each year with one in the West and one in the East side of our area.

In 2025 we are hoping to support the regiment on St Davids day and have the Sandbaggers over in July 2025 for a branch BBQ on their way over to Germany.

London and the Home Counties Branch

This year started with our "Pint & Chat" event in a pub near Horse Guards, London, we had a good turnout with sandbags pulled up, lanterns swung and pints flowing! We were joined by General Simon and Brigadier Alan later in the afternoon and the motion carried on, I am not quite sure how I made my way to Charing Cross Station and got home to Kent! In the Summer the Branch were invited to join A Squadron for a social at Ed Barham's stunning home, Hole Park. A thoroughly good evening was had, we hope to do both these events again next year.

Branch Members representing the Regiment also attended the 100th Cavalry Sunday parade in Hyde Park, 80th Anniversary of D Day in Normandy, The Field



London and the Home Counties get together – Basher and Dave are told the price of a pint in Whitehall!

of Remembrance parade and took part in the march past of the Cenotaph organised by The Royal British Legion.

This year there will be a Waterloo Dinner on or around the 18th June in the Victory Services Club London, more to follow.

The Sandbaggers Branch

The Sandbaggers managed a few trips out in 2024, attending and supporting other branch dinners and standalone gatherings as well.

The Derby Sandbag Bash involved lots of food, drink and chats. However, the weather was not kind to us, but we managed to set up an indoor social area and had our own "Round Table", righting all the wrongs of the World. The Field Kitchen also had to be relocated indoors as Mitch Walker was the only one of us with wellington boots suitable for cooking whilst stood in a puddle about 6 inches deep surrounded by electric BBQ's!

We also attended the Oswestry Dinner Night, joining the Border Counties and Powys Branch for the dinner and making a weekend of it, members helped set up and clear away and we kept the visiting members from the German branch fed and watered with plenty of brews

consumed during the day by our RCA guests, some bringing home made cakes that are always very welcome.

We had planned for Derby meet up but had to postpone it due to the weather. Instead, we held the Sandbaggers Air Rifle Range Day back in Oswestry. Whilst it was expected that the group would have some skills, though slightly rusty, what was more surprising and slightly worrying was the selection of air weapons owned by the Sandbagger members. An estimated hour or so took all afternoon and great fun was had by all, including some of the ladies who went from having never fired anything to hitting pretty consistent groups after a very short time shooting.

The Sandbaggers already have four standalone events planned for 2025 and we will also be attending many of the other Branch event



The Sandbaggers, targets will fall if hit!



The Wessex Branch

It has been a quieter year this year as we brought our Branch BBQ forward to May to allow for a big family event to take place in early July. Our BBQ was held on a wet and windy evening, but it didn't prevent us having a great time under the marquee. Richard Parry travelled down from South West London to join us for the evening. Richard commented on how great it was to hear the likes of Johnny O'Brien and Brian Bell regaling us all with tales of daring do from their days in the Regiment. As per usual the VW factory currywurst went down a treat and seconds and thirds were enjoyed by some (no names no pack drill).

We also had a pleasant evening at Twiggy and Jane Thomas's BBQ where we were also joined by Chris Ions and Reg and Mandy Bond. We will be returning to having our Branch BBQ on Tankfest weekend in 2025 and we will also be taking the Branch on tour meeting up in pubs across the Wessex patch over 2025, so look out on the RCA event page on the website and the Branch Facebook page for details.

Regimental Home Headquarters

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

As you've read above, 2024 has been an exceptional year for the RCA. From small and intimate Branch dinners to well attended Association events, Comrades representing us at their local remembrance this year has been filled with events that have strengthened our regimental family. None of this would have been possible without the tireless efforts of Chris Gibbons, our RCA Chair, along with his dedicated Committee, Branch Secretaries, and countless other contributors.

On behalf of our entire regimental family, I would like to thank Chris for his unwavering dedication and hard work in supporting the RCA and Kate and myself here at HHQ. After nearly eight years of exemplary service, Chris will be stepping

down in March 2025 having devoted an incredible amount of time and energy to coordinating our Association and Branches. Thanks to his leadership, the RCA is in excellent shape. Chris will be handing over the reins to Dave Way in March 2025, I wish him and Pat all the best and believe he's looking forward to our next bash where he can relax and completely let his hair down. Any future chest poking about the price of beer, position of badges on berets, bushy beards, or suchlike please direct towards Dave!

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to all our comrades, both serving and retired, who generously contribute to the Regimental Benevolence Fund, whether through the 1 Days' Pay Scheme

or private donations. Your generosity has been vital in supporting those in our regimental family who find themselves in challenging circumstances.

In 2024, we provided 19 general grants totalling £10,536, addressing needs such as emergency accommodation and orthopaedic furniture. Additionally, quarterly grants, annual fuel grants, and Christmas grants amounted to £5,900. In total, the Benevolence Fund awarded £16,436 in support of our regimental family this past year.

Your continued support makes this work possible and upholds the values and camaraderie that makes our RCA such a remarkable community.

Combined Cavalry Weekend 2024 Officers' Regimental Dinner

On the evening of Friday, 11th May 2024 the annual Officers Dinner was held at the Cavalry Club. A message of goodwill from our Colonel in Chief, Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales was read out in reply to our Loyal Greetings by the Colonel of the Regiment. The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Chris Kierstead then gave a comprehensive summary of the Regiments activities over the last twelve months.

The names of those who attended are listed as follows: Brig Stenhouse, Maj Stenhouse, Maj C Howard, Maj N

Garland, Maj D Hoey, Lt Col C Ruggles-Brise, G Fearn, J Brooke, Maj J Kite, Maj C Craven, Col Peacocke, C Robinson, Maj G Jackson, W Russell, S Mildinhall, Maj B Williams, A Roe, G Barham, Maj D Roberts, Col T R Wilson, Maj C Homewood, A Hoenich, Maj D Ruck Keene, Lt Col S Farebrother, D Rosier, D Taylor, Maj Q Browell, Lt Col A Roxburgh, K McGinnity, D Warner, Lt Col H Lloyd, H Chaplin, Maj J Whelan, J Brockless, S Upward, E Dillon, F Holland, Z Spicer, E Barham, N Truscott, S Patel, I Mackenzie, T Graham, J Fearn, E Cooper, T Wills, M Hawtin,

Brig Richmond, H Renshaw, G Webster, Maj H Pilcher, W Weischelberger, N Featherstonhaugh, R Charlesworth, J Beatson-Hird, Maj J Coleman, J Hacker Hughes, Gen Mayall, Lt Col D Landon, Lt Col J Tyson, M Ashley-Miller, Col P Andrews, A Dumont, Lt Col H Sugden, P Marques, J Woodhart, Lt Col C Kierstead, Maj B Matthews, J Banbury, J Carroll, D O'Connor, Col Pittman, Lt Col P Corfield, P Wickham, D Sheehan, Maj C Beaver, Maj J Curry, J Clarke, B Lewis, H Mower, H Swailes, D Seales, W Asquith, H Gates, Miss H Searle, M Evans.



John Morris recruiting the next generation of Chelsea Pensioners



The National Cenotaph Marching Party



Cavalry Memorial parade

Combined Cavalry Memorial Parade and Service

This year's Cavalry Memorial Parade held on the 12th May was of special significance as it marked its centenary. To commemorate this prestigious milestone all of the regiments carried their Colours, so our Regimental Standard and Party were front and centre, closely followed by LCpl Emrys Forlan Jones and the Farrier Major, Dave Way carrying the RCA Banner, Chris Gibbons the Wreath and the Colonel of the Regiment smartly stepping us off on our march past the Cavalry of the

Empire Memorial to the Bandstand.

This year the salute was taken by His Royal Highness, Prince Edward, The Duke of Edinburgh, Colonel in Chief of the Royal Dragoon Guards. Once again, we were graced with good weather, complementing our cracking turnout, over 200 comrades, old and bold along with a coach load of the serving Regiment, I believe our marching contingent was so strong that we even surpassed the Household Cavalry in numbers! It was

great to see so many of our families in attendance, supporting and cheering us on, ably shepherded into the right place at the right time by our CCOCA Committee Members, Lt Col Stewart Burman, Andy Bowtell and Robb Chubb.

Following the parade our camaraderie continued with a Regimental RV at the Audley Public House, once again wonderful to see so many familiar and new faces raising a few glasses of London's finest well into the evening.

The 2024 Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey

The Royal British Legions, 96th Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey was opened at 11 o'clock on Thursday 7th November by Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester. This annual event, which marks the start of the nation's Remembrance commemorations, has been held every year since 1928, when the Poppy Factory brought a tray of poppies and a collecting tin to the grounds of St Margaret's Church. Only a handful of poppies were planted around a single cross, but it began a

tradition that has grown over the decades, with a sea of scarlet poppies now covering the Abbey grounds each November. This year Andy Bowtell and John Morris were front and centre of our Regimental Plot to greet HRH Princess Birgitte as she toured the field, in attendance were the Colonel of the Regiment Brig Richmond, Lt Gen Mayall, Lt Col Brace, Lt Col Parry, Mr Bowtell, Mr Chubb, Mr Way and Mr Morris.



The Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey - Regimental Plot

Regimental Comrades Association Dinner =

The reunion dinner was once again held at the Cardiff Masonic Hall on Guildford Street, with many comrades arriving as early as Thursday to enjoy the attractions and delights of Wales's capital city. The food, camaraderie, and service were, as always, exceptional and greatly appreciated by all in attendance, with 99 comrades and guests sitting down to dine.

Loyal Greetings were extended to our Colonel-in-Chief, Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales. Her gracious response was read out by the Colonel of the Regiment, who then provided a brief update on the activities and accomplishments of the Regimental family over the course of 2024. This was followed by Major Paul Jones, the Regimental Second-in-Command, who delivered a

detailed account of the serving regiment's year, highlighting their achievements on behalf of the Commanding Officer.

The evening continued with Chris Gibbons leading the toasts and presenting Dave Evans with the Valleys Branch Flag. Before the dancing and festivities began, Brigadier Alan, on behalf of the RCA, took the opportunity to thank Chris for his exemplary service to the Association. As a token of appreciation, he presented Chris with a regimental hiking stick and Scimitar weathervane, while Pat was gifted a bouquet of flowers in recognition of her loyal support.

The following members attended: Brig Richmond, Col O'Brien, Mrs O'Brien, Maj D Roberts, Brig J Stenhouse, Maj Jones, Lt Col Ruggles-Brise, Mr S Mildinhal, Lt Col Jones, Lt Col Tyson, Mr C Gibbons, Mrs P Gibbons, Mr C Williams, Mrs G Williams, Mr G Williams, Mrs S Williams, R While-Paddon, Mrs S While-Paddon, Mr G Humphreys, Ms L Lloyd, Mr P Allen, Mrs A-M Allen, Mr G Walker, Mrs M Walker, Mr D Evans, Mrs S Evans, Mr G Jones,

Mr I Moore, Ms R Snape, Mr M Edwards, Mrs A Edwards, Mr P Mepstead, Mr M Ashley-Miller, Mr A Clay, Mr A Dean, Mr A Yoxall, Mr K Dicken, Mr R Hallewell, Mr P Smith, Mr C Lenderyou, Mr P Sabel, Mr C Evans, Mr B Gabriel, Mr M Ryan, Mr A Greenwood, Mrs A Greenwood, Mr D.J. Duruty de Lloyd, Ms M Forse, Mr S Farthing, Mr J Rawbone, Mr G Brown, Mr J Bangsund, Mr P Rowe, Mr G Powell, Mr D Grady, Mr S Reed, Miss R Lloyd, Mr M Hull, Mrs J Hull, Mr R Doe, Mrs P Doe, Mr C Morris, Mrs K Morris, Mr A Harrison, Mrs I Harrison, Mr J Crane, Mr G Thomas, Mrs J Thomas, Mr E Thompson, Lt Col B Thayer, Mrs Thayer, Mr D Deacon, Mrs M Deacon, Lt Col C Ions, Mr D Rash, Mr M Ord, Mrs J Collins, WO2 M Beal, WO2 D Fisher, Maj J Kite, WO2 Welfoot, RSM, Capt Cooper, SSgt Petre, Capt J Davies, Capt Lewis, RQMS, Cpl Tukana, LCpl Holland, Mr M Hawtin, Maj M Evans, Miss H Searle, Mrs K Cox, Mr D Way, Mr A Bowtell, Mrs L Bowtell, WO1 Chant, Capt Maxwell, Capt Al-Khamiri.

MLH

The QDG Regimental Trust

During the financial year 2023/24, the Regiment's reduced level of operational deployments allowed time for a higher level of activities that could be supported by the QDG Regimental Trust, including Team Cohesion and Adventurous Training. The principal grant to the Regiment increased to £53,370, (£48,494 for 2022/23) plus an additional £12,043 expenditure on the maintenance of heritage assets, that are on loan from the Trust to the Messes. Richard Dennis has been supervising a continuing programme of refurbishment of our magnificent picture collection.

With regard to benevolence, £16,737 was disbursed in benevolence grants during the year, mainly to Regimental veterans. The principal point of contact is the Regimental Secretary, who coordinates our cases with other charities and these activities are covered in his report.

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.

AFJR

KDG Reunion Lunch

Sadly, Derek Edwards who organised all of our reunion lunches for many years is no longer with us so details I hoped to include are not available. "The annual KDG officers lunch took place in the Cavalry Club on the 6th of November. Nine Malayan Veterans 1956-1958 attended: Allan Edwards, John de Candole, Edward Stenhouse, Ronnie Davidson-Houston, Jeremy Greenwood, George Nicholson, Tony Gibson, Mike Thompson and Sam Legerton. As usual a most enjoyable reunion. The numbers are dwindling, but the memories remain, if sometimes, somewhat embellished. We hope that the 26th Lunch will take place, as usual, in early November."

JAVdC

The QDG Shoot

This year (2024) is the 17th anniversary of the QDG shoot. It was originally founded in 2007 by Colonels O'Brien, MacKenzie-Beevor and Pocock as a roving syndicate. In 2015, it found its long-term posting to Milborne Wick, outside Sherborne in Dorset at Bradley Head Farm, the home of Chris and Sarah Sprake.

Set amongst pretty perfect shooting country, it is a mixed shoot of partridge, pheasant and duck. Whilst all the shooting is challenging, the partridge are particularly spectacular. We aim for two days and a bag of 150 birds. That said, on our first day this season we shot 102 partridges, 58 pheasant and 25 duck.

We have a great mix of serving and ERE officers (who often share a gun) and the old and bold. We have had as many as 15 in the field, with 10 pegs. The day is also a culinary delight, starting with breakfast at The Kings Arms in Charlton Horethorne,

elevenes in the field and an excellent lunch provided by Sarah Sprake.

Apart from the shooting and rations, there is stimulating banter. Had the shoot been running whilst I was a subaltern, I would have learnt how to overcome one of the huge difficulties we faced in Beirut. When talking to Edward Stenhouse about ten years ago, we were discussing the merits of the Ferret scout car. The main benefit was that they never broke down. But I explained to Edward that every time we went over a bump in the road, the rounds would fall out of the canvas belt feeding the .30s.

"Stupid boy," was Stenhouse's reply. "We always soaked the belts in water before we went out on patrol."

Excellent shooting with first class knowledge transfer. Anyone interested in the coming season, please contact me.

JB-H

The QDG Heritage Trust

Franz Josef, Emperor of Austria

1830 – 1916

Colonel in Chief, 1st Kings Dragoon Guards (KDG) 1898 – 1915

In the summer of 2014, The Heritage Trust, at the request of Magister Markus Habsburg-Lothringen, put on an exhibition at the Stadt Museum in Bad Ischl, Austria. The aim was to highlight the connection between the regiment and the Habsburgs and thence with Austria, showing that we were friends before the two world wars and, indeed, after them.

Markus had a specific interest. His unofficial title is His Imperial and Royal Highness, the Austrian Archduke Mag. Markus Salvator Habsburg-Lothringen. He is one of the great-grandchildren of Emperor Franz Joseph and Empress Elizabeth, called Sisi, being the grandson of their youngest daughter, Marie Valerie.

His Imperial and Royal Highness lives in the Summer Palace of the Habsburgs, the Kaiservilla, in the spa town of Bad Ischl, east of Salzburg. The town is set amongst the magnificent scenery of the alpine mountains and lakes and is rich in both history and culture. Franz Joseph described it as 'heaven on earth' for him and his family, a wonderful spot from which he could contemplate the many challenges facing the dominions over which his word held sway.

The museum team arrived in Bad Ischl with QDG Richard Robert's Volvo loaded

to the gunwales with artefacts. The Stadt Museum had already printed the signage and after five days we established an excellent exhibition in three large rooms. The centre piece was the Emperor mounted as though he was reviewing the troops.

Franz Josef had an extraordinary life which was filled with dreadful events and personal tragedies. Despite these, Queen Victoria described him as 'very quiet, simple and unaffected, not talkative, but very dignified'.

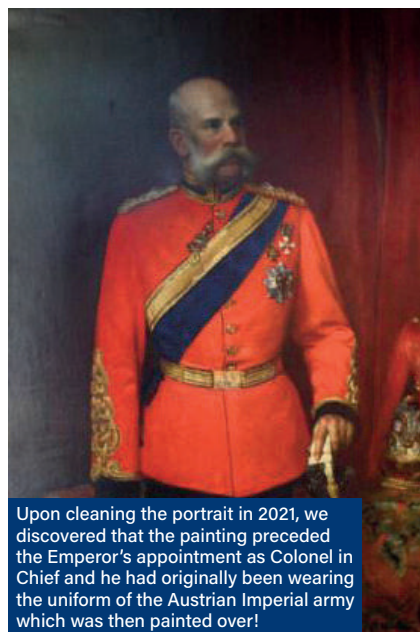
He only just survived an assassination attempt in 1853 during which he was stabbed repeatedly, almost dying. As a

result, his mother organised for him to be married with all haste to Elizabeth, Princess of Bavaria, a beautiful socialite who was probably not suited to her new role as Empress of the Austro-Hungarian empire. The royal couple suffered the trauma of losing their first child, Sophie, who died of scarlet fever aged just two. They received another blow when Franz Josef's brother, Maximilian, who was briefly Emperor of Mexico, was executed. Then there was the mysterious death of "Mad" King Ludwig of Bavaria (one of Sisi's very

few close personal friends). But worst of all was the horror of the suicide in January 1889 of their only son, Rudolf, who is the subject of a large melancholy portrait in a room specifically dedicated to him in the Kaiservilla. The Emperor's beloved wife, Sisi was herself assassinated in Geneva



Franz Josef had an extraordinary life which was filled with dreadful events and personal tragedies



Upon cleaning the portrait in 2021, we discovered that the painting preceded the Emperor's appointment as Colonel in Chief and he had originally been wearing the uniform of the Austrian Imperial army which was then painted over!

in 1898. And then, of course, there was the assassination of his nephew Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, which led to the First World War.

Queen Victoria was the antithesis of this quiet, slightly naïve, man. She wanted to involve herself in the matters of state as much as she was allowed. One aspect of this was her approach to foreign policy in Europe. She had both family and personal connections with the four empires in Europe (making her known as the grandmother of Europe) and she was exceedingly proud that she was one of those who was not only a monarch but also an empress. There were twenty kings in Europe, but only four were emperors, being those of France, Germany, Austria and Russia. There were no state visits in those days and all her meetings with the



The main room at the Bad Ischl exhibition, 2014



The Emperor, mounted



other emperors were informal in England, Germany, or France. Whilst Victoria was a constitutional monarch, she was her own person and was determined to use her connections to bring about a strong relationship between these four empires.

Her husband, Albert, was a German Prince.

Their eldest daughter, Victoria, the Princess Royal, was married to the king of Prussia and she became the German Empress and mother of Kaiser Wilhelm 2nd, the last Kaiser.

Her second daughter, Alice, married Louis IV, Grand Duke of Hesse.

Her second son, Alfred, married the Grand Duchess Maria Alesandrovna, daughter of Tsar Alexander II and aunt of Tsar Nicholas II, the last Tsar.

Victoria had no blood connection to Napoleon III, but they became very good

friends and Empress Eugenia became a close confidant of the Queen.

The Habsburgs, the last of the four empires, were Catholic and had no immediate blood ties to Queen Victoria. However, they were distantly connected through Franz Ferdinand, Franz Josef's uncle and the Duke of Saxe-Coburg who was Queen Victoria's fourth cousin.

Despite this, the relationship between the Habsburgs and the Queen was extremely cordial. After Empress Elizabeth had a nervous breakdown, she decided to recuperate in Madeira – out of the public eye. But the Imperial yacht was not available, so Queen Victoria lent her the Royal yacht, despite never having met her. They finally met when Sisi went on holiday to the Isle of Wight. The Queen reported that she was enthusiastic for life, but lacking any sense of duty! Instead, Sisi enjoyed hunting in Leicestershire and Rutland, visiting England and Ireland on many occasions.

Queen Victoria finally met Franz Josef in 1863, at her brother-in-law's house in Coburg. They didn't meet again for 25 years until they had a succession of meetings, predominantly in the South of France. During all this time, her relationship with Franz Josef was such that he showed diplomatic support to Britain despite the antagonistic approach of Lord Palmerston to Austria. Whilst they didn't commit troops to the Crimean campaign, they did support Britain by mobilising troops (which were never deployed) and by voicing encouragement in the diplomatic community. During the Boer War, Austria was the only European power that supported the British. So, Franz Josef was always a loyal supporter.

It was in Nice that Queen Victoria offered Franz Josef the Colonelcy of the

KDG over lunch. This was part of Queen Victoria's strategy to unite the emperors of Europe behind Britain. She also offered the Scots Greys to the Tsar and the Royal Dragoons to the Kaiser. The Emperor accepted the offer immediately and it was announced in the London Gazette on the 24th March, 1896. Franz Josef wrote to the Prince of Wales:

'I am delighted with this beautiful present, which will always remind me of its kind donor, but also the gracious disposition of The Queen, your noble mother, who did me the singular honour when she appointed me Colonel-in-Chief of the King's Dragoon Guards.'

The Emperor immediately commanded that the KDG adopt the Habsburg Eagle as their cap and collar badge. This was officially approved by the army in 1898.

The Commanding Officer, Colonel Lawrence, with two captains, Briggs (later Major-General Sir Charles of Nery fame) and Bell-Smyth, travelled to Vienna and presented the Emperor with the old regimental standard. In return, the Emperor awarded the Second Class of the Order of the Iron Crown upon Colonel Lawrence and the Third Class on the Captains.

He gave them a set of band parts of the Radetzky March which was written by Johann Strauss in 1848 in honour of Field Marshal Count Joseph Wenzel Radetzky, with whom Palmerston had fallen out. It has been the regimental march ever since. He also presented a special helmet for the Commanding Officer's Trumpeter along with a silver trumpet. These can be seen in the museum in Cardiff.

The Emperor always took a close interest in the regiment, although he never visited. The painting of him reviewing the troops is totally fictitious.

However, the Archduke Frederick of





Austria did visit Aldershot and inspected the regiment on parade. In 1908, Franz Josef celebrated his Diamond Jubilee and awarded twenty-three silver medals and ninety-five bronze, which were presented at Ambala.

To be fair on Franz Josef, the assassination of Franz Ferdinand tipped him over the edge. Having taken all his misfortune stoically, he now wanted revenge. He naïvely asked the German government whether they would support him if he gave the Serbs a bloody nose. The Germans, who were looking at dominance in Europe, read the situation much more accurately than Franz Josef and realised that if the Austrians invaded Serbia, the French, Belgians and Russians would all turn against Austria, providing Germany with an opportunity to start a war in Europe. The rest is history.

In May 1915, whilst the KDG were in the Festubert area, it was decided that Franz Josef could no longer remain as Colonel in Chief and at the same time the Habsburg Eagle should be replaced with the Star and Garter. The Colonel of the Regiment wrote to Franz Josef and told him with regret that the regiment needed to ask him to stand down. He gracefully acknowledged this and stated his desire that when hostilities ended, he should be asked to take up his position again. He reportedly passed an act of parliament which said that any soldier of the KDG,

**“
Having
taken all his
misfortune
stoically, he
now wanted
revenge**



officer or other ranks, who was captured would not be a prisoner of war, but his guest at the Kaiservilla for the duration of hostilities.

When the regiment arrived in India in 1937, they applied to restore the Habsburg Eagle, I suspect to coincide with the Coronation of King George VI in May. It was not approved until September that year, just in time for the last mounted parade on October 23rd.

As part of the refocusing of the regimental museum in Cardiff, we are instituting a new permanent exhibit about Franz Josef. As part of this, in the autumn of 2024 we visited Bad Ischl for

the first time in ten years, to interview Markus Habsburg, thus perpetuating our connection with the Imperial Royal family. This brought back memories of 2014 and the way the regiment made such a huge impression on the town. Having been briefed back then by the Austrian government that the Habsburgs had no constitutional role any longer, we succeeded in nearly causing a diplomatic incident! When we were planning the route that the regiment would take marching through Bad Ischl, we thought it only right and proper that Mr. Markus Habsburg should take the parade. This was not viewed particularly well as it was the first time since 1916 that a Habsburg had taken the salute at a military parade!

JB-H



Markus Habsburg taking the salute of the regimental march past at Bad Ischl in 2014

Firing Line

The mission of the museum is to protect, commemorate and celebrate regimental history and tradition whilst being professional, educational and inspirational.

We certainly have the audience! At 81,255 visitors, the financial year 2023-2024 saw a 17.5% increase in the museum's footfall compared to the previous year. At the time of writing, visitor numbers are on course to surpass this during the financial year 2024-2025 with numbers estimated to come in close to 100,000 by the end of March.

On the theme of professional, one highlight of our year has been the renewal of our museum accreditation, awarded in May 2024. Accreditation is vital to our museum and ensures working practices adhere to high standards. We have also had our Firearms license renewed which allows us to hold all types of firearms within the law.

Activities and Exhibitions

Moving towards the themes of education and inspiration: Firing Line Museum continues to focus on the development

of our floor displays to focus on exciting and personal stories showing the culture and ethos of the regiments. Our aim is to bring Firing Line to a point whereby visitors go away remembering the name of our regiments and hopefully inspiring them to find out more for themselves.

The redevelopment of the Waterloo Room is one of our main goals for the year and to this end, we are working with a variety of designers to increase interactive potential with the goal of making it an even more impressive and rousing space. This will be available for private or corporate bookings. We are also in the process of bringing in a new area in the museum dedicated to Franz Josef, the Austrian connection and regimental music. To this end, the QDG Heritage Trust arranged for an interview to take place with Markus Habsburg in the Kaiservilla at the end of 2024, which will be shown on a screen alongside the display.

Aside from the development our permanent displays, we also routinely develop a series of changing temporary exhibitions at the museum. Recent

highlights of the temporary exhibition program have included:

- the installation of a banner exhibition commemorating the Korean War to coincide with the seventieth anniversary of the signing of the Armistice Agreement.
- a photodocumentary exhibition commemorating the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards involvement in peacekeeping in Kosovo in 1999-2000. We were delighted to have the launch of this exhibition opened by the Colonel of the Regiment and Leader of Cardiff Council, Councillor Huw Thomas.
- the development of a Beirut exhibit telling the story of the Queen's Dragoon Guard's involvement in the 1983 peacekeeping mission.

In June, our team were delighted to host A Squadron QDG for a talk and to look around the museum, followed by a tour around Cardiff Castle, before the Squadron went on to an evening of engagement with the South Wales Branch of the RCA. What a fantastic day.

That same month, we were lucky to be able to host the Welsh Veterans Awards Finalists for a day of filming, and our fortnightly veterans' hub continues, established thanks to the generosity of Adferiad and V4P. This hub is under the guidance of Abigail Warburton, the Armed Forces Liaison Officer at Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan. The memorial garden continues to be tended to by veterans from Boots on The Ground, overlooked by the Abandoned Soldier Statue which all provides a peaceful place of reflection.

We have a sustained demand for professional research, which has been conducted throughout the year by Mark and a research volunteer, so do get in touch if you would like any research to be undertaken.

Education Programme

The Education programme remains strong with Firing Line seeing an increase in the number of schools booking sessions compared to the previous year. Activities are a mixture of on-site and outreach sessions, with the newest addition to our offering being days based around Remembrance. Our furthest education session this year took us to Rydal Penrhos school in Colwyn Bay – whose Combined Cadet Force is affiliated with QDG – where we worked in partnership with the QDG Regimental Engagement Team to tell the story of both the historical and present-day regiment.

The museum also continues to host visits from cadet and regimental groups,



The Abandoned Soldier Statue, located in our Memorial Garden

reflecting on the history of both regiments. We are always delighted when new recruits visit us to learn about the history of their regiment.

Team News and Contacts

We are extremely lucky to have a very strong team with a variety of talents.

Major Mark Evans has just taken over the role of Chairman of the Wales and West Army Museums Network (WWAM). This network is one of several around the country, grouped by location by the National Army Museum, providing opportunities for military museums to collaborate and share ideas. The most recent meeting of the WWAM network was on the 17th October, held in Firing Line Museum. He is also still serving in the Army Reserve as the QM (R) of The Royal Yeomanry.

Hannah continues her DPhil Studies in Victorian regimental history at the University of Oxford. At the beginning of the year, she was lucky to be able to visit Lucknow (India), followed swiftly by a fundraising walk for the Army Benevolent Fund across the Wadi Rum (Jordan). The publishing of her book on the 2nd Dragoon Guards in Lucknow 1857-1859 remains expected within the next year.

Iain Fife continues in his role as Front of House Supervisor, leading a fantastic team of six employees and around five volunteers. In September 2024, Iain travelled to Arnhem to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Operation Market Garden.

We are extremely lucky to have a very strong team with a variety of talents.



To get in touch with us, please use:

Major Mark Evans (Curator and Operations Manager): curator@cardiffcastlemuseum.org.uk; or Hannah Searle (Company Secretary and Assistant Curator): companysecretary@cardiffcastlemuseum.org.uk.

Volunteer and Placement Opportunities

Firing Line continues to work alongside Cardiff University in the provision of voluntary and work placement opportunities, with several placements expected to go live imminently. This is a positive collaboration that has seen the museum

work with the University Careers Development department as well as with volunteers from the School of History, Archaeology and Religion.

The museum is always interested to hear from anybody who would like to find out more about volunteering at the museum. Please contact Mark Evans if you are interested.

We are also looking for artefacts from any operational tours that you may have stored away and could be of use to our collection and exhibitions.

Finally, our usual reminder for all those who have served with our regiment, you are entitled to free access to the museum. For practicality's sake, please contact Mark Evans before your visit to allow us to book you in with the castle.

ME, HBS

The Hereford and Forest of Dean Branch

As always we had our annual St David's in the Shire weekend of fun and frolics with a curry night on the Friday, followed by our Black tie formal evening on the Saturday, the eating of the leek challenge was won with gusto by Ray Welsby with a valiant "attempt" by challenger Ralph Hanning. Massive thanks to the Regiment for their help with Mascot and Quarter-Guard and looking forward to future events.



Obituary

Lieutenant General Sir Maurice Johnston KCB, CVO, OBE

Maurice Johnston died on 10th November 2024 aged 95. He had a stimulating and varied career as a professional soldier, later in business and then as Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire. He was energetic, indefatigable, had an enormous capacity for work and could turn his hand to almost anything. Nothing was deemed insurmountable. Successes attended all his endeavours.

Self-reliance came early when, aged eleven and, after his preparatory school was damaged in the blitz, Maurice was put on board SS Stratheden bound, round the Cape, for India where his father was serving. After three years at Aitchison College, Lahore, he returned on the Stratheden to go to Wellington College.

He attended RMA Sandhurst, passed out top of the order of merit, receiving the King's Medal, and in 1949 was commissioned into the Royal Artillery. Serving in post-war Germany he competed at Army level in the hurdles and quarter mile, had several winners on his German remount stallion and enjoyed wildfowling on the Elbe. He was selected for 3RHA, no longer horsed but prestigious all the same, and went with them to the Canal Zone, Egypt. There he and Tony Shewen transferred to The Queen's Bays in Aqaba, Jordan briefly as a troop leader and then in Sabratha, Libya as adjutant.

From then on until command of his regiment Maurice had a run of demanding jobs. He instructed at Sandhurst, getting an Army trial at Pentathlon, commanded a squadron twice both in BAOR and in Borneo during the Indonesian confrontation with Malaysia and was a DS at the Staff College. In 1969 he was appointed MA to CGS – firstly to General Sir George Baker and for a brief spell with General Sir Michael Carver. This experience and insight into the MOD was to stand him in good stead. For this service in a pressurised job he was awarded OBE. His citation noted that "his most outstanding characteristic is his sound and balanced judgement" and "he has the ability to assimilate the vast quantities of paper which pour through this office, extracting all the important and relevant points and to put forward his conclusions concisely and clearly.

Maurice commanded the Regiment from 1971 – 73. During this period he was involved in a trial of a square brigade based on two armoured regiments and two armoured infantry battal-



ions which was ultimately adopted by the Army as a whole. Important appointments in command and on the staff followed in rapid succession. He was promoted directly to command 20th Armoured Brigade, followed by a year as a student at the RCDS and in 1997 he became BGS at UK Land Forces in Wilton. There he led a study into the place of women in the Army. Stemming from the maxim that "a woman's central role is the creation of life, not to destroy it," his study team concluded that women should not serve in the front line but should be taught how to defend themselves with personal weapons which came official policy for a while.

Maurice's military career had definitely taken off. He spent eight years as a Lieutenant Colonel only to reach the rank of Lieutenant General in seven and he now moved in heady circles. He was successively senior DS at the RCDS from 1978-80, ACGS (Operational

Requirements) and then after a year promoted to Lieutenant General as DCDS in the same discipline, becoming involved in the Falklands War. He was Knighted KCB in 1982. His final appointment was a new post as DCDS when he had to arbitrate between the entrenched single service attitudes of self-preservation and resource allocation. He retired in 1984.

Maurice quickly launched himself into a new business career. He was chief executive of a merchant bank specialising in counter-trade finance, chairman of a company pioneering private prisons and of another re-cycling Birmingham waste. For many years he was a non-executive director of an hydraulics firm.

Along while he was made a DL in 1990, was High Sheriff 1993-94 and Lord Lieutenant 1986-04. He was a Governor of St Mary's School, Calne and Dauntseys School. For his services to Wiltshire, he was appointed CVO by The Queen in 2005.

Maurice was a man of many talents. Not only was he an accomplished athlete, horseman both in point-to-points and polo handicapped 2, keen shot and fly fisherman he was a most skilled glass engraver, made tapestry work, a dedicated gardener and beekeeper.

Maurice was Colonel of Regiment from 1986 – 1991, he and Belinda attended numerous regimental events.

He married Belinda Sladen in 1960 and we extend our heartfelt sympathy to her, Lucinda, Philip and their families.

Sadly, the following deaths were notified to the Regimental Secretary throughout 2024

Name	Regiment	Served	Dec'd	Age
T Hesketh-Gardener	QDG	1959 - 1961	June 23	86
Major J Hamilton	KDG	1946 - 1959	Jan 24	105
G Robeson	KDG	1947 - 1948	Jan 24	95
D Davison	QDG	1952 - 1975	Feb 24	88
J Sutherland	QDG	1961 - 1970	Feb 24	84
J E Borrett	KDG	1944 - 1947	Mar 24	98
K Ruscoe	QDG	1960's	Mar 24	
G Macey	QDG	1963 - 1978	Apr 24	81
R Partridge	KDG/QDG	1951 - 1976	Apr 24	90
RDK Edwards	KDG	1953 - 1955	Sept 24	89
D Negus	KDG	1956 - 1958	Oct 24	86
Lt Gen Sir Maurice Johnston	BAY/QDG	1950 - 1984	Nov 24	95
A I Harrison	BAY/QDG	1953 - 1977	Dec 24	89
D McCaig	BAY	WWII	Dec 24	103

Valetes

Ed Carter

Edward Carter — yes, another Carter, and yes, another Ed from Cirencester — commissioned from the Royal Military Academy in April 2020. Owing to the pandemic, this moment marked the first parade in combat dress since the Second World War. Joining A Squadron pre-phase 2, Ed swiftly found himself deployed on Op RESCRIPT, tackling COVID-response tasks with 3rd Troop.

The summer of 2020 saw Ed embark on the Light Cavalry Troop Leaders' course in Bovington, a moment he met with unbridled enthusiasm. Whether it was duck fighting, shooting, hunting, spear fishing — if it involved field sports, Ed and his ever-faithful companion, Tarzan (his dog, though we initially thought it was his wild alter-ego), were on the hunt.

Back at regimental duty, Ed's adventures continued: first to 'FOB Pontins' for more COVID-related tasks, then on to Cyprus for live range packages, and finally to Louisiana for Ex RATTLE-SNAKE. Ed has always been a staunch believer that you can get all the vacation you need in the UK, his first ever visit to the United States was a revelation. Watching this man of Kent, who was more accustomed to living off the land, navigate the land of ultra-processed foods and marvel at 'yams' was a spectacle in itself.

In November 2021, Ed deployed on Op NEWCOMBE 3 in Mali and quickly carved a niche for himself. His route recce back-briefs — equal parts insightful and David Attenborough-esque — earned him the affectionate moniker 'Radio Carter'. We jested about his animal-track identifications and lessons in local fauna, but truth be told, his knowledge was invaluable. It felt less like a military operation and more like an expertly narrated nature documentary.

Post-Mali, Ed found himself being scoped for a job in RHQ. The prospect of the ten-week RSO course back in Bovington reignited his enthusiasm. True to form, Ed threw himself into it with gusto. Whether extolling the virtues of skywave propagation or detailing the latest multi-mode radios, Ed's passions shone brightly. But his greatest legacy as RSO? Wi-Fi. Thanks to the Ed Carter Commemorative Wi-Fi, even the squash courts and respirator testing facilities now enjoy connectivity.



His greatest legacy as RSO? Wi-Fi.



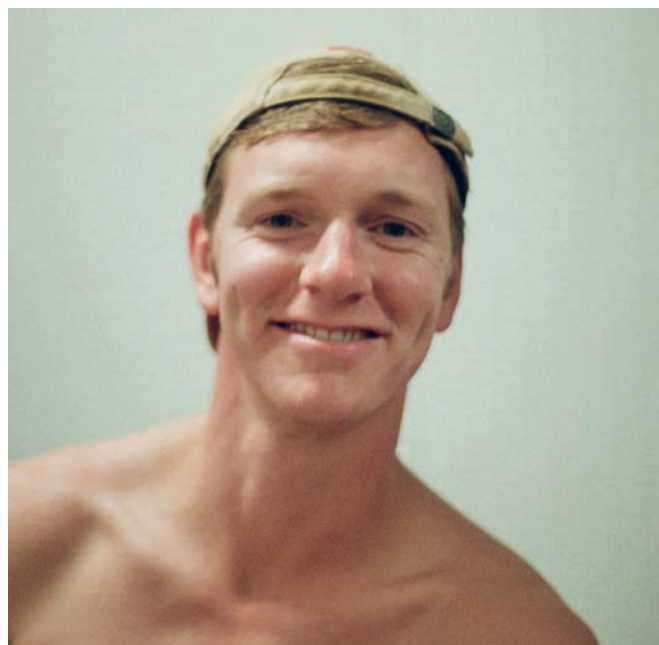
Radio Carter



In 2024, Ed bid farewell to his first love, the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, and gave in to his other passion: directional drills. His fascination with them was legendary—none of us were surprised it would one day lure him away. It was only a matter of time after during Ex RATTLESNAKE, he halted the vehicle to chat with a directional drill crew.

Today, Ed resides in Cheltenham with his diligent and endlessly patient wife, Lara, and their son, Felix. With a name like that, it's only a matter of time before Felix dons the QDG cap badge himself.

ZAK



SSgt Bob Comley

Bob Comley enlisted into the British Army in Sept 2001, at a very young age of 16. Initially attending phase One Training in ATR Bassingbourn and then completing specific to arms Training at Bovington. After a few failed attempts at breaking into the Warrant Officers and Sergeants mess for drinks, Tpr Comley found himself at Regimental Duty, where he joined A Sqn in Catterick. Coming from Stoke and with a love of football Bob fitted in quite seamlessly. It was in his first few days of the Regiment where he got the nickname Bob as a certain Sergeant at the time (He has a rather large head) didn't want to call him his school boy nickname of Pubehead. When the Regiment deployed on Op-TELIC 1 Bob was too young to deploy and thus stayed in Catterick on ROG and was part of the advance party to Osnabruck Germany.

In 2004 Bob would begin training to deploy to Northern Ireland and after a full training cycle, he was then turned around to deploy to Iraq on Op-TELIC 5. He was deployed mainly as the troop Sergeants Driver. It is here where he had been victim of a vicious prank to sell him to the local Men on a Thursday night. With the successful completion of Op-TELIC 5, Bob attempted an in house sniper cadre and at this time was unsuccessful but he didn't have to wait long for success as 1.5 years later he completed the Marine Sniper Cadre. On successful completion of a very arduous Sniper course Bob deployed on Op-TELIC 8 this time deploying as a sniper with 1LI (Now 5 Rifles) as part of the Reece Troop. This was a very prestigious post and one that was thoroughly enjoyed.

Upon completion of Op-TELIC 8 Bob completed the JCCC PNCO Cadre and here was selected to promote to LCpl. It wasn't long then until Bob found himself back on tour this time on Op-Herrick 9 as part of 1st Troop C Sqn as the troop Sgts Operator and for periods of the tour vehicle commander. Upon completion of the tour and after a few months, Bob met his future wife Hannah at a welcome home party. There wasn't much rest before during or after this tour as LCpl Comley now promoted, attended and completed Crew Commanders, coming second overall. Cpl Comley then deployed on Op-Herrick 15 this time as part of the BRF, and as a dedicated Sniper.

This tour was to be Bob's last in Afghanistan as shortly returning from tour he welcomed his first daughter Poppy and was subsequently selected to take an instructor post



at AFC Harrogate. On completion of this post Cpl Comley deployed to Sierra Leone on a STTT with A Sqn. On return Bob was promoted to Sgt and took over as SHQ Tp Sgt B Sqn. His reign of terror on comms was put to valuable practice on all major exercises conducted in his time both home and abroad. As Covid kicked in, in March 2020 Bob was promoted to SSgt this time taking over A Sqn SQMS. Here he successfully deployed the Sqn to Cyprus and was SQMS RLS at the British Army's Covid task for Liverpool. He was instrumental in the running of Pontins at this time.

Upon completion of SQMS SSgt Comley took up post at the Staff Leadership School. Here he used all his background and skill set to successfully train over 2000 Army trainers from LCpl to Col, ensuring they were all equipped to take the future of the Army forward. Throughout his career, Bob has represented the Regiment and Corps in Football, Basket Ball and Cross Country. He will always be remembered for his quick wit, humour in the face of adverse conditions and always having an opinion. To everyone he worked with, he always saw the positives and took a personal interest in developing all those around him. A true mate in every shape and form and a regimental character that will be deeply missed. For the future Bob is now employed as a primary school teacher in Liverpool. Married to his wife Hannah and with two daughters and a son, we wish Bob and his family all the very best for the future.

Captain Edward Dillon

Some men are born great, some have greatness thrust upon them, and some go to Cirencester. Ed went to Cirencester.

The Army was Ed's second career. His first was as a tree surgeon where, at 6ft5, he was named most valuable employee (costs saved in Cherry Picker hire). Post surgery he focused on Academia at Cirencester, following in the footsteps of Ed (H) and Ed (Ca). Ed visited the QDG for the first time on the infamous 'Super Cider Sunday' PO visit of 2019. Amongst Beers, cigarettes and cricket Ed knew that he had found his home. Finishing Sandhurst amidst the start of Covid Ed and his intake immediately went to Regimental Duty for 6 months. There he earned a name for himself as a stalwart of the games room. Whilst much of the mess felt that he had perfectly balanced being present without being overbearing as a junior officer, subsequent evidence suggests that he may have just had enough drinks to go 'non-verbal'. A well liked mess member Ed

backed up his friendly persona with professional competence. He excelled on the Troop Leaders course and rightfully earned himself a place in C Sqn for Op NEWCOMBE 2.

Highly competent officer in the field he was also incredibly humble and always put his soldiers and the mission before any selfish pride. He had the difficult position of being the second officer in a Troop for the first half of Mali. Fortunately for Ed he was Delta callsign to a quite frankly brilliant tactician, leader and mentor Ed (C) who benevolently took Ed (D) under his wing. Two officers in a Troop is not always a sound combination but Ed's humility, sense of humour and ruthless competence prevented arguments and created a Troop that had high morale and an exceptional tactical reputation. Even if he did bore the Battlegroup with his stock joke of 'two Eds is better than one'.

Ed took over from Ed as Troop Leader during Op NEWCOMBE. He already knew all of the Troop's personalities and capabilities

inside and out from his time as Delta callsign and decided to get stuck into the action right away. Within 5 days of becoming a Troop Leader Ed had seen his vehicle destroyed, lost all of his belongings that he wasn't wearing and been involved in the Field Army's first firefight since Op HERRICK 20. As with everything Ed did in his time in the QDG he took these experiences head-on, using his professional competence, brilliant ability to draw on the experience of those under his command and wry sense of humour (for a tall man) to achieve success.

Following Mali Ed had a steady year of Squadron level exercises. A C Sqn man through and through Ed then deployed to Texas on Ex WARFIGHTER, where he volunteered to work in the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 3(UK) Division's 'situational awareness cell'. He regretted this when he found out that he'd have to go to 4 ROMEO. Whilst uncomfortable for Ed it was good for the QDG as we were able to put 4 different Edwards (H, C, D and F) into the Divisional construct and thus guarantee success for Britain and NATO.

Ed then spent time as an Observer Mentor on Squadron Level international exercises before deploying to California for several months on Project Convergence Capstone 4, where along with Joe Kite he once again did the QDG name proud to an international audience.

All through this time there had been something missing in Ed's life. Pining to reach that next level of development he knew that this would only happen under one of the two father figures in his life, his father and his first Tp Ldr Ed (C). Most likely to reach Self-Actualisation under Ed (C), Ed (D) became Regimental Signals Officer, taking over from Ed (Ca). This moved him just one office away from his old patron Ed (C). Despite having decided to leave the Army, Ed's final year was filled with the drive and commitment that he showed throughout his time at QDG. Whilst RSO he was also the Potential Officer Liaison Officer (POLO) and worked closely with the Colonel of the Regiment, Adjutant and QDG's Sandhurst representative in a period that saw QDG commission a highly talented crop of Officers.

Ed was a brilliant officer. Professionally competent yet humble



he never had to self-advertise his abilities. He'll be greatly missed in the mess, conversation was never dull and he rarely (if ever) turned down a good booze up. Importantly Ed will also be missed by the soldiers of the QDG. He got the relationship with his men right. Calmly walking that thin line between a good and humorous relationship whilst allowing no doubt as to who is in command. Soldiers have lost a great leader, Junior officers coming through QDG in the next few years have lost a brilliant role model, the mess has lost a great drinker and JP Morgan have gained a terrible mathematician.

Captain George Barham QDG

It is with great fondness that we bid farewell to Captain George Barham, an officer whose unwavering dedication to 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards was inspiring. In his years of service, George distinguished himself not just by his leadership, but by his profound commitment to the betterment of the Regiment and the welfare of those who served alongside him. His service saw him thrive as a Troop Leader in B Squadron. His ability to turn a 355 radio on and set the correct frequency highlighted him from the other Troop Leaders and as such he was the obvious choice for RSO. He deployed on Op Newcombe in this role and did an outstanding job. He finished off his time at Regimental Duty as Second in Command C Squadron. He always wanted to be in the mighty C Squadron, so it was a happy ending for George. His wider service to the Regiment included delivering Ex White Knight, Senior Subaltern and so much more. The Officers' Mess truly felt the benefit of George's leadership.

George's passion for engineering is as boundless as his spirit of adventure and taste for Doom Bar. His ingenious yet occasionally misguided enthusiasm for building things, most notably a car that never quite started, became legendary. It was a fitting reflection of his character: always striving, always dreaming, and never shying away from the challenge, no matter how improbable. As eccentric as he is talented, George embodies a sense



of adventure that few can match. Whether it's exploring the far corners of the world, embracing the unknown, or indulging in his expensive taste for the finest wines, George lives life to the fullest, always with a flair and charm that captivates those around him. His zest for life is matched only by his equally peculiar penchant for motorised vehicles, which he enjoys thrashing around his vast estate.

And yet, for all his many gifts, George's unique sense of humour, or rather his chronic lack of banter, was something that endeared him to us all. While others might have dazzled with quick wit or sparkling conversation, George's quiet, thoughtful nature and occasional chinny joke

somehow made him all the more memorable. His company was never boring, his presence always appreciated.

Though Captain George Barham may have left the Regiment, his spirit and character will remain with us forever. He will be remembered not only for his commitment to his soldiers, his engineering exploits, and his adventurous soul, but for the way he made each of us feel like part of something larger than ourselves. His legacy lives on in every soldier he mentored, in every project he started, and in every glass of port raised in the mess.

Farewell, George. You may have departed from the Regiment, but you will always be one of us.

Major Daniel Brown

May I be permitted to start this Valette with my own opening salvo with Major Dan Brown, a man that I have now come to regard as a close friend. As a Royal Lancer and having arrived at 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards to take over OC B Squadron, and as an unaccompanied Major, I was to be billeted with the Dan in the Officers Mess Annex. People had initially warned me that Dan could be quite... "fastidious" in the way that he kept that house in order, and it would be best that I arrive with limited kit to clutter his environment, took more interest in house cleanliness than the running of my Squadron and generally conducted myself like a Submariner! I also made the fatal mistake of parking "nose in" due to arriving late on a Sunday evening, on reflection it was fate alone that saved me from having to find other lodgings!

To Dan then, hailing from Kidwelly as his hometown, he signed the oath of allegiance in late 1996, starting a career that would span over 28 years, culminating in retiring at Field Rank. Having attended ATR Winchester where he won the Best Recruit Award he quickly arrived at 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards in 1997 when the Regiment was based at Athlone Barracks. A [REDACTED] period at Regimental Duty followed, with deployments to Northern Ireland, Canada and Kosovo arose in quick succession. This was promptly followed by the birth of his Son, Ethan, whilst the Regiment was based in Catterick, North Yorkshire.

Promotion to Lance Corporal happened in 2001 after another [REDACTED] period supporting NATO exercises and also re-rolling onto CVR(T) and the required 30mm Gunnery Conversion Courses. Dan again deployed on operations for Op TELIC 1 with B Squadron, in role in what was a seminal Operational tour for the British Army. Known then as "Brownie" (no doubt in reference to his tan which was the colour of a stained mahogany table!) he spent the majority of the tour on his OC's vehicle. Having cut a hole in the roof of his vehicle I have it on good authority that Dan would sit proudly with his GPMG, bask in the 50C heat and revel in his decision to join an organisation that would pay him to go a shade browner per day! Regrettably, whilst following his OC into a meeting he forgot to stow the GPMG as well as leaving it out of sight of the driver. On his return to his vehicle the GPMG had walked and the driver was none the wiser, and after a few hours of furious negotiation with the locals, and a not insignificant amount of flapping, the GPMG was returned and only a few dollars lost. I again have it on good authority that not even the weapons grade tan could hide his ashen face when he discovered what had happened!

A return to ATR Winchester beckoned when he had returned from operations, where he was able to bestow his operational experiences on the newest crop of recruits. In 2007 the Crew Commanders Course was the next key milestone on the horizon where he again challenged for the top student award. This earmarked him out as a highly suitable RAC prospect to send across to the other side of the Combat Arms and in due course Dan attended and passed the arduous Platoon Sergeants Battle Course in Brecon. To give wider context to this achievement, this was at a time when the RAC had been given the high-profile task of force generating the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF), a task that our Infantry brethren felt strongly should lie with them. Needless to say RAC soldiers and officers were not



flavour of the month in Brecon for those years (even those hailing from just down the road!), and it speaks volumes about man that Dan put in another very strong performance on the course and was a rallying figure for RAC members who would follow in his footsteps.

His first tour to Afghanistan followed, Op HERRICK 15 where fulfilled the role of a Troop Second in Command for the BRF. I was on the same tour but doing a different role with the Afghans, so I am aware of how hard the BRF team worked from September 2011 to April 2012, and also how much the contribution of Dan and the wider Squadron effort made to the ongoing security of our corner of Helmand. After a return to Germany, an SQMS appointment in C Squadron and then a promotion to Warrant Officer Class 2, Dan returned to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 20 as the BRF Squadron Sergeant Major. This role allowed him to bring all of his previous experience to bear, and along with the OC at the time (now Colonel Hugo Lloyd), form a subunit which was going

to provide a significant proportion for the security for the close down of the British Army's mission in Helmand. He was held in very high regard by the Squadron, due to his attention to detail, no nonsense approach to soldiering and ability to generate what he would refer to as a "warrior ethos" amongst the ranks.

A natural choice for the Regimental Sergeant Major of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, Dan took over the role in 2016. Shortly after being appointed, he planned and delivered the 5th State Opening of the Welsh Assembly at the Sennedd in Cardiff for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 2nd. As RSM he always put the soldiers first, was never afraid to speak truth to power and invested heavily in E Squadron to reinvigorate the wider Regimental community. Additionally to this the Waterloo Dinner Nights that he planned were some of the best in the Regiment's history.

Having shown significant potential as a Late Entry Officer, Dan attended the first Late Entry Combined Assessment Board and was selected for a Commission. He promoted to Captain in 2018 and deployed on Op CABRIT(P) as the National Support Element Commander on the same day that his son Ethan arrived at ART Winchester. Other Regimental appointments followed, notably Regimental Careers Management Officer (RCMO) where he again put the soldiers first, ensured their MS was beyond reproach whilst mentoring his team. His son Ethan joined the Regiment in 2019.

Dan finished his time at Regimental Duty as the Quarter Master, and was integral in deploying the Regiment to Mali on Op NEWCOMBE in late 2021. I remember driving him the 400m from the Officer Mess Annex to the Guard Room so that he didn't have to carry his bags and remarking that I now understood the pride that my father must have felt dropping me off at an airport to deploy on operations, I was promptly told to bugger off (the polite version) and make sure that the house wasn't looking like "DE Swamp" on his return or there'd be hell to pay!

He attended Intermediate Command and Staff College (Land) after this and then one a SO2 role in the MOD Abbey Wood, focusing on the acquisition of weapons and ammunition across the RAC. He leaves the Army to take up an opportunity as a Director of Operations for a company in South Wales.

Major George Jackson

George 'Jacko' Jackson entered Sandhurst from one of the Regiment's feeder universities (at the time) Newcastle, in 2014. He began training for his commission safe in the knowledge that his ultimate destination was 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards having been offered a confirmed cadetship while still studying. No one quite knew how the young man secured such a luxury and all the freedom that the pressure free life at RMAS would afford him. A crucial witness does report overhearing Jacko calling the then Colonel of the Regiment, Lt Gen Mayall to thank him personally after a PO visit. My source acknowledges that the following is a cantankerous misquote but he remembers the phone call going somewhat like this: "Oh good afternoooooon General. How are you? – Yes, mummy and daddy are fine, I just wanted to say that I just enjoyed a fabulous visit to your regiment." The rest of course is history, and it will be my job to distil the marvellous career that followed that phone call into a few amusing anecdotes and a heartfelt goodbye, buckle in.

George arrived at Regimental Duty on a sleepy Sunday evening when most of the Mess were enjoying a few late afternoon drinks in the garden in Dempsey Bks. Tired from the drive and eager to join his new brother officers for a drink himself, George settled into a chair just slightly too close to the Senior Subaltern Duncan Wiggins. Upon observing George's fashionably ripped jeans and no doubt very cool t-shirt Duncan ordered him immediately to go and get changed. In an act of terrifying sang-froid I watched in admiration as Jacko finished his ciggy before sloping off.

Assigned to B Sqn under Dom Staveley most of his early days were spent preparing for the final ball in Germany and looking forward to a deployment as COEFOR to Kenya later in the year. One of the preparatory exercises for that trip to Kenya saw the Squadron shake out on STANTA at the same time as A Sqn. Bored of an evening, George was one of the intrepid troop leaders that decided that the adjacent squadron could do with a bit of extra "reaction to enemy fire" training. Unbeknown to George and his giggling colleagues the woodblock they had just assaulted also contained a detachment of RAF regiment. They, nor A Sqn, were particularly impressed, sentiments echoed by Dom Staveley the morning after during a now infamous hairdryer-esq dressing down. Once the dust settled the guilty foursome were quickly giggling again and now, in the light of day, a true Jacko trademark, the wobbly shoulder, was on full view. When ever George breaks into a laugh or is in anyway delighted, which is often, his right shoulder will bounce uncontrollably along with his laughter.

George quickly gained a standing as a great Troop Leader and his military prowess was confirmed when he passed the arduous jungle warfare instructors' course. He enjoyed a great



reputation with everyone he worked with and backed up his charming nature with real grit. His reputation was further solidified on the rugby pitch following a nasty tackle by Sgt Welfoot that left George's tibia and fibula snapped clean in two. During the long wait for an ambulance to arrive, George steadfastly ignored the obvious pain he was in to continue chatting, smoking ciggies and only occasionally taking deep lungful's of oxygen to "take the edge off." We were all having too much of a good time being regaled by the invalid to question the proximity of a lit cigarette to an oxygen tank.

George's foray into Extra Regimental Employment saw him first head to the Field Training Unit of Salisbury plain where he bent his experience to training Battle Groups toward validation for operations. QDG went through the FTU a couple of times on his watch, and it was always a delight and occasionally a relief to have a friend in the butts.

After FTU George was employed on an OCE tour on Op SHADER on the Syria desk as an SO2. The period

of 2021-22 can be described by an observer to have offered a period of relative calm in the region, it is not too much to venture that Jacko's unflappable character contributed in some way to that fragile peace. Nor should it be believed that the subsequent return to violence and eventual coup we're anything more than the direct result of the removal from the region of his calming presence.

That calm resolve would be in high demand in George's next appointment in the LOC in the triple hatted roles of Training Plans, Operational Commitments and Campaign Plans. During a frenetic period, George's hand can be found in the staff work for Op PITTING, the invasion of Ukraine, the Jubilee, The late Queen's funeral and the King's coronation.

By now George has garnered a reputation as an utterly safe pair of hands and so it was that he was invited to command D Sqn of the King's Royal Hussars. I'm told, by the same source that let slip the post PO visit phone call to General Mayall, that George accepted this offer for no grander reason than the opportunity to have a smart pair of trews made up. Of course this couldn't be further from the truth. George spent the last few years of his career leading soldiers, an endeavour that this pen picture demonstrates was a real calling and one that he will undoubtedly miss as he moves on to pastures new.

On behalf of the regimental family, I wish George and Lucinda all the best on their next adventure wherever it may take them. George will be missed by all that worked with him but Lucinda, his eminently better half in all regards, will continue to earn him frequent invitations back.

JPC



