# SOLDIERS OF THE UEEN'S

#### **UNCONQUERED I SERVE**



1966-1992

**LOAN SERVICE** 

THE JOURNAL OF THE QUEEN'S REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

2018



#### **FOREWORD**

#### BY ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT **COLONEL A A A BEATTIE**

It is now six years since the annual Journal of the Queen's Regimental Association, in its current guise, was launched and since I last wrote the Foreword. What has vindicated the expense, not least as it has attracted generous donations, is that *The Journal* has proved an unrivalled medium of communication bringing Queensmen around the World together, in fact and through memory. But what it has also done is that it has



cemented the Association's existence and purpose in the membership's mind as a vibrant part of the overall regimental family and thereby contributed to an almost threefold increase in active participation from just over a thousand members in 2013 to just under three thousand today. An additional benefit is the way that it has allowed our members to complement General Jonathan Riley's magnificent 'Soldiers of the Queen' as anecdotes of personal experience add colour and life to the Regiment's history. My thanks to all contributors.

In 2013, I expressed my concern that the Queen's Regimental Association had effectively been side-lined. I still believe that to be true and I am sure it falls into the ambit of 'unintended consequences'. But, what is now increasingly evident is that the Queen's Regimental Association itself goes from strength to strength: fundraising flourishes to meet the inevitable increase in benevolence demands; the Queen's Regiment's memory has been nationally assured by the dedication of our Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum; and we are seeing the embracing of new branches into the Association's infrastructure as the word gets out that the Association is there for all former Queensmen and their dependents, and that it is delivering! For example, the Secretary and I were delighted, along with many other comrades from his time of service, to attend the dedication of the headstone of Corporal Raymond Spencer MM, the cost of which was voted in by the Annual General Meeting in March.

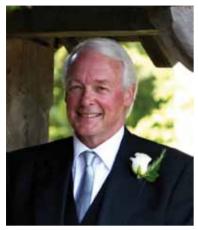
I would be failing if I did not draw attention to the spectacular fundraising success of the Queen's Regimental Riders' Association. Over the 5 year period it has raised nearly £35,000 with an exponential rise year on year. QRRA sets itself a high bar and always achieves its aim...and more. Its collective contribution to regimental benevolence is exemplary and I urge our branches to take up the challenge similarly.

The Association owes thanks to Colonel Wayne Harber, late Regimental Secretary, the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, who throughout his tenure supported our efforts and ensured that we acted in the interests of our members and the wider regimental family. We welcome Colonel John Powell as his successor, confident that, as he too is an-ex-Queensman, we will continue to receive objective encouragement and support.

I must record, on behalf of us all, grateful thanks to Alasdair Goulden, our Secretary, who works tirelessly- and hugely above any threshold suggested in the contract of his 'job specification' - to serve the Association, edit The Journal, fundraise, control and disburse benevolence, and generally keep the name and reputation of the Queen's Regiment as high as it is in the regimental and public eye.

Finally, my second challenge after fundraising concerns 'belonging'. I ask all of you who receive this Journal just to spare a thought for anyone you know who is not yet engaged and encourage them to join our splendid institution, **The** Queen's Regimental Association.





Greetings and welcome to the 2018 "Loan Service" edition of the Queen's Regimental Association Journal, illustrating that Queensmen were never satisfied with just doing the rounds of Northern Ireland, Germany etc or, as last year showed, grabbing every opportunity to practice their art in the various conflicts that have taken place around the world. We served in places as far away as India, Namibia and Malaysia; and some, as you will see from the first article, appeared to have been on permanent loan service! Irrespective of the fact that they were away from the Regiment, their stories are still our story as they illustrate the professionalism of the officers and soldiers who were part of our Regiment. They also helped demonstrate to the rest of the world what it meant to be a Queensman and, as I deal with members throughout the year, still show what being a Queensman is all about. I hope that this year's Journal illustrates that spirit and once again I thank all those who have contributed their time so generously to record their experiences.

As with every year, I have tried to include elements of all the material that has been sent in but space dictates that unfortunately not every word written can be included. Your efforts have not been wasted though because any material – especially the anecdotes – that has not been used will be filed as the start of the collection for next year.

To my long-suffering proof readers, Anthony Beattie, Mike Jelf, Nick Keyes and Merrick Willis, I offer the usual heart-felt thanks for all their hard work in helping to get the Journal to the printers. If there are any mistakes or typos, they are mine as I had the final read!

Once again there have been a number of fundraising initiatives this year. A few stand out. The first is the continuing and magnificent efforts of the Queen's Regimental Riders' Association – an all battalion group – who have raised a record £17,272.76 for the Benevolent Fund this year. Their cheques were presented to the President at HM Fortress Tower of London in the presence of Lt-Gen Doug Chalmers, Colonel of the PWRR. The second plaudit goes to our Drummers who have not only been raising awareness of the Regiment in the Kent area, enhancing our reputation, at the same time have raised significant amounts for the Benevolent Fund and the Museum Fund. They give of their time freely, purely for the love of the Regiment and drumming and the thanks of all of us should go to them. The Queensman Lodge also deserve a significant mention for not only making history (read the article!) but also for their very generous donations to the Benevolent Fund and the Museum. Thanks too to all those who put their hand in their pocket to support these efforts. All the money collected goes into our Benevolent Fund to benefit all ex-members of the Regiment who are in need.

You will see the latest report from the museum. We are still desperately in need of artefacts. Please do dig out all your old buckshee kit that you have for which you, and your family, once you have shuffled off this mortal coil, have no use, and send it to the museum with a story attached. The response to this request continues to be poor so far with the odd exception and unless items start appearing then the chances of us having a meaningful exhibition of our heritage will be slim.

Lastly, as far as this year is concerned, there have been meetings of Queensmen throughout the United Kingdom, weddings have taken place and opportunities for inclusion in 'Photo of the Year' taken. The reports all follow. Enjoy!

Next year's Journal will, as it's the 50th anniversary of our deployment into Northern Ireland, concentrate on that troubled place with, I hope, a report of some kind from each one of the 36 Tours in which we took place. So get writing! Send me your memories not forgetting to let me know which battalion, which tour and the date. The deadline for articles for next year is 7 September 2019. Please do not wait until the last minute to send in your article but get writing and send it in straight away.

With every good wish for the coming year.

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## **BOUGHT OR BORROWED?**

Memoirs of a Military Remittance Man or How Not to Plan a Career

#### By Peter Hiscock

In days of Empire, the black sheep of the family would be despatched to its furthest ends and told never to return. I know the feeling!

I have to admit that my first expedition from the British Army was at my own behest. I had found after my first regimental amalgamation that there were 16 captains in the battalion and life looked a little restricted. I therefore looked around for other avenues of military adventure and settled on the Trucial Oman Scouts (TOS) which seemed to have the requisite adventurous tone.

It did not start well (IDNSW). One of our number died of apoplexy awaiting a Royal Air Force flight (many of us have been close to it!). IDNSW continued. On arrival, I succumbed to pneumonia. Once I rose from my sick bed, I found that the squadron was largely composed of Dhofari from southern Oman who had learnt their Arabic from the squadron officers, all of whom spoke with a pronounced Scottish accent and therefore my painfully acquired and rudimentary Arabic was of little value. The soldiers were somewhat mercurial and military life was sometimes delicate. I spent the next 18 months wandering through the jebel, wadis and sands of the Trucial States, frequently lost, wearing a red and white tablecloth on my head, ready to neutralise minor quarrels within the seven Trucial Sheikdoms (now the UAE). 40 years later, it is noticeable that those same wandering tracks have now become four-lane highways with street lighting.

A few years later as I was sitting in my office as the ADC to General Fergus Ling, musing on why and how the General's Christmas tree could be described as being 'of the wrong shape', I noticed that officers were required for the soon to be formed Guyana Defence Force. Since I had recently become engaged to my wife, whose family lived in Guyana, this seemed too good an opportunity to miss.

IDNSW. My new commander was aghast at my lack of BAOR experience, dismissive of my degree (another over-educated and under-trained officer) and of my plans for future wedded bliss ("You won't have much time for married life, young man"). Nevertheless, I was the only game in town, so I was presented with one Guards

sergeant, one ex-Volunteer Force subaltern, 2 ex-riot police NCOs, 120 No 4 rifles and 130 recruits and told to form a rifle company in 8 weeks. The soldiers were roughly half African, descended from slaves, and half Indian, descended from indentured cane workers; two Portuguese and one lone Amerindian (half American/ half Indian) completed the collection. In spite of gassing the entire camp after our improvised gas chamber proved to be insufficiently insulated, not understanding that to be early was as bad in my commander's eyes as being late, and failing to provide sufficiently imaginative lower control input for the monthly CPX, I proudly reported No 2 Company ready for duty. I was somewhat surprised, thinking that I would be off to capture parts of Venezuela for the new country or some other high-value task, to be told my next task was to organize the first and probably last state banquet and turn my soldiers into waiters. Rather to my surprise, I was selected for a Staff course, albeit not for two years so that I was suitably behind my contemporaries.

Time and other duties continued. I still did not get to BAOR and the nice new duty-free car remained a mirage, but life included wearing a light blue UN beret. I then learnt I was to be loaned to the Sultan of Oman to command the Frontier Force.



Peter Hiscock and Signaller Shawiish FF

IDNSW. On the way to my first 'O' Group, my predecessor only narrowly avoided an oncoming 4-ton truck. Once I got my breath back, I found I was the nominal commander of 1,012 Baluch mercenaries from Pakistan, five one-legged tailors (mine casualties), six dhobi wallahs, 10 sweepers (Christians) and 15 mess staff, as well as a slack handful of British officers - somewhat of a misnomer as they included an Irishman, an Australian, a New Zealander and an Indian doctor, four Royal Marines, two Green Jackets, a Guardsman, one RTR and one REME (ex-SAS). Some of these were on contract to the Sultan and the others loaned from the Oueen (bought or borrowed as my wife put it). Our major task was mopping up after the insurgency in which my TOS soldiers had been a constituent part of the enemy. We had minor successes, but the major one occurred when I was on leave; humbling. Communication with the soldiers was not easy as most were illiterate and spoke only Baluch, so there was a mixture of English, Baluch and Arabic; the key people were the signallers who managed to interpret. They were very stolid people; at one stage I had broken my glasses and had recourse to the pincenez from my gas mask tied with string! The Baluch soldiers took it in their stride as another curious foible of the sahibs! I hate to think of the remarks I might have had in a British battalion and the nickname I would have suffered subsequently. After three very happy years, MS struggled to find me a suitable posting since I was a very square peg apparently .Eventually I was buried in the Procurement Executive.

IDNSW. I managed to break my predecessor's favourite coffee mug when trying to wash it in the lavatory hand basin, having become unaccustomed to the mundane life of a Whitehall warrior. My task was not to procure 'talent' but to coax special equipment from British industries in quick time on a promise that they might eventually be paid, it being the time of the Thatcher Moratorium. I was reasonably successful at this and found myself with no more equipment to coax and was therefore out of a job. The next whirl of the military roundabout sent me as far as possible to the west coast of the USA, to the US Army.

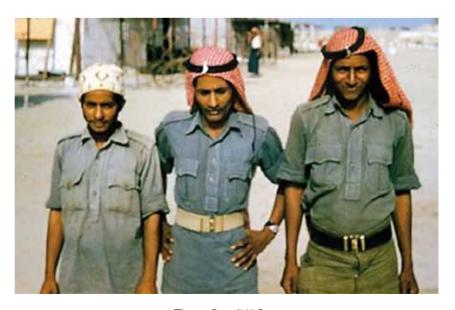
IDNSW. Nobody knew how to employ me. I was posted to the Hi-Tech Test Bed, initially responsible for Ideas Management. Think of 'blue-sky thinking', recumbent on a water bed. Eventually, I was drafted to a division run by a testy US Army lieutenant-colonel, made more so because his division consisted of officers from the US Marine Corps, the US Air Force, Britain, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and France and one lone US Army major. I had to explain to the major the aristocratic concept of the whipping boy or, in his case, the whipping major, to explain why his life was so professionally miserable.

Towards the end of this tour, I got the 'letter' - no further promotion for you - and was buried by the 'flesh peddlers (an evocative US term for posting branch) to yet another hidey hole, as advisor to the Saudi Arabia National Guard on secondment.

IDNSW. On arrival, as my heavy baggage was x-rayed, I noticed to my alarm that my son's air rifle was prominent but luckily the inspectors were far too busy trying to detect alcohol in the liquid of my children's boule balls. My task was largely to whisper sweet British military nothings into the Saudi Arabian ear, whilst the other ear was pounded by an American-organised mechanisation programme. My status as a seconded officer was somewhere between bought and borrowed but had the



Mul Karim Bux FF



Three Gundi X Sqn



advantage of paying no income tax and we all (including children from school) could travel first class; perhaps at last I could afford a new car! It was not to last; a letter arrived to say that somebody had made an error in the calculations and I was indeed to be promoted. I envisaged, if not to the pinnacle of military organisation at

least somewhere in the seat of it, but found myself disappointed but not surprised, at yet another peripheral activity, at the Ordnance Board.

Unusually, it started well. I was responsible for the design safety of all infantry weapons, all small arms ranges, and common use pyrotechnics. I calculated that by this time I had carried 11 types of personal weapons in operations, although only once fired at an enemy, and that to the cost of the windscreen of my company commander's Champ! I had also been on many ranges, formal, informal, licensed and totally unlicensed, some safe and others downright dangerous, and was experienced in being burnt handling flares and being deafened by thunderflashes. However, if it started well, it almost ended very badly. At BATUS, standing proudly in my turretless tank, a burst of 7.62mm from a disoriented or disgruntled dismount flew far too close. On another occasion, testing a private venture training grenade, it exploded in the inventor's pocket as we walked together to the test site. Somebody up there must have given the game away, because towards the end, I was offered the same job in Australia. It would have made a good ending but regretfully I had to decline!



Peter Hiscock dressed for walk Feb 76

So there I was after 32 years, 19 units or organisations, 11 cap badges and too many different uniforms to count; I was a civilian and on Permanent Loan Service from my Queen to my wife!

In 1987, 6/7 Queen's had their annual camp at Jurby on the Isle of Man. The highlight of camp saw the Battalion providing a guard of honour for HRH Princess Margaret who was going to open the Manx parliament known as the Tynwald. The RSM was WO1 'Bernie' Winters who oversaw the Battalion's drill, culminating in a number of full dress rehearsals. At the end of the final rehearsal, he gathered the guard around him, asking if anyone had any final questions. "Yes sir, I have a question" said Cfn Marr (REME) from B Company, "What will HRH be wearing tomorrow?" There was a pause and Bernie said "Did everyone hear the question? This young man wants to know if I know what Princess Margaret will be wearing tomorrow." There was another pause before Bernie exploded: "HOW THE F\*\*\*\*\*G HELL DO I KNOW WHAT SHE WILL WEAR TOMORROW? I'M THE RSM NOT HER F\*\*\*\*G LADY IN WAITING!" There were no further questions......

Les Vial

# **EXERCISE PURPLE MONARCH**

A Queensman goes to Sea, or Gibraltar Revisited

By Billy Bolton

The year was 1992, our final year as Queensmen, so it seemed fitting that one of us got to go to sea again with the Senior Service before the dreaded disbandment took place. It was June; 198 years to the month after the Third Battle of Ushant, when our forebears fought so gallantly aboard HMS Queen Charlotte and other ships in Lord Howe's fleet in what became known as the Glorious First of June; but allow me first to set the scene.



Billy Bolton

I was serving as a Staff Captain in HQ 56 London Brigade, which in those days was the working part of HQ London District, then quartered in Chelsea Barracks whilst Horse Guards was being refurbished. Despite being referred to as 56 'Luncheon' Brigade by some of the more humorous members of the Household Division, we were occasionally quite busy.

At the time, computers were slowly creeping into the Services. Needless to say, each service developed its own; if I recall correctly, we had something called MAPPER and known, of course and not without reason, as 'Crapper'. Unsurprisingly, the three individual systems could not 'talk' to each other, so the boffins were sent off to come up with yet another system that could get them all to sing from the same hymn sheet, as it were. The buzz-word at the time was 'Purple', or 'Joint' for the uninitiated, so being able to communicate with each other seemed a pretty basic requirement; so basic in fact that it was clearly overlooked by the Chiefs of Staff and the Ministry, but I digress. My job description was given a re-scrub behind my back and I awoke

one morning that March to find that I now had a 'Purple' role and was duly sent to RM Poole to attend the Joint Warfare Staff's Out of Area Course No 5A. My first challenge was to book myself into the Officers' Mess at Poole – "Captain Bolton, are you in the Royal Marines, Sir?" asked the young lady I spoke to over the telephone, "No I'm bloody not!" I replied. Imagine my delight when I finally got to the Mess (or is it a Wardroom?) to find that I'd been put in the Honeymoon Suite! Fantastic, thought I, this lot know how to look after themselves... only to have my kit unceremoniously thrown out into the corridor the following morning by a grumpy 'bootneck' colonel, also on the course, for being a three-star captain and not one with four rings! Never mind.

On Sunday 28 June, I left London for South Cerney, which seemed strange at the time as I knew that HMS Ark Royal, which was to be my home for the next few weeks, was alongside in 'Pompey'. However, that gave me a chance to go and meet Mike Scott for supper as he was doing the Shrivenham stage of his Staff College course. Early the next morning, we drove past my front door going in the other direction, boarded the 'Ark' and set sail for Gibraltar at 1100hrs. At noon, STARTEX was declared; I was one of a pair of G1/G4 watch-keepers, and after a quick game of 'Rock, Paper, Rank', found myself on the 'doom stag' from 2000hrs to 0800hrs for the duration. EX PURPLE MONARCH had begun. For reasons unknown it became known as EX PURPLE HELMET.

HMS Ark Royal, launched in 1981, was the fifth ship to bear this famous name; the first was a 690-ton, 38 gun-ship built in Deptford for Sir Walter Raleigh in 1586 which led the English Fleet against the Spanish Armada. The second was the Royal Navy's first seaplane carrier: commissioned in 1914, she was later re-named 'Pegasus' and served until the end of World War II. The third, launched in 1937, was a 23,000 ton Fleet Carrier, the first British ship designed as a flattopped aircraft carrier. Sadly, she was sunk by a U-Boat off Gibraltar in November 1941. The fourth, an Audacious-class carrier, was launched in 1950 and decommissioned in 1979, but not before she achieved fame when the BBC filmed the documentary series, 'Sailor', on her in 1976. My HMS Ark Royal was decommissioned amidst much sadness in 2011.



The 'Ark' had nine decks, the flight deck being No 1 Deck. My 'office' was a small space down on No 7 Deck, well below the water line and just above the propeller shafts, which, at any speed, vibrated due to a design fault and badly spaced bearings, so accidentally nodding off 'on stag' was out of the question. My accommodation on board was in Cabin 2K4: not a huge place, but it had in it 27 beds in triple bunks. The ship had been re-roled into a command platform, i.e. the aeroplanes were taken off and various comms systems were put on, including the jumble of computer and comms kit mentioned earlier. The aim of the

exercise was to test the various computers and command and control systems, on the move, out of area, and then move it all ashore and try again.

On Wednesday 1 July, we arrived in the Bay of Gibraltar. Having spent two of my formative years as a subaltern ensconced on the Rock (1985-1987) with the 1st Battalion, it was interesting to approach the place from the sea, but we couldn't see much as the Rock was completely shrouded in a Levanter (Ed: Foq!). The next day was the 'establish a beach-head' phase and the advance party flew ashore.

For those that remember the place, what were our MT sheds at Lathbury Barracks had been, with the addition of some hessian screens, timber, tables 6' and chairs GS, transformed into HQ Joint Force Operations and declared a 'No Saluting Area', which coming from London District, made me feel a bit uneasy. On the 3rd (Friday), the rest of us deployed ashore by helicopter shuttle - this was another interesting experience; we were mustered downstairs in the vast hangar space and then delivered to the flight deck by one of the deck lifts which more usually move aircraft up and down. I was given a bed in what was C Company's old accommodation block and then spent the next five days doing the doom stag in the MT sheds. To be honest, I recall little of the 'working' bit of the exercise, (however, at one conference I spotted a familiar face, none other than Captain Richard Scott-Will-Harknett, late of the 3rd Battalion and a chum from our Depot days). It seemed to be a constant round of important visitors and gaggles of senior officers all rubbing their chins and nodding sagely to each other, but I'm sure someone got some benefit from it all – maybe?

At 0800hrs on Tuesday 7th, ENDEX was called, much to everyone's delight. After the usual post-exercise 'headless chicken' phase, we were fallen out for the rest of the day. Wednesday was declared an R&R day but exercising troops were told that they were forbidden from going into Town! That seemed a slightly silly thing to say so Richard and I headed off straight to Town and had garlic steaks in 'Jim's Den', a haunt much loved by our Mess in days of old. I spent Wednesday having a wander around, re-capturing the sights and smells of yesteryear and was both surprised and delighted to meet Private Roger Ali, once in my platoon and now stagging on the front gate at Lathbury Barracks, having just joined the Gibraltar Regiment. Roger is now a major and the RGR's Quartermaster! While free, I also revisited the Trafalgar Cemetery and paid my respects to those of the Queen's Royal Regiment interred therein, having died of the 'Malignant Fever' in 1804. The Regiment lost ninety officers and men in the outbreak in that October.



The following day saw us set sail for Blighty whilst the 'Grown-Ups', all being so busy and important, were flown back home. This made for a thoroughly pleasant five-day cruise courtesy of the Grey Funnel Line and was by far the best part of the whole adventure. Leaving Gibraltar, the ship's company, myself included, lined the decks in what is called 'Procedure Alpha', as we had done when we first arrived. I found this a profoundly moving experience, truth be told,









and we were to do it once again as we arrived in Portsmouth.

As long as we wandered around in some semblance of uniform, the Andrew (old Naval expression for themselves) were happy to give us the run of the ship and they laid on

helicopter trips with 846 Sqn, a 'Make & Mend', a tug of war competition and other potted sports – the football came to an abrupt end when the ball flew off the edge into the 'oggin! On the subject of things going over the edge: as we passed the site of the Battle of Trafalgar, the ship slowed down and I was invited to attend a burial at sea! I didn't know it until then. but it is apparently every sailor's right to be buried at sea. However these days, they restrict it to ashes rather than entire corpses. Accordingly, the White Ensign was dipped as the old chap's remains were slid off a plank at the back, again a most moving episode and a privilege to witness. Other highlights of the return trip, other than the CSB beer in the Ward Room bar, was the Chinese laundry; this really had to be experienced to be believed jammed up for 'ard on No 3 Deck next to the 'Shiny Door' (matelots' term for the Nick) and the hawser storage, hot, steamy and extremely noisy, it was a version of Dante's Inferno; a small army of Chinamen toiled away in there and ate and slept there too. Having dropped some things off, I was told to come back at 'half-past sixteen', which I duly did to find my socks had been starched and pressed so that they were unopenable, my civvy shirts were immaculate but all the buttons had been crushed and everything else was like cardboard, all for £5.39 – I still have the 'RN Form S. 1279 H.M. Ships Laundry List' as a souvenir. On Monday 13th, we arrived in Portsmouth: I was amazed by the huge crowds that turned out unprompted to wave and cheer from the shoreline as HMS Ark Royal sailed past, but apparently the locals were very fond of her and always did. We returned their salute by standing to attention on entry by Procedure Alpha.

All in all, it was a wonderful couple of weeks. So much of it has now passed into history - 56 London Bde, HMS Ark Royal, a posting to Gibraltar, me (!). The happy memories are tinged slightly with sadness, but at least I have them.

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My Chinese Laundry List!

When 6/7 QUEENS did an annual camp in Gibraltar in the late 1970s, the Governor sent his car for the late Sgt Lefebvre, who worked in the City in civilian life, so he could advise HE on his investment portfolio. Sentries outside 'The Convent' saluted when they saw the car approaching! He expected it from then on!

Martin Wilson

#### LOAN SERVICE IN BRUNEI

By James Myles

Having had an exciting time in Northern Ireland, - well if you can call being shot and spending four months in hospital and a year in Germany trundling around the countryside, exciting - I was informed that I was to be posted to the Divisional Training Depot to train recruits. I was not enamoured of the prospect. Working someone else's programme with little to add did not appeal at all to me. I had been spoilt. What was the alternative? I had heard of loan service, then called secondment; I applied, passed the selection and was duly posted.

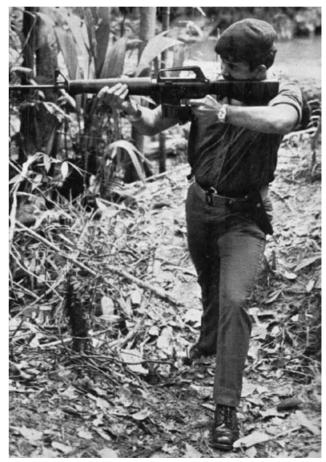
I packed my things and joined a civil flight via Karachi, Ceylon and Singapore. In Singapore I found the famous night markets where food is cooked over charcoal fires on ingenious bicycle-mounted travelling kitchens. The Indian, Chinese and Malay food tasted superb but the effect on my stomach that evening was that of Mount Krakatoa. I exploded the following morning, missed the final call and then had to get myself back to the hotel, re-negotiate a room and quietly try to die. My wife of just two months was not impressed!

I arrived two days later to find that the message that I was now married had not been received in Brunei. No married quarter was available. Major Chris Brown of the Royal Scots, who had trained me as a junior leader, kindly offered me his quarter for a month whilst he high-tailed it off into the jungle. He was one of the few 'jungley bunglies' in the regiment and we were to share much in common in this area during that tour.

I met my own company commander one evening soon after arriving. He appeared and knocked at the door of the house and stood back into the gloom. The houses were raised up on short stilts. He was a black-haired, swarthy man with a large, spread nose, not uncommon for Malays. Yes, I thought, he was a Brunei Malay albeit a very well-spoken one. He was in fact a Coldstream Guardsman. He was not impressed with my error! Once we had overcome the initial misunderstanding, he said he had been away and I was to report to his office in the morning. He was a man of few words and fewer explanations. His instructions were that I was to be in the jungle by the end of the week, so I was to report to the QMs and make sure I was kitted-out. So no attendance at the Jungle Warfare School or language training for me. "Not necessary" he said. "You'll learn what you need to here."



Main mosque, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei



The Sultan of Brunei on a visit to the field

To explain to any reader not familiar with North Borneo, the daily temperatures were between 28-35 degrees Centigrade out of the sun and the humidity was mostly 98%. If you walked for ten minutes with no discernible cooling, one side would be soaked with sweat and the other drying off in the sun. Walking to the QMs to collect kit was a challenge. The story so far sounds as if the Royal Brunei Malay Regiment (RBMR) was laid back and not



ready for those joining. With just 32 British officers and families, either in the RBMR or the supporting technicians, it was not set up to greet new people.

Clearly, I needed a car fairly quickly if we were to survive. Nick Cann, an old mate from the battalion who was also in Brunei, just happened to have one for sale and sold me his spare car. Dodgy deal or what, eh?

Jungle kit was going to be an issue. I am 6' 1" and have large feet. Back in Germany, I was very firmly ordered to hand in all my temperate kit to the QM in Werl and not to take boots! 'Come on! I am an infantryman! Leave my boots behind?' The old Borneo hands made it quite clear the boots would rot in no time at all. I left my boots behind!

"What do you mean you have no boots? This is an Infantry Battalion and I was ordered not to bring any with me!" I stood in the QMs in the RBMR horrified by being outmanoeuvred by the system. The RBMR corporal storeman looked embarrassed and produced a pair of glorified plimsolls. "Here Tuan, Harkey Bowut". His smile said, 'I have solved the problem and Tuan can wear these hockey boots' was written all over his face. Clearly this storeman had not been in the jungle for a very long time! The QM's presence was requested. The Brunei Malay captain looked very harassed as he made excuses for a fractured and poor supply chain from Britain. This was 1972 and industry in Britain was in bad order - as my feet would be if I tried to operate in rain-forested high ridges in 98% humidity. There were no boots! Well, not for me!

I was then measured up by the Indian tailor. Wow! Tailored combats! I should have taken the warning as I looked at the green trousers. They had buckles on both sides of the waist. You lose an awful lot of weight in the



RBMR Trooping the Colour

jungle. The QM's did not store the varied sizes for the 'Orang Puteh', so a resident Indian tailor was the answer.

We deployed to the jungle a few days later. I had an 8-man patrol with one English speaker, a well-born educated Brunei Malay soldier, who was a cut above the rest. Lifted in by a pair of UH1b Bell helicopters (Hueys), we arrived at the edge of the tropical rain forest. Preceding this for about a mile was secondary jungle. This was an area of formerly primary tropical rain forest that had been slashed and burned for agriculture by jungle people. After a growing season or two, the rain would wash away the nutrient and it would be abandoned to regrow; it lacked the top canopy of the rain forest and was thick growth and hard going under a relentless sun. By comparison, the rain forest was cooler.

Floating near the jungle were huge butterflies. They were an unbelievable eight to twelve inches across and were just so fabulously beautiful. That was the good side. Then I met 'wait-a-while.' This plant boasts thin bramblelike tendrils. These are enormously strong and they are covered on all sides in sharp barbs. Think brambles, multiple hooks and barbs on all sides, up-armoured and with aggressive attitude. The moment they caught you, you had to freeze and unpick them or they ripped your flesh open. Deploying into a Borneo jungle with torn flesh would not be wise (apart from that, they hurt like hell). There were more delights to come. Whilst we had swarms of mosquitoes around us, I had yet to meet leeches. Oh, the leeches! The places they can get to on your body!

After a day's patrol, we moved into an LUP. I checked the perimeter and arranged to give orders. My platoon runner, the English speaker, would translate for me but he declined to cook for us both. Het the matter go but clearly this did not bode well for the future. When I asked him why he replied "Tuan, I don't cook for an Orang Puteh". This was not a racist approach but he felt it was below him. I could see this was going to be a problem for if I was cooking my own food, I would not be commanding my platoon to the best of my ability.

The boots were rapidly becoming a problem. By the time I had completed five days of slipping and sliding on wet moss-covered rocks and roots, my toes were black and blue and I was limping badly. I was back in the jungle each week, limping more and more for a further month.

Perhaps the jungle conditions should be explained. First, you are wet throughout: wet from sweat and wet from rain or dew. You take off your wet kit, at night, climb into your light sleeping bag wearing some dry kit then into your 'basha', an 'A-frame' arrangement with a bed

similar to a stretcher that sits about two feet off the ground. The following day before dawn, having cleared your boots and clothes of 'creepy crawlies', yesterday's cold wet kit is pulled on. Your skin is rotting within the first hours and you continue to rot with soft wet skin throughout the patrol. The soldiers later confessed they called the white officers 'daging ayer'. It is because we have a rotting smell in the jungle and the daging ayer or kerbau (water buffalo) smell emanates from us because we eat dairy products like cheese, milk or yoghurt. In the jungle, you stink!

One month in country, and at the suggestion of Nick Cann, I negotiated a couple of days off and caught the Sultan's Royal Flight to Singapore to buy 'excess' American jungle kit, especially boots. The flight was a frequent service to buy hay for the Sultan's stables! The night market in Aberdeen Street sold kit that clearly was coming out of the back of a lorry in Vietnam and from the British OM's as well. I was offered a British vehiclemounted C42 radio and a US Harris or Collins Short Wave Radio as used in the SF patrol vehicles in Vietnam, but couldn't carry them back.

Once I had proper jungle kit, my eventual Malay course under my belt, and my boots, my company commander saw absolutely no reason not to send me back into the jungle on a very regular basis. I got to be very thin and I even began thinking in Malay! It did me no harm and I rapidly began thinking of the jungle as just a big wood......until the day the Brunei Malay pilot could not find the LZ and he dropped me into a mountain river: quote "about 20 minutes flying time north of your company commander". It can take a day to cross the many ridges that criss-cross the terrain. It can test your leadership skills after a day or two of climbing or descending to find that your best guess as to where you are is completely wrong as the river is flowing the wrong way!

Time rolled on and I became the Company 2IC to a largely absent Brunei Company Commander. A new train set! Whoopee! This was now 1973 and a fellow Queensman, Major Mike Kealy DSO, arrived to plan a Jungle Survival, Shooting and Tracking Camp for the Hooligans of Hereford. I was lucky enough to bag a place on this. In the patrol, of which I was part, were survivors of Mirbat where Mike had won his DSO, described in the 2017 Journal. Two of them did not have gunshot wounds; the others had. I was careful not to brag in any way about my own experiences or compare scars! They were really pleased to be in Brunei but saw almost nothing of the towns and villages. They kept away from most folk which was a shame as Brunei is a fascinating place. It was never a British Colony: it was a Protectorate and therefore the relationship with the British was not one of master and subject but more of mentor and pupil. It is a strict Muslim community that has moved partly away from the houses built on stilts above the water 'Kampona Aver' - water village) into houses on land. The Bruneis are fabulously rich per capita but the way of life is relatively simple except for a huge number of cars. They were the most friendly and welcoming of people who are graceful, kind and elegant. In the regiment, most of the officers were trained by the British so much of the business of the staff officers was in English. At company level, it was far more important to speak Malay (Bahasa) fluently. As a consequence, you could chat to folk in the Long Houses, bazaars and even in the Chinese cafes. Here a discreet beer could be enjoyed, poured out of a tea pot -'special tea' as it was called, now no longer permitted.

The jungle had become home from home. As a result of spending the full month of Ramadan in the Northern Outpost, I had a great deal of time on my hands. I held the grossly inflated title of Commander Brunei Northern District at this point although the soldiers were not impressed. They were simply not interested in soldiering whilst fasting. To keep myself busy I would sit in jungle locations and watch the wild life, use tracking skills etc. I had all day, almost every day, to study wildlife! The Borneo jungle was not well documented and we were visited by a BBC Team led by David Attenborough. Sadly, we expected far more from the man than was reasonable.

Brunei was a great chapter in my military life and I enjoyed it. I learned a huge amount about patience, myself and reading a map! Get it wrong and you can be very hungry.

#### Overheard at an Officers' Mess Party

CO to Guest "Have you met my Adjutant, Amédée Mieville?" "No. I didn't realise you had a WRAC Officer." Loud guffaws off stage from the QM.



# A QUEENSMAN WITH THE ARMY AIR CORPS IN BAOR

#### By Roger Farnfield



As a boy I had always had a fascination for aircraft, especially military aircraft. When the time came time to leave school, I had decided that I would try to join the RAF or the Fleet Air Arm. Unfortunately, I was not academically able to join in a flying role.

So in 1975, I enlisted into 3 QUEENS. I did my training at JIB Folkestone, and joined the battalion in Catterick, North Yorkshire, in 1976.

Whilst I had flown in helicopters in basic training and in the battalion, it was during our six months in Belize in 1977, where most troop movement was by helicopter, that I made

my mind up to give selection for the AAC a go. Some years later, in Fallingbostel, West Germany, as an MFC (Mortar Fire Controller), on a live mortar shoot, we had the opportunity to take part in an air OP with the AAC. This was when I decided that if I was going to try for aircrew selection, it had to be now or never.

In 1983, I left the battalion and joined the Air Crewman's Course at the AAC training centre, Middle Wallop, Hampshire. This included underwater escape training at the Royal Navy survival school. This involved escaping from an upturned Lynx submerged in a large water tank, in both daylight and the dark, an experience not forgotten.

On passing out of the centre in 1984, I was posted to 661 Squadron, 1 Regiment Army Air Corps, Tofrek Barracks, Hildesheim, West Germany. The Regiment consisted of three squadrons, two Lynx anti-tank squadrons, and 661 Sqn, a reconnaissance squadron, consisting of twelve Gazelle helicopters.

While I always thought my map reading skills to be of a reasonable standard, it wasn't until I started as an air crewman that they were really put to the test. Flying low-level at quite a pace was very challenging, and, yes, I did get geographically embarrassed a few times. After a few months in 661 Sqn, the Gazelles were fitted with a mini TANS (Tactical Air Navigation System); while a great help, it was not infallible. I can remember one incident, flying back from a border patrol in West Germany with six Gazelles all following the one in front that was 'Oops, lost'! We landed in the car park of a rastplatz on the autobahn to find out where we were. If nothing else, it kept the locals amused.

I flew back to the battalion on a couple of occasions, once to bring the Brigade Commander into Fallingbostel, and once to the Mortar Platoon on a live shoot, to provide an air OP for the MFCs. If my memory serves me correctly, Graham



Booker was one of the MFCs. On the occasion of flying the Brigade Commander into St Barbara Barracks, Colin Garten was the RSM; his face was a picture when the Brigadier asked him if he could arrange for some refreshment for the aircrew. The perks of flying the boss, although I don't think the RSM saw it that way!

I found the way the Air Corps did things very different from the Queen's. You knew where you stood in the regiment who you should call 'Sir', or by rank, or who you should put your heels together for. In this respect the Air Corps was

much more relaxed: at times, it was almost like belonging to a flying club, rather than a military unit. However, the Corps does take its flying responsibilities extremely seriously. This took some time to get used to, but I found the Corps to be very welcoming to members from other units; there were as many other arms crewman as true blue Air Corps, and many of those had rebadged from other arms.

I have, under the guise of training, flown the route of the Dambusters over the Eder Dam, much to the dismay of some of the locals; have flown to France to purchase wine for squadron BBQs, known as 'the Beaujolais Run'; have flown to the Pyrenees mountains to carry out mountain flying training with the French Air Wing; and have rounded up mustang and pronghorn on the prairies of BATUS training area in Alberta, Canada.

While with the Squadron, I was lucky enough to experience flying aircraft from both the RAF and the Royal Navy, representing 'Teeny Weenie Airways'.

There was a flip side to the many jollies that occurred. In any accident that happened in barracks or on exercise, it was normally an AAC helicopter that arrived on the scene. As a result, I did also get to see some sights that I rather wish I rather hadn't. CASEVACs were not my favourite sortie. There was also the feeling of dread that one felt when hearing that an AAC helicopter was overdue or crashed. I had the unfortunate experience of one of our squadron helicopters crashing on a night exercise, killing the pilot and seriously injuring the crewman. Not an experience I wanted to go through more than once.

Whilst the Army Air Corps, compared with the Queen's Regiment, is a mere baby formed in 1957, it was really born out of the Glider Pilot Regiment. In terms of age and history it can't compete with the more senior regiments. However, they are a very proud Corps, and while the Gazelle and Lynx have now long been retired, and the Corps has moved on to more advanced and far superior aircraft, I am proud to have served with them.



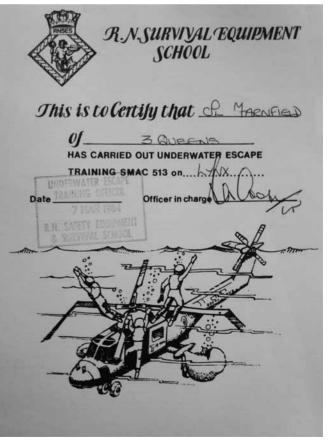
On the Pan in Canada



Me and my Gazelle



The All-Arms Team



Underwater Escape Certificate



# A YEAR NEVER TO FORGET By Andy

#### By Andy Charalambous



Andy Charalambous

It was our Company PSI who prompted me to sign up with 1st Battalion telling he'd me make sure I'd get my first choice when I applied to enlist. I'd made up my mind after my company returned from its two-week exchange visit with

Oklahoma National Guard in the summer of 1980. Soldier Magazine had run a feature on the Irish Guards and their tour of Belize the year before, glamming it up as some tropical paradise of a posting. I was 19 years old, bored with civilian life and the attraction of a single year 'S Type' engagement was better than the minimum 3 years if you were enlisting as a civvy. 'If I liked the regulars,' I thought, 'I can always extend after my year is up.'

However, an admin error sent me straight to the Depot in September as a Week Minus-1 recruit. Then, without anyone knowing who I was, or where I was meant to be, I was up-squadded to Gallipoli Platoon, at Week 14 and about to embark on their final exercise at Warcop. A week later, I had one of those experiences that could only be described as 'divine intervention'.

Whilst on muster parade a couple of days before we were bound for the Cheviots, I was told to fall out and report to the Company office. "Chara' whatever your name is, you're not meant to be here, you're meant to be with the 1st Battalion. Pack your kit, here's a travel warrant and get to Howe Barracks by the following morning." To say my platoon sergeant - who, by the way, had a thing about making his recruits slither on the floor and hiss like snakes, was utterly peeved and jealous - an understatement to say the least. Perhaps it was the thought of Warcop and all those sheep that had finally got to him...

The next morning, I arrived at Howe Barracks, nervous and excited. Straightaway, I realised things were very different from the TA. My status for one couldn't have been any worse. I was a 'Red Arse' from the TA with a surname no one could pronounce. I was posted to B Company, 6 Platoon ending up in the same section,

replicating everything I'd left from my old company back at Hornsey.

Two weeks later, I was suffering in the heat of Belize and getting used to the characters and personalities of my new platoon and the blokes with whom I now found myself sharing the same experiences. It wasn't easy at first getting accepted. But as one does if one is meant to survive the first few weeks of being the newest bloke in the unit, one has to learn to adapt very guickly, and I did. To my knowledge, most of the company hadn't served in Belize, which meant we were all equals. Army numbers, where you came from, what one did in Germany or Northern Ireland, meant nothing out where we were. But my background in the TA did give me some advantages over some of the newer blokes in our platoon; for example when our platoon commander, brandishing an M79, came to visit me in hospital after I suffered an infected ingrown toenail of all things. I made the mistake of telling him I had recently used the M203. On our last patrol, the M79 was brought out and I was asked to prove that I could use it, so I did...

Prior to that, I became the gunner in my section, was upskilled from the LMG to the GMPG and did my tour doing exactly that. I loved that job and when it came for our turn to rotate through the Battalion's Jungle Training Centre (JTC) in January 1981, the training I received was precisely what I signed up for. For me, the skills I learnt changed me from what I had been in the TA to something approaching the definition of what soldering was all about. It came to define what Belize had been about; the jungle, the Caribbean, two slots of R & R wherever you wanted to go, the shared experiences under an 'A-frame' with one's mates, the dawn chorus when every living thing in the jungle seemed to have woken up at the same time. It never failed to crack me up. For me and in more ways than one, Belize was a lifechanging experience and the making of me as a trained soldier.

When the battalion returned to the UK in April 1981, most of the company was split up into cadres. I wasn't assigned to anything other than ceremonial training for our six weeks in Edinburgh looking after the Castle, finding myself on guard the same day the late Princess Diana was married to Prince Charles. It was in Edinburgh that another legacy from Belize finally caught up with

me, as it did for a number of the battalion: Leishmaniasis. I was fortunate in that a skin specialist happened to be posted in Edinburgh at the same time and he sent me away for a new treatment being pioneered in Aldershot. By the time I returned to the battalion fully cured, my year was almost up. The company underwent a change in personnel and was earmarked with the rest of the battalion for 'Spearhead'.

By the time September arrived, I'd decided not to extend my year as I was getting engaged and married the following year. The experiences I'd gleaned from my time with the Battalion served me well until I decided to put away the cap badge in 1988. If there is one regret, I wish I had served longer than I did.

It's amazing to think that I can still recall so much about the time I served with the battalion and that I'm still in touch with some of the blokes with whom I served, an experience that will stay with me forever.



Edinburgh



Last Patrol: Back Row L-R Simpson, King, Paxman, McCartney, Edwards, Tidey. Front L-R Bird, Charalambous, Foad, Rutherford RIP



Cpl Andy Charalambous, Pirbright Ranges 1987



JTC Last Day: Back Row L-R Paxman, Thomas, Charalambous, Bushey Front L-R Jaycock, Harris, Brown, Faith, Stentiford



Back Row L-R Pat Simpson, Andy Charalambous, Steve Paxman, Back Row L-R Al Foad, Mick Bird, NK



# AIRBORNE WITH THE **GERMANS** AND MUCH MORE

By Piers Storie-Pugh



PS-P the month after the amalgamation

They say that you bring much of your own luck and I'm sure that is true. However, I also believe that others bring you luck as well. This is certainly true when I look back on my Short Service Volunteer Commission with the 1st Battalion.

The system said that Territorial Officers undertaking a lengthy attachment with the Regular Army had to attend their full Special-to-Arm course - for me that meant the five months Platoon Commander Battle Course at Warminster; two months skill at arms and three months tactics. I had attended the TA two-week course the previous year. When I arrived in January 1978 for the full course, I found that the course commander, David Williams RGJ, and my platoon commander, Richard Peters LI, were the same staff I'd had on my previous year; and they remembered me! Queensman Tony Ward, commander of another Division at Warminster, sought me out and was very helpful and encouraging, even though we had never met before; another piece of luck. Following the course, I headed for Werl in Germany whilst the battalion was on leave. It could have been a lonely place but for the superb welcome given by Anthony and Jo Beattie with whom I have remained closely in touch.

Shortly after leave, the Battalion headed for West Belfast and my company commander was none other than the legendary Mike Kealy DSO. I learned a great deal from Mike about life in general. Our company took over from 'C' Coy 3 PARA whose OC was Major Hew Pike, who of course went on to great heights. Thus in Belfast, I was in the presence of two brave and superb military leaders.

When we returned to Albuhera Barracks, Werl, in Northern Germany, my Platoon Commander's Battle Course report arrived on John Holman's desk. He seemed pleased with the result and then asked if there was anything that I wanted to do. I said "Yes Sir, I should very much like to parachute with the Germans." He turned to Martin Allington, who was the Ops Officer, and said "Please fix it." This is how I found myself heading for Bavaria by train in January 1979. I had long admired

the German parachute wings and this was a real adventure.

I had served in the 10th Battalion Parachute Regiment and had my British wings, but had not jumped for some seven years – I probably pretended it was more recent. Fortunately the T-10 harness is used by both the British and German airborne forces and the only slight variance is in the emergency chute, which one hoped one would never need.

After a long journey from the North of Germany to the South through



John Holman (Sec SERFCA) and PS-P Dep Comd 2 Inf Bde

an extraordinary picturesque snow-covered landscape, I arrived in the sleepy town of Altenstadt. I was sort of expected and given a courteous but cautious welcome. I found myself slightly on my own; not least because I found no other English-speaking students. Moreover, I was posted to a dispatcher's course with old sweats.

My instructor at Altenstadt was Hauptfeldwebel (Sergeant-Major) Eder who was in his forties, short but very kindly. In between jumps, we would withdraw into the Warrant Officers' Mess for a game of Jacks, schnapps and hot chocolate. The aeroplane used by the Germans was a Transall, a sort of two engined C-130 (Hercules), so the exit procedure was pretty familiar to me. The most distinct difference was the German klaxon horn which shrieked into your ear by the door, instead of the green light. The shrieking noise certainly propelled you out into the slip stream. I've never liked heights but this was no time for showing nerves and anyway January in Bavaria is mighty cold and every jump was into deep snow – lucky for me because I particularly disliked a hard landing.

I suspect I was anyway a rather poor parachutist. Round and round we seemed to go for a couple of weeks doing jumps, some with me and the others but most of them for the dispatchers who needed the tally. Then, on the last day of the course, it was my turn for the final jump to qualify. Unbeknown to me, the Germans had decided to drop me on my own, a thoughtful gesture. As I landed, qualified as a German parachutist, I was greeted by my instructor Eder and another well-wisher. I felt pretty good about life and I extended good luck (in German of course) to my new found German dispatcher friends.



Some of the 1st Bn Officers in West Belfast L-R Henry Eagan, Al Cooper, Jon Riley, Lance Mans, Les Edwards, Martin Featherstone and PS-P



PS-P about to fly in the 2-seater Harrier. Pictured with pilot FI Lt Ball; the late Sqt Michael Potts and a platoon Cpl at RAF Gutesloh



HE Sir Oliver Wright Ambassador to Germany, inspects the 1st Bn. L-R PS-P, Col John Holman and Parade Adjt Henry Eagan



German Parachute wings as presented to PS-P



Just as I was about to pack up to return to Werl, I received a signal from Bn HQ. The Commanding Officer had decided that since Storie-Pugh was already in Bavaria, who better to move the few miles to run the battalion's Alpine ski hut on Exercise SNOW QUEEN? Another piece of good luck. Whilst on SNOW QUEEN, I received a call from John Holman to say he had very good news – Al Cooper, a fellow platoon commander, had been awarded a 'Mention in Dispatches' for his most excellent and courageous ambush of a convoy carrying arms and ammunition. I was a small part of the operation but Al was the star. This call was then

followed shortly after by another from John with the dreadful news that my friend Mike Kealy had died in the Brecon Beacons, having left the battalion to return to Hereford. I ran the hut for several wonderful weeks before returning to Werl, full of my Bavaria experiences and grateful for the opportunity given to me.

Whilst with the 1st Battalion, I also managed to go to Denmark on Exercise ODIN'S BLUFF, and to the opera in East Berlin with David Pollard. I patrolled the East/West German border near the Brokhen with my platoon; I went to Canada on Exercise MEDICINE MAN 6, the all-arms live firing package; and apart from acting as 2IC Camp Crowfoot to Peter Hubert, I was the co-ordinator of all R&R arrangements for the battle group. I teamed up with Bert Merhura, of Bert Merhura Travel in Medicine Hat to send people to Yosemite, Banff, the Great Lakes, New York, Yellowstone Park, Vancouver, St Louis, and everywhere else you could think of within reach of Calgary. Bert then sent me on my own 'pilgrimage' to Vancouver Island, Los Angeles and San Francisco – net charge to me, \$9 Canadian for insurance. On return to Germany, I flew in a two-seater Harrier from RAF Gutersloh. I was promoted to Captain as second-in-command to Charles Joint, a delightful and fair man who went on to command the 5th Battalion, and I was lucky enough to be on parade when HE Sir Oliver Wright, HM Ambassador to West Germany reviewed the battalion. I remember all the battalion officers frantically practising how to master the sword flourish on the march.

The German 212 Parachute Battalion was stationed in North Germany, so my company teamed up with them for exercises. We offered live firing and travel in the AFV 432 APC – they invited us to try the nutcracker, a parachute simulator. As the name implies, get things out of order and the result is painful.

So, after all these great experiences, it was no wonder that I was extremely sad to leave the 1st Battalion in Germany and for some time I regretted it. Happy days, indeed.



Jumping with the Germans - beginning, middle and end

Wife to Lt Storie-Pugh: "Have you passed your BFT yet?"

SP: "Yes"

Wife: "Well, why have you still got English number plates then?"

## BERMUDA LOAN SERVICE

#### MARCH 1984 - SEPTEMBER 1985

By Mike Rowney

During a posting at the Queen's Division Depot Bassingbourn, I was informed that I had been selected for WO1 and waited to hear where I would be posted. A few weeks later, I was sent for by the late Brigadier Charles Millman, who informed me that I had been shortlisted for a loan service post to Bermuda. This was normally a Royal Anglian Regiment posting so it had to be approved by their Colonel of the Regiment, General Tim Creasey, who agreed that I could go. On the 21 March 1984, my wife Anne and I flew to Bermuda.

In 1609, the English Virginia Company, which had established Jamestown in Virginia two years earlier, permanently settled in Bermuda in the aftermath of a hurricane. The crew and passengers of the Sea Venture had steered the ship onto the surrounding reef to prevent its sinking, and then landed. The islands became a British colony following the 1707 unification of the parliaments of England, Scotland, and Wales, forming the Kingdom of Great Britain.

Bermuda's two largest economy sectors are offshore insurance and reinsurance, and tourism. Bermuda had one of the world's highest GDP per capita for most of the 20th Century and several years beyond. And we must not forget the triangle!

The total area of Bermuda is 20.5 square miles; the population is approximately 63,000, with the Bermuda dollar as its currency. The country has a Governor and Deputy Governor appointed by HM The Queen, with its own legislature consisting of an Upper and Lower House; the language is English with US spelling. Bermuda is famous for its pink sandy beaches and Bermuda cedar. It sits within the hurricane belt. A terrible place to be posted!

Bermuda has had a military force since 1612, and in one of the small military cemeteries we found graves of soldiers from our forbear regiments. The Bermuda Militia ceased to exist after the American War of 1812, although a Royal Naval Base was established in 1795. The forebears of the Bermuda Regiment were the Bermuda Volunteer Rifle Corps (BVRC) and the Bermuda Militia Artillery (BMA). These were raised in 1894 and 1895 respectively. The two units took part in both world wars. Other units were also formed but disbanded over time. The main dockyard was closed in 1951 leaving only a small naval detachment on the island. In 1957, the two army units ceased to have a role as active units. The last regular army unit to be stationed in Bermuda was the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry (DCLI) a forebear of the Light Infantry and subsequently the Rifles, which withdrew in 1957. The two units, the BVRC and BMA, amalgamated to become the Bermuda Regiment on 1 September 1965.

On arrival, I was informed that the normal quarter for the RSM inside the camp was occupied by the Regimental Bandmaster as I was the first British Army RSM for some time and I was taking over from a member of





Summer Dress



Fishing Competition



the Bermuda Regiment. We were given a two-bedroom cottage about 8 minutes' walk from Warwick Camp, home of the Bermuda Regiment. The first thing that struck us was the high cost of

living in Bermuda; even the basic items were not cheap compared to UK prices. Practically everything, including water had to be imported and every house had its own water tank built under it for all domestic water use.

The Bermuda Regiment (now The Royal Bermuda Regiment) was founded on the normal infantry battalion structure, with a Regimental Headquarters, three rifle companies, Support Company (including the Boat Troop), Regimental Police, Signals, Gun/Assault Pioneers, Medics and the MT troop, Band Company and QM's platoon. Of the three rifle companies, C Company was the training Company with A and B the actual rifle companies.

Most of the regiment was made up of conscripts, making it unique among all of the land forces still under the British Crown. Conscription was based on a random lottery of men through the ages of 18 to 23, with exemptions being granted to police and prison officers, members of the British regular forces (or men who had served for two years), church ministers, prisoners or those who had been judged to be of 'unsound mind'. Temporary deferment was granted for full-time students (attending either the Bermuda College or schools abroad) for the length of their studies, and individuals currently medically unfit but likely to become fit again. Conscientious objectors could either serve in a noncombatant role or perform an alternative community service chosen by the Governor.

On arrival, we were introduced to the other British Army soldiers all of whom were from the Royal Anglian Regiment (as they are the affiliated regiment to the



Queen's Birthday Parade, Hamilton

battalion). This included the Training Major, Adjutant and three WO2 Permanent Staff Instructors.

The handover/takeover lasted four days, mainly dealing with ceremonial and recceing the location for each event. The WOs & Sqts' Mess had a spectacular array of silver on display. I thought 'what a wealthy Mess!' but no, almost all the silver belonged to the Bermuda Fishing Club! Most of the members had served with or were current members of the Regiment and ran the annual fishing contest. Used to our local fishing catch back home, we were amazed at the size and weight of fish being brought ashore, with some weighing as much as 300lbs or more.

Shortly after my arrival, I was informed that I had to accompany the Commanding Officer to Government House to attend the National Defence and Security meeting, a regular event as there were a number of high-level visitors to Bermuda, so Guards of Honour were required at different levels. On one occasion, we had a visit from the Prime Minister of Mexico. The Commissioner of Police said that he was to have a full Guard of Honour with complete band. Having checked my red book on protocol, I said "No. He is only entitled to a Quarter Guard!" This caused some consternation. The Governor, His Excellency the Viscount Dunrossil CMG, who was chairing the meeting, asked me what my red book said and I repeated, "A Quarter Guard, Sir!", so that is what he got. This did not make me flavour of the month with the Chief Constable or my Commanding Officer! The two most valuable books that I always had to hand were the Government red book on protocol and Debrett's 'Correct Form and New Guide to Etiquette and Modern Manners'. I have used these on several occasions since in different appointments.

Each year, the battalion had an annual recruit camp in Bermuda. This was followed by a Junior NCOs' cadre normally in Canada for those who had been selected



HRH's Inspection

during the recruit camp. Annual Camp took place in the Bermudian winter as a large majority of those serving worked in the tourism industry and so summer training was out of the question. I only had one annual camp and that was at Camp Lejeune, the North Carolina US Marine base.

During the year, the regiment was involved in HM the Queen's Birthday Parade held in Hamilton, the Peppercorn Ceremony held in St George's, the formal Opening of Parliament and Remembrance Day at the Cenotaph in the capital, Hamilton.. During my period in Bermuda, we had a change of command parade and a stop-over for the Tall Ships Race. These were very well attended as there were always a great number of tourists on the island. They all liked to see the battalion on parade with the full band, which was also good for the local economy.

During my tour, we had a visit by the late HRH The Princess Margaret the Countess of Snowdon, Colonelin-Chief of the Regiment. This was a four day visit with parades, visits, lunches and dinners. The programme was very full, resulting in a number of recces, and the ubiquitous cleaning and preparation taking place, but the visit passed off very well.

One of the enjoyable tasks as the senior British Warrant Officer on the island was to brief Royal Navy ships when they arrived. We had many ships, including the submarine HMS Swiftsure and the Royal Yacht Britannia. These two visits were great fun and Anne and I were invited to the Petty Officers' Mess. On the nuclear submarine HMS Swiftsure, Anne was asked to get up from her seat so that that the steward could change the beer barrel space being at a premium, the barrels, quarter size, had a board across and cushions to double as seating!

My tour was reduced as commissioning was the next step, so it was pack-up and off to Gibraltar (again) to join 1 QUEENS as a newly-commissioned 'Rupert', a new way of life but back with many old friends.

Bulford ranges, late 1974. Pte Hooker on telephone duty in the butts. Phone rings.

Hooker: "Pte Hooker speakin', Sir"

Range Officer: "Hooker, the butt party is not signalling the fall of shot. Where are the rounds going?"

Hooker: "The rahnds sir? Well froo the targets and inter the bank a course!"

Puts the phone down.....

Jonathan Riley

Recce patrol of C Coy sneaking through the deep mud at Soltau, 1978, looking for the Russians and not really finding them. Lt Jon Riley, Pte Frank Batt and two others. We are late and the going is bad. Frank coughs loudly and spits.

Frank: "Sir Sir, I spat me false teeth inter the mud".

JR: "For f\*\*k's sake, Frank, we're late and you know what Neville's going to do to me.... hurry up and find them."

Patrol scrabbles around doing it all by feel - no lights allowed of course. After about 5 minutes:

Frank: "Give it up, Sir, we'll never find them."

He takes one pace forward and....CRUNCH. He found his teeth!

Jonathan Riley



# GROUND LIAISING IN NORWAY

#### By Mike Adler

After handing over Command of A Company 6/7 QUEENS (V) in 1977, I was selected to attend the No 2 TAVR Staff Course at the Staff College Camberley and came away from that looking for a job away from the battalion. I was fortunate enough to be selected as a Ground Liaison Officer (GLO) with 33 Squadron RAF flying Pumas out of RAF Odiham, just down the M3 from my home. As I was not old enough to hold my acting rank of Major, I reverted to being a Captain and joined 506 GL Section as second-in-command under Major Anwyl Hughes RWF who had just returned from being the last 'Seaballs' (Carrier-borne Ground Liaison Officer) on HMS Ark Royal. As the Ark was being decommissioned, he took advantage and brought with him the entire (land) map library, all the army radios and as much other kit as he could cram into three four-tonners and he turned up at the gates of RAF Odiham with his convoy, wearing a submariner's white polo-necked sweater and bearing a 'full set' (ie he was bearded). Naturally the gate guard was highly suspicious but eventually he gained entry. 33 Squadron provided the Ace Mobile Force (Land) [AMF(L)] Flight of four Pumas and we formed part of the AMF(L) helicopter unit, working with about ten Hueys from the German Army (Heer). AMF(L)'s task was to demonstrate a combined NATO show of force, usually on the flanks of NATO, mainly in North Norway and

I deployed to North Norway for the first time to take part in Exercises HARDFALL and COLD WINTER. Whilst the helicopters were meant

in Turkish Thrace.

Royal Norwegian Air Force Huey gets airborne

to take off from Odiham and fly north to Scotland, where they were to refuel, and then cross the North Sea to the Bergen area, pilots tended to prefer (with some justification!) the safer southern route via Manston, Koksijde (Belgium), the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and eventually to a camp at Bomoen (5 miles from Vos) in Norway. It was here that we did our initial Arctic warfare training. I never flew that route as the helicopters were laden with long range tanks, spare parts and ground crew. Instead we would fly from Lyneham in C130s which were meant to be kitted out with an extra plywood floor to take vehicles with studded tyres without damaging the aircraft deck.

My first deployment on 7 March 1979 was interesting in that on boarding the Herc, I was put next to a container of boiling hot coffee which ruptured in flight and drenched my legs in sticky liquid. As I was wearing full arctic clothing, I was not scalded, but my long-johns were stained dark brown and it looked as though I had had an embarrassing personal accident during the flight. On arrival in southern Norway, it was discovered that we had no plywood on board and thus could not embark an RMP section with their two studded-tyre Land Rovers so we decanted to an excellent hotel for the night while



Mike Adler and early-mark Puma



Mike Adler and Maj Anwyl Hughes

the movers sought out the necessary plywood. Next morning, a bus arrived to collect us and the 'mover' turned up in his Land Rover to guide us to the airport. Unfortunately, he was in perhaps the only Land Rover in that part of the world without studded tyres and needless to say he had an accident en route to the airport. Anyway, we equipped the Herc with its flooring, embarked the RMPs and flew north to Bardufoss where we dropped off the RMPs, and then returned to land me at Bergen from which I travelled to Bomoen.

At this stage, we were non-tactical and performed our normal peacetime duties which included making daily returns to the camp HQ at the White House. This created comms problems and we frequently got our signals returned from the other 'White House' in Washington!

Anwyl departed by Puma to Elvargarsmoen and I was left to travel with the ground party by train to Bergen, where we embarked on a mailship and spent the next two days eating smorgasbord and admiring the Norwegian coast as we proceeded sedately to Narvik. We arrived on 15 March and were joined by the Commanding Officer 1 PWO who arrived by Gazelle to brief his Orders Group in the sun room at the stern of our ship. What he had failed to notice was that moored stern to stern with us was a Russian merchantman where a number of officers watched our briefing with their binoculars through our large plate-glass windows!

Narvik was interesting in that some of the wrecks of five German destroyers and the U64 sunk by HMS Warspite and her accompanying destroyers in the second battle of Narvik (13 April 1940) were still visible from the coast road to Bjerkvik; this was where we deviated inland to the Royal Marine camp at Elvergardsmoen. Here we started to live rough in 9'x9' shelters, sleeping four men to a tent. We used electric drills to bore into the ice to insert our tent pegs and then poured water around the peg which gave the pegs a very solid foundation. To reverse the process we just heated the pegs!

My diary does not record any of the detail of the flying that we carried out from Elvergardsmoen but daily sorties took place ferrying troops and supplies around the exercise area and it was our task as GLOs to brief the aircrews on the ground situation and also, in the evening, all members of the flight on the general situation. We spent a great deal of our time out in a Volvo BV or Land Rover liaising with ground units and visiting HQs to get the information that we required for our briefings. Sometimes, we flew with the crews and met up with US Marines, Italian Alpini, Canadians and the guys from 1 PWO.

I next deployed to Norway, restored to the rank of Major in March 1980 to act as the AMF(L) Flight GLO (Anwyl had opted to stay at home!). This time it was Exercise ANORAK EXPRESS. Apart from my briefing duties, I was also responsible for the defence of the old Bardufoss Airstrip from which we were operating. This was a wartime strip that had been used by RAF Gladiators and Hurricanes during the abortive Norwegian campaign of May/June 1940. When the snow melted (after our exercise) a German 88mm Flak gun was discovered at the entrance to the strip and the Norwegian helicopter crewroom at Bardufoss Main was full of bits of crashed German aircraft that they had found in the summers when the snow had partially melted.

The exercise commenced with a period of 'not guite war' events and SITREPS. Among the latter was a list of vehicles said to be being used by Spetsnaz in our area (most of these were exercise play but some were real sightings). Accordingly I briefed all the aircrew, both British and German, on the registration numbers and next day a German Huey crew turned up in the Ops tent bearing the number plates that they had recovered from a crashed car. Lo and behold, the numbers matched those given in the signal. I debriefed the crew, sent a FLASH signal to our HQ and departed in the Huey to find the wreckage. This proved to be abortive (as there was no such vehicle). The Ground crew had made the plates, and very professional they were too. Fortunately HQ was amused when they learned the truth and from then on it was 'be on your guard when dealing with the Heer'.

I got a huge amount of flying in during the exercise, usually in the left-hand seat of a Puma, and flew the aircraft when we were clear of obstacles. Initially, I made the mistake of flying at a fixed height off the radar altimeter. As the ground was 'all ups and downs', the guys in the back found this to be trying as it was like being in a yacht in heavy seas. I was asked to fly more by eye than by instruments. We had to be extremely careful in locating wires. The national grid pylons were well marked on our maps but the cables could be difficult to see. Much worse however were logging cables which went up overnight and were not notified to anyone. They were strung across valleys where logging was taking place and could be at any height. On one occasion, we had aircraft up for PR photography shots and the cameraman in the back of one Puma spotted cables close by which had not been seen by any of the pilots.

Looking at the mountains, you sometimes thought that your eyes had gone funny; the surface seemed to have changed colour and was moving. These were massive



herds of reindeer, over which we were forbidden to flv. We did however chase the occasional arctic fox.

In camp, I slept on a reindeer skin which I found to be

much better insulation than the issued 'green maggot'. I had to teach the squadron leaders with whom I shared the tent all sorts of basic living-in-the field infantry tricks. They were useless in keeping our stoves going so I took on that responsibility, and they were banned by me from touching the Tilley lamp, as their method of turning it off was to unscrew the pump, which let a jet of flame streak across the tent, rather than the pressure relief valve. I slept with a kukri by my bed, not to protect myself from attack by the squadron leaders but rather to hack my way out of a burning tent. Trips outside the tent at night were not a good idea as it was regularly -30 degrees Celsius, but the Aurora was spectacular.

I had great respect for the men that made up the flight. Apart for the aircrew and technicians, we had a small contingent of RAF Regiment personnel with whom I had a natural infantryman's affinity, a Tactical Communications Wing (TCW) detachment, a Tactical Supply Wing (TSW) detachment, medics and, most important, the Mobile Catering Support Unit (MCSU). These MCSU chefs were fantastic. The food that they produced was of an extremely high standard, available twenty-four hours per day.

They varied the menus, which were always posted on their large notice board, with many choices, often five different options for lunch, and they produced food from different countries and usually dressed in their idea of that country's national costume. I found myself eating up to 5,000 calories each day just to keep warm. The MCSU was undoubtedly the main contributing factor to the flight's superb morale. Unfortunately, we had no bath unit and heated our water on the stoves in our tents or obtained it from outside dustbin-type heaters. It did not stay warm for long as daytime temperatures were seldom above zero degrees. We did get an occasional shower in the changing room at the gym of the Bardufoss air station, where we found that the Royal Marines Sea King Commando helicopters had established themselves on the football pitch.

Bardufoss was a joint Royal Norwegian Air Force base with a civil airport superimposed upon it. Our main contact there was the RNAF helicopter unit and also the radar, signals and command people who were established in a massive underground facility burrowed into a mountain. Surprisingly when we flew, our (HF) guard radio net on the Pumas was with Gibraltar and we spoke to one another at the start and end of each sortie without difficulty.

I had a marvellous time on Exercise ANORAK EXPRESS learning a great deal about NATO air and ground operations, and the considerable capabilities of our allies, especially the superb soldiers of the US Marine Corps. We flew Brits, Canadians, Italians and US Marines all over the exercise area and delivered stores and mail to some places that were 'hairy' from the flying point of view. It was a great experience and I found it difficult to depart from such soldiering to return to the battalion as Second-in-Command and finding myself collating notes for the Regimental Journal and being President of the Audit Board! Such is life, but in due course I returned to working with the RAF, this time with 1 (F) SQN on Harrier GR3s and later GR5s and 7s. But that is another story!



Scimitars - the vehicle of choice



Snow spindrift

# **ARMY-BARMY: CROSSING THE** START LINE or How I Became a Queensman

By Colin Hurd

Those of you who read my Territorial Army Cold War piece in the 2017 edition may well have wondered why, if I was such a keen soldier, I never joined the Regulars. For the answer, read on.

I must confess that I was always Army-barmy. As a lad, I had the obligatory WWII steel helmet and assorted 37 pattern webbing (that was subsequently issued to me on joining 7 QUEEN'S). I fully intended to enlist in the Regular Army on coming of age but in the meantime I enrolled in the Sussex ACF. I must also confess that my first cap-badge was not infantry. I joined No 10 (Eastbourne) Independent Cadet Troop, Royal Engineers in 1963 when I was 12. In the time-honoured way, I lied about my age (encouraged by the sergeant instructor and local policeman); the formal lower limit was 14 but '13½ was OK', so I said I was.

My greatcoat swamped me, and the combination of rough serge battledress and webbing on small, bony shoulders led to friction sores on many occasions. Bruising from the kick of the Lee Enfield No 4 .303 rifle was also fairly common. Interestingly, ear protection was not something that was ever considered then and I'm surprised that I'm not deaf now. My favourite weapon on the range was the Bren Gun, which was incredibly accurate when fired on single shot. Useful, as the LMGs I later used in the TA were converted Brens.

Unsurprisingly, my mother wouldn't let me go on the first camp to Wales, but I subsequently did the rounds of St Martin's Plain, Salisbury Plain and so on in the age of Blanco, Brasso and bed boxes. I also got to know Pippingford Park in the Ashdown Forest very well. There were two drill nights every week, originally in the wooden hut in the Ordnance Yard that allegedly had a bullet hole in the ceiling, compliments of a careless sergeant instructor. I also remember that we had live three-inch mortar shells in the weapons cabinet - how different life was then!

A highlight of my time as a cadet sapper was explosive training. The local TA Squadron taught us the drills and then took us to the range near Gravesend. Our most impressive efforts were cratering charges of 45lbs of PE, plus assorted time-expired pyrotechnics. They went up with a huge bang and lumps of clay the size of wheelbarrows went flying in all directions including towards the shipping in the Thames Estuary, but we were deep in bunkers by the time they came hurtling down. The end result was most impressive. It was alleged that the range limits were exceeded but I can't believe that a TA unit would bend the rules! Another classic memory was of a certain officer's car brakes failing on the hill down to Pippingford Park. As was common then, he had a boot full of weapons but luckily the thin trees and dense vegetation at the entrance saved the day.

I did the usual range of training, passing my Certificate 'A' Part I in July 1964 and Part II with a credit in May 1965. I was a first class .22 shot and also an enthusiastic signaller. By July 1964, I had risen to the dizzy heights of cadet corporal and was appointed cadet sergeant at 15. Bob Moorton was OC for a while of Pendragon School's ACF detachment at Bexhill and from time to time I would help out. The lads here were badged Royal Sussex Regiment, which, regretfully, is the closest I came to serve in the then county regiment. When we eventually converted to infantry (in 1967 I think), it was as members of the Queen's Regiment.

I was selected attend the Eastern Command leadership course shortly after my 16th birthday in March 1967, and this was to have a lasting and lifechanging effect. The course was based at Wretham Camp on the Stanford Training Area (STANTA) and I spent a couple of days indulging in various activities including riding motorcycles. I remember that the weather was freezing, with a bitterly cold wind coming straight off the North Sea. In fact, it was so cold that we were issued



Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major Sussex ACF 1968



with string vests. These had more affinity with shopping bags, being constructed from thick, rough string. I'm not sure many people wore them as their warming value was probably best realised by burning them on the coke

stoves, which we managed to get to glow red hot.

We had been on some field training at STANTA and were herded onto (then) 3-tonners parked on the far side of the iconic Bailey bridge for the return to barracks. The bridge still stands and I've crossed it many times since. In those days the big house also stood nearby, which, along with the bridge and water feature, appeared in 'Dad's Army' episodes. Anyway, the lorries drove off but that's the last thing I remember. I woke up in the West Suffolk General Hospital, Bury St Edmunds seven days later. From what I can glean, there was a 'brushing' accident. Two 3-tonners moving in opposite directions on the narrow roads, no doubt at speed, touched tilts and canvasses. There were no seats in our lorry and I was somehow caught in the canvas, pulled over the tailboard (hitting it on the way) and dragged along the road. Apart from the extended unconsciousness, I suffered a suspected fractured skull, bruised kidneys, a broken right arm, a badly broken pelvis and much scabbing.

I was relatively lucky, although my poor father was initially told that I was dead. A second cadet bled to death from a ruptured spleen and a third cadet broke his collarbone. We were taken first to the MI room at Wretham Camp and subsequently a newspaper article challenged the delay in getting us to hospital. Coincidentally, a fellow cadet (later Lt Col) Mike Mercer witnessed all this and we were later to serve together in the TA. My mother, heavily pregnant with twins, not surprisingly gave birth prematurely.

I spent the best part of three months on my back in traction, with a steel pin through my lower right leg bone to take the weight. This clearly put paid to my military aspirations and rather fouled-up my GCE examinations. It is because of my injuries that I have a limp (the pelvis is pushed up by an inch on the right side) and I am unable to rotate my right wrist (the forearm bones are fused and couldn't be separated by a subsequent operation), giving rise to my idiosyncratic salute that defeated the best efforts and abuse of CSM Ted Courtnage. It most definitely wasn't an officer affectation; I can salute perfectly well with my left hand and was entitled to do so when my arm was in plaster, my right arm being, in the words of the Drill Book, 'incapacitated by wounds'.

It took me a while to recover but I returned to cadet duties in time and was promoted Cadet CSM in February 1968. In August 1969 Colonel Pat Tetley, who many knew as a very distinguished Sussex Yeomanry gunner, appointed me the first Cadet RSM for Sussex at our camp in Browndown. I subsequently served as an adult sergeant instructor for eighteen months. My ambitions began to overwhelm me and I enquired after a commission. The response from the Sussex ACF was lukewarm to say the least. But dark forces were at work!

Over the course of several years, I and other cadets benefited from the unstinting support of CSqt lan Everett and CSM Gordon Hymans of 4th/5th Royal Sussex and later 9 QUEEN'S Cadre. They told me about the new Battalion that was being formed and as a result of their persuasion and my unfilled ambition, I found myself travelling from Eastbourne to Crawley. When it came to the medical, I was lucky that the civilian medical practitioner (Dr Collyer, if I remember rightly) was impressed by my enthusiasm and wrote up my PULHEEMS sympathetically. Without his support I could have gone no further.

So, although training for some time earlier, I formally enlisted into C (Royal Sussex) Company, 7 QUEENS in July 1971. So began the Territorial Army experiences of 24241787 Private Hurd.

Geordie Britton and I were in Canada during an air traffic strike, so we were hitch-hiking to a placed called Vermillion. Thumbing a lift in uniform, I jokingly said, "I tell you what mate, it's Vermillion or bust." His reply was: "Where's Bust? I fell about laughing and after I explained, he did as well. We still say it to each other these days. For example, when he was HGV driving he would text me "Where am I today?" The reply is always "Bust".

Keith Montague

# LOAN SERVICE WITH THE ROYAL NAVY

#### By Mick Knibbs



HMS Arrow's Crest

On 25 February 1978, I received a call to report to Drum-Major Bernard Lively BEM. I didn't think that I had done anything wrong and so was intrigued as to why I had been summoned. As I entered the drum store I heard "Knibbo, get in here!" His voice sounded happy so I knew I wasn't in the crap as per normal.

A month or so earlier, I had been sent to the RN dockyard in Gibraltar to play the Mediterranean Fleet in on the bugle for the Flag Officer Gibraltar. The Drum-Major told me that my skills and knowledge were once again required by the Royal Navy, but this time onboard HMS Arrow, the Royal Navy's newest ship. HMS Arrow was a Type 21 Frigate on her maiden tour around the Mediterranean and was paying a very special visit to a communist country and was I interested in going along? Needless to say he didn't have to ask me twice, although sadly, while I was going to be away, the Drums Platoon would be going back to the UK on exercise at Warcop in the cold and snow.

Packing my kit, I was on my way two days later to the dockyard to join HMS Arrow. I had to pack enough kit to last a month including full No 1 Dress (Blues), No 2 dress and barrack dress.



HMS Arrow entering Grand Harbour, Malta

Reporting to the Quartermaster at the gangway, I was made really welcome. I was taken below to No 3 Mess that was for the storemen and chefs. The ship was like nothing I had seen before with really nice bunk beds - most unlike the old ships I had served on before. Having got squared away, I was taken to the bridge and introduced to the Captain, Commander Bill Davis who again welcomed me onboard and explained what he required of me during the tour.

No 3 Mess were really glad to see me as they all got extra beer rations because I was a visitor.

I was sitting in the Mess Square with the other lads when this guy called 'Bungy' Edwards asked me if I had any family in the RN, as he knew a Knibbs at HMS Ganges around 1970. Well it was me, and we were in the same mess, so that was a great ice-breaker. Needless to say I got the piss ripped out of me as I was now in the Army and my new nickname would be 'Percy Pongo'.

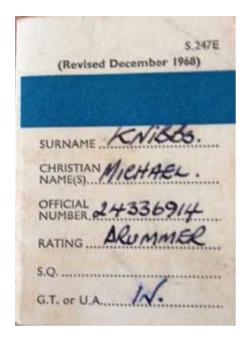
The following morning we set sail for Tunisia. A few days later we arrived three miles off the coast and I was in full blues on the Quarter Deck with an RN Guard of Honour. The first thing we noticed was the smell. It was bloody horrible, like rotten veg and it got worse the closer we got! As we entered the harbour, guns were fired and I played the General Salute. When alongside, the Guard and I were formed up on the Quarter Deck to receive the dignitaries from Tunisia, including British military officials stationed there.



HMS Arrow in Malta



The rest of the day was mine, so along with the other lads in the mess, we went into Tunis for a few drinks. We had been made aware that, a few weeks before, there had been an attempted assassination of the King so there was a curfew at midnight. It was





Station card

quite strange really as the police were riding motorbikes with a passenger carrying a sub-machinegun as pillion.

The run ashore went well with only one slight problem in that my wallet was pinched from my back pocket. This contained my money and most importantly my MOD 90 ID Card. It was returned to me after a threat of a bar stool going across the bar and smashing all the optics (not made by me, I might add). We arrived back on board without any further incidents.

The next morning I was out again in No 1 Dress to play Last Post and Reveille at a British War Graves Cemetery with a full Guard of Honour.

Whilst not carrying out my bugling duties, I was part of the 'Boats Crew' which I enjoyed very much driving the inflatable RIBs around the ship.

The following day, we left Tunisia and once again with full Honours and Gun Salutes, we said our farewells.

Two days later we arrived at Valletta, Malta's grand harbour. Once again, I was on the bridgehead with a guard in full No 1 dress playing the General Salute on the bugle; remember this ship was the newest in the Royal Navy and loads of very special of dignitaries were waiting for us to dock.

After my duty was complete, the Leading Regulator asked me if I fancied working with him that evening on shore patrol. Off to the shower I trotted, only to come out and find my towel had been taken, meaning I had to walk completely naked from one end of the ship to the other. With guests onboard, the guys in No 3 Mess thought that this was very funny and thus I was initiated into the mess. On went the No 2 dress and the NP (Naval Patrol) arm band and off we went; first call Straight Street ('The Gut'), the most famous street in Malta, all bars and houses of ill repute. The main job of the evening was making sure sailors returned to the ship safely and keeping order.

I remember picking up a sailor walking along carrying a huge vase that he had picked up from outside a bar. I asked him what he was doing with the vase and he told me it was a 'rabbit' for his mum, which was Navy slang for a present. His intention was to take it home to the UK. It was quite a hard job taking it back from where it came from and getting him back to the ship. The Gut closed at 23:59 so our next job was to clear the place along with the RAF Police, then back to the ship and onto the Quarter Deck with the QM checking the crew back onboard. An old sailor's trick was to buy a bottle of Coke, empty out the Coke and refill it with rum, so we had to open every bottle, smell it and if rum was smelt the whole bottle was emptied over the side as the RN rules are that the crew could drink beer but not spirits while on board.

The next day, I spent cleaning all the SLRs and SMGs onboard and doing my kit for our next port of call which was to be Split in Yugoslavia.

We left Malta behind and proceded up the Adriatic to Split, an important destination as Yugoslavia was still a communist country.

We arrived early in the morning and again I was with the guard on the Quarter Deck in full No1 dress ready to play the salutes along with the gun salutes. It was National Women's Day and lots of people were around, including many Yugoslavian military. A full Guard of Honour and band were on the dockside waiting for us. We were warned that no photographs were to be taken whilst there; we were allowed ashore but only in full uniform and warned about talking about the ship to anyone. We were approached by certain people and asked all about our ship and its equipment - the information passed on was total rubbish but they seemed to like it!

The following day, I, along with a naval guard, was taken to the Yugoslavian Seamen's Memorial where I played Last Post and their trumpeters returned the honour and played their equivalent. Split at the time was a very strange place. The only people that would speak to us were the people wanting information about the ship. We left Split with mixed feelings but it was an experience.

As we headed out of the Adriatic towards Malta, all of a sudden a small Russian gunboat started hailing us telling us that we were going the wrong way. The Adriatic is a dead end so there was only one way out and that was the way we were heading! The gunboat continued hailing us with a bullhorn and kept sailing across our bow. HMS Arrow has two diesel engines for normal use and two Olympus Twin Turbo engines that should only be used in special circumstances.

I was summoned to the bridge by the Captain and told to play 'Clear Lower Decks' over the tannoy which I did. The Captain then called to the gunboat: "Remove your gunboat away from my war ship or I will blow you out of the water". The main gun on the front was aimed at the gunboat and it cleared off. He then instructed the helicopter to be launched to keep an eye on the gunboat and gave the order "clutch in Olympus", told us all to hold tight and off we went like a speedboat. We left the area

and continued on our way with no further incidents. What it was all about no one will ever know

Passing Malta, we headed back to Gibraltar. The normal practice in the Royal Navy is to have a party, called 'a channel night' on the last night away, but as I was leaving the ship in Gibraltar, the Skipper gave permission to have the channel night the night before we arrived in Gib. All messes put on a show and No 3 Mess put on a very strange version of Jesus Christ Superstar, with me as the Angel Gabriel. The script was written, rehearsals were carried out and booze consumed. My part was to dress up in a white sheet, silver tape around my boots and a coat hanger halo with tinsel; and of course my bugle. I had spent some time tearing up paper and putting it in a bucket which I would throw over the Skipper and Number 1, the naval equivalent of the 2IC.

My time arrived and I was very pissed by this time. I swung around a pillar blowing my bugle, shouted; "Hi Sailors. My name is Gabriel. Fly me!" and, nearly falling over, I picked up the bucket and threw it over the two senior officers sitting in the front row. The big problem, and what I didn't know, was that the lads had removed the paper and filled ½ the bucket with foot powder and covered it over with paper. The powder left the bucket in a lump and burst over the two senior officers covering them and their mess dress in white powder. I received a huge cheer from the rest of the crew, I can't remember the rest of the evening, but I remember feeling horrible the next morning.

We arrived at Gibraltar the following day about midday and it was time for me to leave the ship.

As I walked down the gangway from the guarterdeck with my kit and a naval cap with HMS Arrow on it the whole crew stood along the side singing "We all agree: Percy Pongo is magic!". I took a Land Rover to Lathbury Barracks to find that the Drums Platoon were still in the UK. I reported to the guardroom and was told the platoon would arrive back in two days, so I was able to take two days off, meet up with the ship's crew on their run ashore and continue the movement!



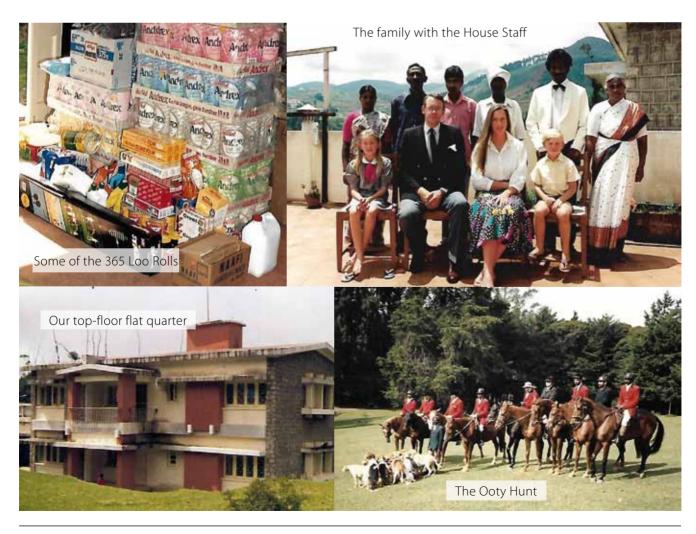
### ON LOAN TO INDIA

#### By Alasdair Goulden

"My God Goulden, they've posted you and the family to India instead of Camberley!." So started what became the posting of a lifetime and the fulfilment of a dream. We packed 365 loo rolls, sent off our boxes and set off from Heathrow in the exalted footsteps of Messieurs McCully, Constantine and Beattie and we left the UK when the temperature was about 13°C and arrived in Delhi to be assured by the High Commission that it wasn't hot even though the thermometer was touching 41°C! Was this a taste of what was to come? Thankfully not. The Nilgiris Hills, in Tamil Nadu, Southern India, where Wellington and the Defence Services Staff College nestle, maintain a very pleasant 25°C in the most superb countryside reminiscent of some of the lovelier parts of the British Isles, albeit with eucalyptus, tea and coffee plantations.

The College combined the Army (the senior service), Navy and Air Force and very much followed the teachings of Camberley - syndicate discussions, endless op orders, telephone battles (when the telephones worked), sand model exercises etc, etc. Any thoughts that I might have had getting off lightly as the Brit abroad were soon dispelled by my Camberley-trained DS who on the first day informed me that he would make me work as hard as he had been made to work at Camberley and proceeded to treat me like any other student when the pressure was piled on – and frankly a good thing too.

All was not work though. For two weeks, while the Indian students were involved in classified studies, the foreign officers (known as FFRs or Friendly Foreign Officers) along with the Navy and the Air Force went on the Forward Area Tour. Not for us the fleshpots of Berlin and Paris à la Camberley. Travel by Soviet IL76 and AN32 took us into the upper reaches of Sikkim in between Nepal and Bhutan, to heights in excess of 14,000 ft to inspect the Chinese/Tibet border with

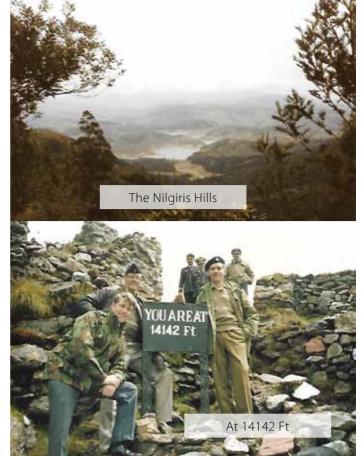


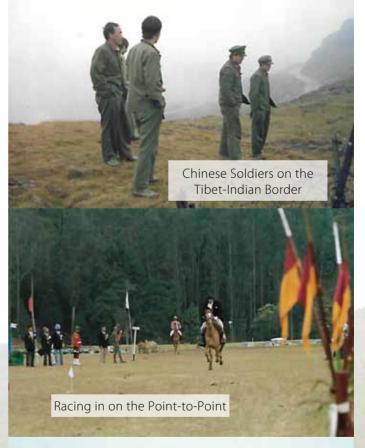
India where the Chinese had invaded in 1962. There at Nathula, we found ourselves eyeball to eyeball with the Chinese soldiers, who because of the absence of their political commissar were prepared to communicate. Even though our Chinese and their English were nonexistent, the universal language of soldiers meant that we understood each other: 'swap money? It's bloody cold. Got any fags?'. The country was some of the wildest that I have ever seen and it took little imagination to understand some of the problems that Younghusband must have had during his expedition in the 19th Century. We climbed a total of 10,000 ft by bus (3kms as the crow flies) and it took in excess of 7 hours so to do. Periodically, we were halted as bulldozers cleared the numerous landslides and rebuilt the road so that we could pass. After a while we began to appreciate just how difficult a job the Indian Army has trying to survive in the horrendous conditions of the Himalayas. Not for them the 4 ½-6 month tour – 3 years unaccompanied!

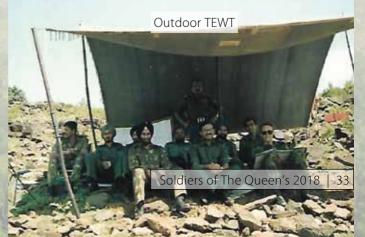
After two weeks touring Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, it was back to earth with a bump. Straight into study of an opposed river crossing and prospects of yet another appreciation, along with an aside from Brig Admin "By the way, your Camberley Commandant is visiting next week. Just before the Postings Conference, isn't it?" No pressure then! For a man who thought that his posting to Washington/Adelaide/Hong Kong was in the bag, this was a shock indeed.

There was only one solution – a quick trip to the Ooty Club for a swift 'G and T' and a quiet game of snooker on the very table on which a young Neville Chamberlain, (no relation to the Prime Minister), had invented the game while on leave from the North-West Frontier in the 1850s. Then a rapid return to Wellington (where incidentally, my wife's great-great grandfather had been posted as an ensign in the 74th Highland Regiment in 1854 where the Middlesex had served in 1898 and The Buffs in 1913).

To save the day, the British officers provided their rendition of 'Mad Dogs and Englishmen Go Out in the Midday Sun' in the college review thus entertaining General 'Muddy' Waters who was greatly impressed by our musical ability, if not by how much we had learned during our time in India!. What with the Ooty Hunt (after jackal), fishing (after 85lb marseer), shooting (wild boar), tennis, golf, squash and croquet, there seemed to be little time for the more mundane tasks such as writing a lecture on direct fire weapon effects simulation to be delivered without notes to the entire college of 450; minor research projects such as the Chinese and Indian economy; and the dreaded dissertation on 'Soviet Army Operations and their Contribution to the Modern









Military Art', to be delivered in a 'viva' to the Indian Defence Attaché to the Soviet Union and the Soviet Defence Attaché to India; all for the award of an MSc from India's leading university in Madras.

To those who said prior to my departure "Of course you will miss out terribly by not getting to know the 'Old Boy' net", I replied that with even the occasional lack of water and electricity and the sometimes basic living conditions, the experience of living in a country as fascinating as

India and the opportunity to study with one of the most professional armies in the world which had a wealth of combat experience far outweighed the 'Old-Boy' network. Indeed, the cry whenever there were frustrations was "Relax. You could be in Camberley!"

# A NEW HOME-MADE TERROR HITS HONG KONG Daily Mirror 15 August 1967

The violence of Hong Kong has entered a new and terrifying phase. The grenade and bomb are taking the place of the stone and the bottle. The terrorist is replacing the rioter.

More than twenty explosions caused by bombs and grenades were counted in the British colony during Sunday night and early yesterday morning. Three people were injured including a Royal Navy demolition expert who was trying to defuse a bomb which had been planted on tramlines. (Ed: One presumes that one of the other injuries would have been the soldier with his rifle at the ready!)

The terrorists are using new home-made hand grenades – crude but powerful. They are 4 inches long, egg-shaped metal containers packed with explosives and fused by percussion devices set to explode on impact. Yesterday, police found five home-made bombs which were safely detonated by military experts. One of the bombs had been placed in a miniature coffin with a skull painted on the lid and put outside the Kowloon branch of the Bank of America.

Soon after dark last night, the terrorist attacks started again. Two bombs were thrown – harmlessly – at two police vehicles. Extra explosive experts have had to be flown in from Singapore to help with the crop of terrorist bombs. Hong Kong has known little peace since the communist-inspired riots that erupted in May.

At first the Chinese communists in the colony made their protests with banners, chanting 'Thoughts of Chairman Mao Tse-Tung', and made attacks on Hong Kong police with sticks and stones. The Hong Kong authorities swiftly clamped down on these demonstrations. Now the colony is increasingly suffering hit-and-run querrilla tactics known so well by British troops in Aden - the grenade lobbed over the wall or the bomb planted in a crowded street.



Meanwhile the border with China – the scene of many violent incidents – was quiet yesterday although tension still remained high. China, in a 'strong' protest note to the British Government, accused the Hong Kong authorities of "repeatedly engineering provocations."

A Soldier of The Queen's Regiment with his rifle at the ready as British demolition experts work quickly to defuse a terrorist bomb planted on tramlines. This is Hong Kong, where the violence has entered a new phase.

# JOIN THE ARMY AND SEE THE WORLD or The Strange Things One Is Asked To Do

#### By Graham Shepherdly

Joining 2 QUEENS in Gibraltar as a young 17-yearold soldier straight from the Depot at Bassingbourn Barracks, I was living the dream and I joined 11 Platoon C Company – or the 'Mothercare Platoon'. This was to be home - Lathbury Barracks.

The 8-week cycle of ceremonial duties, adventure training, guards & duties and military training soon made time fly, leading up to Ex GREAT DELIGHT during December back in the UK. 'Kit Kat arse' was the name given when sitting in the back of a four-tonner for ages, but it was not as bad as sitting in a Hercules for six hours back to Salisbury Plain! The weather was atrocious and we were all issued with parkas and mounted our 'APCs' - open-topped Stalwarts. Not impressed! The lead driver got lost and drove us around in the rain for four hours; many of us went down with hypothermia, the exercise was called off and we all went back to camp to dry out or recover. We had a visit from the 'Top Brass': one officer asked how our posting in Colchester was! He hadn't realised that we had come straight from warm climes to the freezing cold of Wiltshire.

On my return to Gib, I was told to report to the OC, Major Bailey, in his office. This I did, wondering what was in store and what I had done. Maurice Bailey (no relation to the OC, Major Bailey), who had previously been in the Guinness Book of World Records for surviving being shipwrecked at sea with his wife for 117 days in 1973 about which he wrote a book, '117 Days Adrift', had pulled into Gib on his 60 ft cutter-rigged ketch whilst on a Med cruise. He had had to cut it short due to his wife, Maralyn's, sudden illness and couldn't sail the boat back to UK single-handed. C Company to the rescue! Captain John Bullock, the Company 2IC, had been involved with Army sailing and had some ocean-going experience and would help to navigate with Maurice. Three more crew members were needed. So having just returned from a successful NCO Cadre, I, along with Ken Mankelow and a bloke called Richard, were chosen to join the boat and sail it back to Lymington in the UK which was the 'Auralyn 2's berth. Auralyn 1, their previous boat, the name being a mix of Maurice and Maralyn, was sunk by a 40ft Sperm whale, which caused them to be shipwrecked and be

entered into the record books. Richard was the son of the doctor who had treated Maurice's wife and he was going to university in Southampton and so got a free

After getting our sea legs, we quickly got into the '2 on/ 4 off' routine of cooking, washing up, keeping watch and steering. Maurice and John would split shifts to navigate - no GPS in those days. I remember Maurice showing us how the sextant worked and lining it up with the horizon. Dolphins crossed the bow and we headed for a tiny village in Portugal called Sesimbra. Ken sent a postcard home to his family saying we should be home in four days. Little did we know this was not to be the case. The wind was not forthcoming and progress was slow. We had to tack away from our route to pick up wind, which made the journey longer. When we left, we had taken 10-man ration packs with us as well as the food that was already on board, but for some reason our portions of food became smaller and smaller. In the boat there were storage bins in every conceivable place and when Maurice wasn't looking, I would be searching and stealing bits of food found stored in them. I became known as 'King Rat' for my foraging skills, taking them up to the bow where the large sail bags were stored to hide and share with anyone who I gave the nod to.

The days seemed to drag with no land in sight and, getting hungrier by the day, we headed back into Villamoura. As we entered the newly-built empty marina with the concrete still curing, a Portuguese soldier armed with a rifle gave us a strange look; maybe, as I was wearing tropical DPM trousers with tee shirt, he thought we were a threat. After checking in at the new marina office, I tried to have a wash with water from a hose which was connected to the jetty - the soap wouldn't bubble up - it was sea water!

Back at sea, the wind still didn't favour us but we managed to get to Lisbon for a short stop and replen. The dreaded Bay of Biscay was looming and the stories of bad storms and turbulent winds didn't make the prospect of getting there something to relish. However, to our surprise when we got there, it was like a pond,



as still as anything, and again not much wind.

We hadn't any music/cassette player to keep us entertained during the long days and nights. When on watch, just

gazing into the distance, I heard what I thought was a radio playing, when all of a sudden a massive 'whooosh' came overhead, followed by a dark shadow - a Nimrod flew right over us at almost sea level. It circled and made several more passes at a height you would compare with roof tops of a large house; it was incredibly low.

The night watch was bad as we were lulled into a false sense of security; the big bad Bay of Biscay decided to show its true colours and coupled with the darkness, waves would come over the top of us, getting whoever was steering completely soaked. Goretex wasn't around then either. The sea was entering the hatch and the inside of the boat was also getting swamped; the swell from the sea felt like we were flying at times, which made identifying the lights from other shipping and working out which way they were going somewhat of a problem.

Bishop Rock was sighted at last and Maurice said that we needed to catch the tide by a certain time to make Falmouth. I was wondering what difference it made. If I had joined the Navy, I would have known that we would be fighting the water trying to go the other way. Anyway, we made it and headed for Falmouth. John Bullock decided that this was going to be the end of our journey as it had been longer than thought and the OC would want us back ASAP. Maurice could take the boat back to its berth at Lymington with Richard.

We were slowly coming into the port when we were boarded by the Customs and Excise tug. The officers came on board and after establishing where we had come from, one of them asked: "Is there a Ken Mankelow on board?" to which Ken replied: "Yes, me!" It turned out that Ken's Mum had received the post card from Sesimbra and as we hadn't arrived in the four days that he had written, she had alerted the authorities and they in turn had sent out the Nimrod which had buzzed us!

The Auralyn 2 is now in New Zealand, having been sold several years later. Marilyn Bailey died in 2002 and Maurice runs a chandler's in Lymington.

### A TALE FROM THE PAST

In 1954, the 1st Battalion the East Surrey Regiment was stationed in a tented camp at Tel el Kebir (Canal Zone of Egypt). The officers' loos consisted of a row of several wooden 'thunder boxes' within a canvas screen. There was little to do in Tel el Kebir and a game called 'latrine poker' was invented by the subalterns. In the event of two subalterns, or a brace of captains or majors occupying the loo, this was 'two of a kind' and a point was scored. Three captains and two subalterns was, appropriately, a 'full house'. A 'high straight' could be scored with the padre and the RMO as wild cards. Etcetera. (Well, I did say there was little to do...)

One of the things which made the trip to the loo a little uneasy was the fact that, in the depths, rats lurked. An officer who shall be nameless, (he was on attachment to the regiment and had once won a prize for ballroom dancing!), was detailed to deal with the rat problem. His solution was to drop coloured smoke grenades down the loo. Unfortunately, this stained the seats and resulted in coloured bottoms. Not a popular move!

Bryan Ray

# AN EX-QUEENSMAN IN KABUL, AFGHANISTAN (WELL IT'S ALMOST LOAN SERVICE!)

By Philip Finch

Don't worry, I'm not geographically embarrassed (I leave that to the officers), nor am I in a selfimposed exile after we merged with the Hampshires. Having started my military career in the Queens's Regiment in 5 QUEENS, I was fortunate to spend a year with 3 QUEENS before returning to be part of the amalgamation. At this point, I walked into the Army Careers Office to join the regulars, but the cutbacks to form the two new PWRR battalions left little space for me, so I had to choose another regiment. The next best option was the Parachute Regiment and I went from running BFTs in boots as a Queensman to running in trainers as a potential paratrooper. The mid-90s certainly saw some changes in how we were trained, and whilst improvements have been welcome, some fundamental basics have disappeared. The raw product of a soldier



Kabul



2 Kandak Mentors L-R Capt Goodhall, Capt Epps, Lt Col Hoyer, WO1 Finch, Capt Ashford, Sqt Treveton, Capt Engsted, SSgt Cassidy



is still there, it just takes a little longer to get there. So why am I here? Well, after 27 years of wearing the Queen's uniform, I am spending my last year as an RSM of an Afghan Kandak Bn at the

Afghanistan National Army Officers Academy (ANAOA) which is loosely based on the Sandhurst Officer model. It is not the British Army wringing its last drop of work out of me!

#### The ANAOA Vision is:

To select and prepare quality platoon leaders for specialised training within the ANA. They will be imbued with the ethos of leadership, knowledge of Afghan and wider military affairs, be fluent in Dari, have a basic command of English and have developed the core values necessary for the future leadership of the ANA.'

To deliver this training, in a mentoring capacity, involves four nations, namely the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Denmark, with the age of the mentors ranging between their twenties and fifties. The only bonus is the

lifestyle, for the average Afghan makes us look younger in comparison. Mind you, the life expectancy here isn't great for them either. This, coupled with being 6000ft above sea level and with the pollution at dusk and dawn, is probably not good for the lungs either.

Kabul is historically linked to Alexander the Great and Ghengis Khan. It is governed by the many militias and tribes and, of course, we as Brits have a history of occupying Afghanistan in the past 200 years. Kabul is the central hub in Government and is trying to deal with the instability created by the factions in the region, and to this day remains a hotspot for all concerned.

So where does this leave us at the ANAOA? Well, the day consists of briefings, mentoring, briefings, eating, mentoring, briefings, eating and sleeping. Did I mention we like briefings? On a Friday we have a day off to do some admin. It is not a kinetic tour unlike previous trips, but the threat from the inside is very real. In that sense and apart from the traditional enemy we're used to, it is arguably more dangerous.

On a lighter note though, we have volleyball, table tennis, quiz nights and internet. Did I mention we apparently





The ANAOA Mentor Team and Qargha Force Company



also like briefings? (Some people just love an audience.) For those who don't have the use of a civilian armoured vehicle, the 'venga bus' is available to take you down on site at 5 mph, with knackered doors and no air-con. Opportunities to keep fit are plentiful but seeing grown men doing yoga as I tab past with a Bergan on my back reminds me how much the Army has changed.

The local mountain is Charandaz, where apparently a leisurely stroll in full PPE in the early hours to see the sunrise is spectacular - cue the classic Army trip to tab up there late in the morning with the sun beating down on you and sweaty people cursing. One of the RSMs here who allegedly walked up there on a previous tour skipped this for a sleep-in; he is odds on to complete this tour without going up there.

The unsung heroes are Force Protection (FP). This is provided by infantry companies and they roster guard duties, QRF and FP tasks which allow us to carry out our mentoring role. Dealing with mentors from four different nations is a challenge for the FP, with every mentor feeling they are the top priority. The FP are no doubt long suffering with our lastminute.com behaviour. Nevertheless a big thank you goes out to the young soldiers who protect us and allow us to do our job.

So, the ex-Queensman in Kabul is coming to the end of his service. I have got through relatively unscathed over 27 years but I have never forgotten where it all started; a young 17-year-old walking into a 5 QUEENS drill hall in Tonbridge to be taught the SLR on his first night by Cpl Brian Drury. The enthusiasm, passion and regimental pride from this individual set the foundations for my military career. I was and always will be proud to have been a Queensman.

#### Col Panton's Driver

When I was Col Paddy Panton's 432 driver, we were on exercise on Soltau when, in the middle of a company attack, he shouted through the intercom "STOP!". Thinking there was an emergency, I pulled hard on both tillers, coming to an abrupt stop. Then, raising his binos, he exclaimed "Look at that buzzard, Locke." This was just after he had said over the intercom "OK Locke, head towards those silver birches on the horizon". I had to explain to him that I was from London and had no idea what a silver birch was or indeed a buzzard. He then spent the rest of the exercise explaining different trees out to me and pointing out the wildlife!

'Padlock'

### Church Parade

It was at camp many years ago when on the evening before the church parade, the Padre decided to rehearse the officers in the hymns to be sung. Perhaps unwisely he decided to do it in the bar in the Mess. The officers joined in enthusiastically. I would not pretend to be a good singer but I have enough skill to sing a semitone flat, which I and a colleague did, bringing the choir lower and lower until it fell apart. After several attempts at different hymns, the Padre realised he was on a loser and turned to the more important activity within the bar of spending the evening in convivial company. In recompense the following day, I did my best to support the singing at the service, so perhaps my disgraceful behaviour could be forgiven.

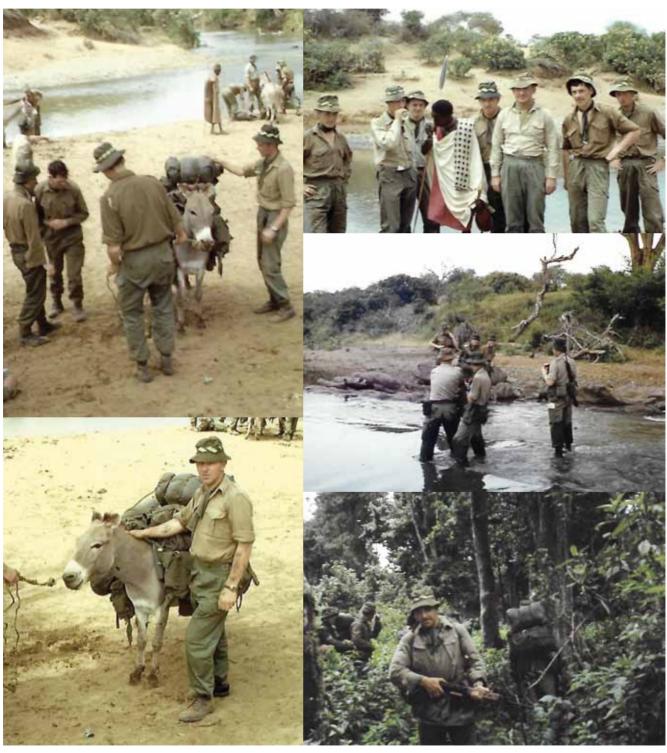
Peter Grove





I was loaned to 2 R ANGLIAN for a month to go to Kenya

living in a tented barracks. While there, I took part in a couple of route marches, in full kit in the blistering heat. On one of the marches it got so hot we had to hire some donkeys to carry the kit; on another, we met some Maasai warriors out hunting and one of the guys wanted to buy a spear. He offered a packet of cigarettes in exchange and the Maasai agreed. Further along the march, we also came across a white rhino, sadly now close to extinction. We were taught how to track by one of the local trackers while testing our map reading skills and, as a bit of adventure training, I climbed the peak of Point Lenana on Mount Kenya, at a height of 16,355 ft above sea level and astride the Equator.



Keith Holden with 'friends'

## THE 3RD BATTALION (ROYAL SUSSEX)

### ON LOAN (ISH) TO LIBYA

By Chris Charter

Commissioned in December 1967, I joined the 3rd Battalion in Lemgo in April 1968 and was informed immediately that the battlegroup was to deploy to Libya for a five-week training period in June. Prior to the military coup by Colonel Gaddafi in 1969, there was a training agreement with King Idris whereby the British Army maintained a detached company from the Gibraltar Battalion at Tobruk and a training facility in the Libyan desert at St Barbara's Camp near the Ras Al Ulbah south of Tamimi. I remember we were briefed that if we ever saw a convoy with police outriders, then we were to stand by the side of the road and salute as the convoy passed – it would be the King.

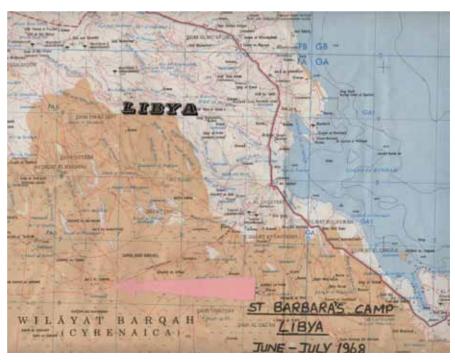
Battalions were responsible for erecting their own tented camps, but a quantity of equipment was in place including a squadron's worth of Centurion tanks, Tac HQ and a company of APCs (AFV 432), equipment for the mortar and anti-tank platoons, a battery of 25-pounder guns and a troop's worth of engineer plant and stores. The training area itself was vast and we were able to carry out live firing, having first checked there were no Bedouin in the danger area. I was able to put into practice what I had learnt at the Platoon Weapons Course at the School of Infantry at Hythe in Kent. The area covered a sector of the desert that had seen some fierce fighting by the 1st Battalion, The Royal Sussex Regiment during World War II and there were many signs of the conflict with burnt-out vehicles, old jerricans, barbed wire and

minefield signs. When one came upon the minefield signs, one was never quite sure whether it was the start of an old minefield or one was in it!

So in June, the 3 QUEENS battlegroup flew from Gutersloh and landed at RAF El Adam in VC 10s and C-130 Hercules. For those who travelled in a Hercules, it was a ten-hour flight. The battlegroup comprised the entire battalion, A Squadron Scots Greys, C Battery 3 RHA and 9 Troop 42 Field Squadron. As soon as the doors of the aircraft opened, we were hit by the heat and humidity. We then travelled to St Barbara's Camp and were welcomed by a sea of tents

that the advance party had erected. Training began with acclimatisation. Each company then carried out combat team training with the armoured squadron and was put through an APC battle run incorporating almost unrestricted live firing of all company weapons, tanks, artillery, mortars and anti-tank guns. A test for us all was getting to grips with the sun compasses that were mounted on nearly all the vehicles. In the end, we became very proficient in their use, as the maps were not much help. As you can imagine it was extremely hot and dusty in the armoured vehicles and I remember frying an egg on the top of an APC. Each company also carried out dry training by day and night. This included night navigation, a skill that required considerable practice and confidence in the prismatic and sun compasses. The training culminated in a two-sided exercise between A and B Company groups, dismounted with a troop of tanks in support, against a mechanised enemy provided by C Company and A Squadron. After the exercise, all troops were able to enjoy R & R in Apollonia, Cyrene and Tobruk. Some chose to spend the time on the beach just relaxing and swimming in the Mediterranean. I recall compo rations were getting quite low, so to supplement our meals, we caught eels and cooked them over open fires.

On a personal note, I was able to visit my brother who was working with BP on an oil rig in the middle of the Sahara. I travelled there on an old Dakota aircraft and the site



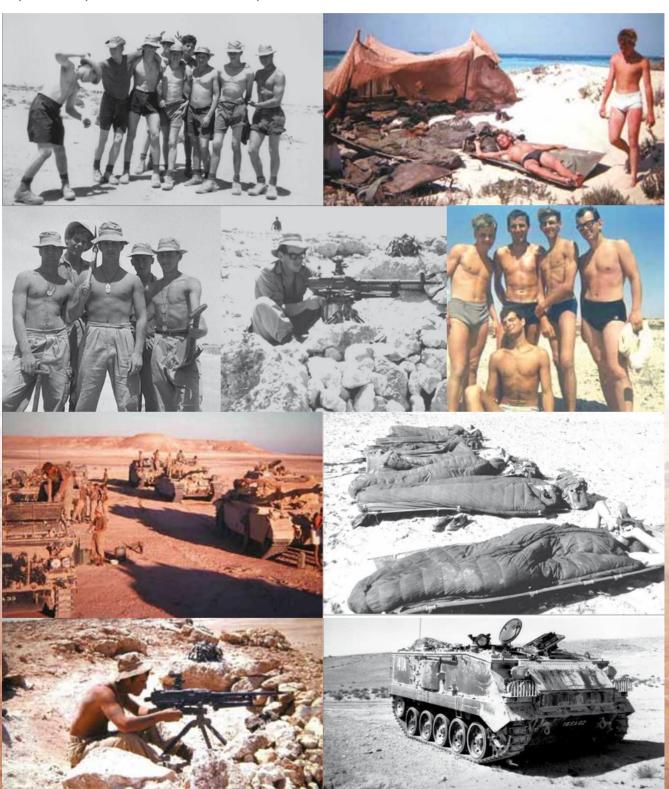


was just like a small village in the middle of nowhere. It was an amazing experience. Before the battalion left St Barbara's Camp, a cocktail party was organised for local Libyans and ex-pats to which

my brother was invited. Unfortunately, on the day of the cocktail party, I was sent south to recover two APCs that had broken down during the final exercise. Whilst still in Libya on 1st July, the battalion lost its suffix 'Royal Sussex'

and our shoulder titles were changed from 'R Sussex' to 'OUEENS'.

The Battalion returned to Germany sunburned, fit and in high spirits having learnt a great deal, not least the importance of logistics and equipment conservation that the heat, sand and distances involved in training in a desert terrain had emphasised. This had been my second experience of training in Libya. As a cadet at Sandhurst, I spent some three weeks there in November 1966, which was the culmination of our first year's training.



## **GOING IN TO BATT**

#### By Martin Featherstone

(Ed: Strictly speaking, the first part of this article sits outside the usual timeframe but it sets the scene and is also quite amusing!)

#### Gyana

In 1966, I was 18 yrs old with 18 months of service in the Signals Platoon under my belt, when I flew to British Guyana with 1 MX. Our task was to ensure the smooth handover of independence to that beautiful country. As we disembarked and formed up on the runway, sweating in the hot tropical sun, I was surprised to be plucked from the assembled ranks without any explanation and placed on a helicopter. This was a new experience for me, and on looking around, I saw that sitting with me were three strangers. I later discovered that these were the sergeant in command, a medic and a cook. As we flew over the jungle, watching the parrots fly beneath us, I didn't realise that we were about to spend three months together, just the four of us, in a house on stilts in the jungle near a small place called Winiperu, situated on the edge of the Essequibo River.

Apparently, we were meant to watch the river for any movement, although I was never briefed as such; in fact I was never briefed on anything. In practice, no one ever looked at the river. We also acted as a base for visiting patrols and occasional military tourists.

My duties were simple: erect the bamboo-masted dipole radio antenna, then get through in Morse Code at the scheduled times of 0600hrs and 1800hrs, to reassure the powers that be that everything was OK. That was it. The other three seemed to stay in the house a lot, drink a lot and one of them (although I never discovered who) took time off to steal my wallet. Poirot would have had a field day with that case...

All I knew was that I been dropped into paradise. This was the time that sold me on the Army for life. I had stepped into the pages of The Boys Own Annual and roamed the jungle unhindered, awestruck by the colours and the sheer excitement of the wildlife. From the leafcutter ants in the leaf mould to the howler monkeys high in the canopy, it was endless, unfettered Darwinian action. I had free access to a boat with an engine so at every opportunity I got away alone, upriver. Sadly, I was a teenager with a gun and to my undying shame I shot snakes, caiman, beautiful toucans and on one occasion, even butterflies! I know, I know....

I slept in a hammock whilst giant spiders crawled across my mosquito net at night. Vampire bats were in the attic (verified by some serious visiting scientists from the Natural History Museum) and piraña in the river. Those fish went crazy when I threw the rubbish in the river but never touched me when I swam in the same spot. I loved it all. This place was where I learned about the jungle.

Occasionally I would be sent in our boat upriver to Bartica, the nearest (and only) town, to buy provisions from a Pakistani shop keeper. Copper-skinned Amerindians walking past a pile of coffins outside the Sherriff's office and genuine 'Wanted' posters nailed to the wall told you everything you needed to know about Bartica. The 'town' was fascinating and supplied everything an 18-year-old could possibly need...

I was quite sad when I had to rejoin the battalion in Georgetown but at least I became signaller to the much respected Col John Shipster DSO.

Decades later, I was to lead a medical expedition way up river to the borders of Brazil and Venezuela and was glad to discover that it hadn't changed a bit. Good old Guyana.

Malaya – coming to the bit that I was actually asked to write about!

Three years later, I was posted as an instructor to the Jungle Warfare School (JWS) at Kota Tinggi, Malaya. Now begins the recurring theme through all my BATT tours: the leadership was stark, staring mad!

I arrived in Singapore with my wife and 1 year old baby to be met by...no-one. No-one knew where the JWS was and neither did I. In the end, I made my way independently into Malaya and located my new unit. Jet-lagged, dragging both my suitcase and family into the courtyard, I met the CO. He made it very clear that he wasn't expecting me, they had no married quarters, didn't rate anyone who hadn't fought the Indonesians during the Confrontation and that I was far too young to be a sergeant or deserve any consideration at all. The instructors were tough, 15-year-service experienced professionals, mainly SAS or Royal Marines and the sight of a fresh faced 22-year-old infantry sergeant who was not a member of their closed shop did not overly fill them with brotherly love.



They saw me as the thin edge of the modernising wedge. I managed to send my wife off with the promise of accommodation in Singapore and the next morning the CO personally

took me for 'a walk' straight up Gunong Panti, a 500m high, baking hot, snake-infested jungle ridge. I realised immediately that he was going to try and run me into the ground, but a few hours later I had the satisfaction of seeing him gasping behind me. Apparently, I'd passed his crude test but I was never going to be on his Christmas list.

JWS taught jungle warfare, mainly to the British Army, and also combat survival to RAF pilots. The Vietnam War was still ongoing, so a handful of South Vietnamese had come through but I only met some bemused Americans who had come directly from a war involving tanks, aircraft, Agent Orange and heavy bombers. JWS were teaching 4-man patrols, tracking, sneaking around looking for bent blades of grass.

I could go on, but there was no doubt that we were teaching the last decade's war. Any mention of cutting trees with chainsaws and not kukris brought looks of disgust and the shaking of greying heads. I had learned to speak Malay and as I went off to do a survival course with the Malaysian Army, it was made very clear to me that I was expected to write an adverse report on their training compared to ours. I survived their expert but extremely basic, even dangerous course, just. Altogether, JWS was an interesting but unhappy period in my life and I don't know how my poor ex-wife, fresh out of Belfast, survived it.

In 1974, I was commissioned from the ranks. Sandhurst has been accurately described as 'Hogwarts with guns', so enough said about that.

#### **BATT Zimbabwe**

Shortly after Zimbabwean independence, the British agreed to set up a training camp for the new Zimbabwean Army. Their command structure, like the whole country, had been turned literally upside down. An interesting time to be there! Ex-guerrillas, who had spent years living in the jungle to overthrow a white government, were now being taught how to fight 'properly'. I spoke to one man who told me: "I was 16 when they came to my village. They said to both the boys and the girls those who want to be doctors form this line, those who want to be lawyers form the other line." We

pushed to get into one line or another. They marched us into the jungle and said: "Forget all that, you're going to be freedom fighters. My brother objected and they shot him. I have now been a freedom fighter for 8 years."

As we sat around the flickering campfire in the darkness, the same man looked up at the bright lights in the far distance and said to me "Those lights you can see are the white farmers having barbecues, while I squat here in the dark, eating Army rations. Most of my old friends from the village are now dead. What was it all for?" Those who had fought so hard now deeply resented their political 'comrades' who had returned from safe exile in Mozambique to take over the spoils of the victor. Mugabe's ZANU PF from the Shona tribe hated Nkomo's ZANLA, descended from a Zulu break-off tribe, more than they hated their former enemies, the Rhodesians. These disenchanted men were the ones we now had to motivate.

Conversely, men, who as young farmers had been forced into communist uniform at gunpoint, were now, by the standards of their new army, brigadiers. They had learned to lead bands of ragged terrorists through the bush to cross the Zambezi River on reed rafts, but were now in charge of barracks, tanks and aircraft, along with all the trappings of high command.

We were taking over training responsibilities from the North Koreans, some of whom were still around. We put on a small firepower demonstration, the targets being some shabby old trucks that I'd seen lying around. Much to the delight of the on-looking crowd, the RPGs and AKs smashed the vehicles to shreds. I very soon discovered that the North Koreans were very angry that we had destroyed the new trucks that they had left behind as a goodwill gesture!

It was decided to make a proper Officers' Mess as up until now, the Zimbabwean officers had been eating out of mess tins, mostly whilst sitting on the floor. Their basic food was a mealie mash known as sudza, eaten at EVERY meal by flicking lumps of goo off the palm of the hand with the thumb. We obtained plates, cutlery, chairs, tables and glasses 'donated' by a local hotel. In Mugabe's Zimbabwe: no-one refused a request for help from the army. We kitted out the Mess, taught the mess waiters and decided to have a mess dinner with all the trimmings, bagpiper and all.

After explaining the etiquette of toasting to the officers, the dinner started. We were under strict instructions NOT to talk about the recent war. Suffice it to say, that it was all anyone wanted to talk about, and I learned

some very useful pointers from them about how to engage low-flying attacking aircraft. Little did I know that I would later pass this very useful information on to paratroopers in Brecon who were soon to use it on their first day in action in the Falklands War! The drink flowed and I ended up outside in a laughing drunken brawl with a rather large Zimbabwean 'brigadier' who forever after, instead of returning my salute would put his arms around me and call me 'his Mzungu' (white man). Very embarrassing.

Apart from the fact that I had a nice cottage with servants and enjoyed luxury holidays with my family to nearby South Africa, it was a good time training these men. Once when we had been walking all day through the hot scrub, we paused to make camp. I noticed a diminutive guy who'd been nobly carrying an RPG and ammunition with sweaty fortitude. As a reward for his hard work, I told him to fire it at a nearby Kopi (stone hill). He fired, there was a large flash as the rocket struck the stones, and it started a bush fire that lasted three days. Embarrassed once again! Luckily, I wasn't accountable to anybody and the fire did put up a leopard which until that moment had been innocently sleeping nearby, hidden by the brush. (Later, through the over enthusiastic use of the GPMG SF firing tracer, I was to start a fire in the Falklands peat that caused smoke to hang over Port Stanley for three weeks but that's another story!)

One of my 'Military Betters' was a nice guy who spent a great deal of his time kitting out his house near the capital. Having been brought up and served in colonial Africa, he was dreadfully paternalistic to the Zimbabweans. One day, he and I were walking along with an ex-guerrilla who overnight had become a brigadier, when my boss spotted a citrus bush: "Aha", he cried, "Kaffir Limes!" The Shona brigadier stopped dead in his tracks and frowned at the use of the K-word. "No, Colonel", I said, "it's the Bush Citrus". "No, no", said he, "It's DEFINITELY a Kaffir Lime." Luckily the brigadier chose to laugh, as did I, somewhat uncomfortably.

One day, I took 100 of the Ndebele troops for a run along the river bank. We passed several large North Korean signs, in English, carrying such slogans as 'We will sweep this land of the Capitalist Running Dogs' (yes, they REALLY did have that sort of thing). To much cheering from the African soldiers, we were tearing down the signs, when I noticed a barbed wire shape in the river. I was told: "That was where the Koreans put their prisoners!" Unbelievable. Straight out of 'The Deer Hunter'. Of course the North Koreans and Chinese are back now, but I have no doubt that the people of Zimbabwe prefer us to those unsmiling fanatics.

On one river run, I gave the men the choice of singing a Zulu song or running another 3 miles. Thus I recorded 100 men singing a stirring Zulu Chimurenga (War) song in their deep baritone voices. Magnificent, what a moment, I shall never forget it..... but I have, because my daughters later accidentally recorded Wet Wet Wet over the top of it.

Just before I left Zimbabwe, I spent 5 days in the Harare Hilton Hotel, waiting for my plane home. "Spend all you want, Martin", said the man from the High Commission. "It all comes out of the Aid Budget and I'd rather you have it than these people." Good grief.

I was asleep in my hotel room when I heard footsteps in the corridor. There was one of the men I had trained, patrolling the corridor with a live and armed RPG over his shoulder! Firing an RPG INSIDE the Hilton would have been...interesting. Obviously he hadn't been trained very well!

#### **Brecon**

There then followed a double tour at Brecon teaching the attack. This was a tight, efficient establishment that produced the goods. All the instructors, of all ranks, were at the top of their trade, proof of which is that two of my contemporaries went on to become generals and one is now a multi-millionaire mercenary contractor! Unbeknown to all of us, several of the senior ranks were about to win gallantry medals.

My main memories are of super fitness and professionalism all round, as well as constantly telling men "Of course, this is a training area. You'll never actually have to fight in such an open, rocky, boggy place full of tufted grass". Six months later, those same men were fighting in the Falklands.

#### **BATT Uganda**

Uganda was the real thing. A series of coups had produced a long-running, ongoing civil war that killed a possible, but unrecorded, 300,000 people; 180,000 of them in the year I was there. Cruel dictators, child soldiers, several powerful rebel groups, ferociously cruel religious fanatics, bandits, Stone-Age cattle raiders wiping out whole villages, Uganda had it all - unfortunately all at the same time.

I arrived at the HQ in Jinja and sat down exhausted on a dirty settee in what passed for the BATT Officers' Mess. There were spears and shields on the walls and dust on the floor. It was completely silent and empty, but after an hour, a large red-faced man wearing civilian clothes



and a comb-over, stamped in and glared at me. "Don't you stand up when you speak to your commanding officer?" this stranger roared! What a welcoming. Did I not tell you that they were all mad? How

the hell was I to know who he was? Our relationship never improved but thankfully I saw little of him.

Months later, the 2IC, a quiet Scot, decided to have an 'Entertainment Hour'. This consisted of him looking the four of us officers (it was only a small BAT Team) in the eye, tapping his foot for rhythm and then breaking into a deadly serious Gaelic dirge. This went on for what seemed like hours while my three subalterns tried their hardest not to laugh. In the end, he showed us the words of the song. To try and feign interest, I innocently remarked that the words looked like some of the documents we had captured in Ireland. Wrong thing to say! This guiet, unassuming, middle-aged gentleman grabbed me by the throat collar and screamed "IT'S NOT F\*\*\*\*\*G IRISH!", spraying spittle into my face. Told you they were all mad! Luckily, we four underlings saw very little of anyone above my rank for most of the time.

We taught the Ugandan Army tactics and guerrilla warfare at all levels while their war was still going on outside. We tried our hardest with very little equipment to help them. I think I was the only one who came to the belief that we were only a token British presence and that the Ugandans knew this, accepted it, and allowed us to teach the occasional battalion so long as we kept out of the way and didn't observe their atrocities.

At one stage, I thought it would be nice to build a range and teach my heavily-armed soldiers how to close one eye before looking down the sights of their rifles whilst out shopping in the market. (If you don't feed or pay your Army for six months at a time, an AK47 becomes like a credit card! "That'll do nicely, Sir!")

I expressed the desire for a bulldozer as a basic start for range building. Sure enough, a week later a civilian bulldozer came clanking up, driven by a very worriedlooking civilian with a bored soldier sitting on the cowling behind him, pointing a pistol vaguely in his direction. God knows where they hijacked it but I know they hijacked the petrol from a rare passing Kenyan truck.

I now wanted to make a sight-adjusting tool as there were none in the country. For this I needed to borrow a

lathe and the only one around was in Makarere Prison. As I arrived at the prison, I could see a 60ft high wall, with occasional bricks missing. In those brick-sized holes, all I could see were lips sucking in air. It must have been a furnace inside those cells. Later, when the Obote government fell, the biggest prisoner in Makerere was given a sledgehammer and ordered to kill the other prisoners...and then they shot him! Uganda.

One last incident amongst a multitude I could recount: one day I was asked to look at a 'problem'. I was taken to a huge warehouse by the River Nile. The roof was sagging and letting in rain. The door was unpadlocked and I walked into the dark interior, (there was no electricity in that area even though one of the biggest hydro-electric dams in Africa was only a mile away.) There, before me, were row upon row of Russian TM46 anti-tank mines, piled to the roof. They were lying in boxes that were labelled 'Machine Parts from The People's Republic Of Libya'. I had thought they only labelled boxes like that in James Bond films.

There were piles, mounds, hundreds of thousands of rounds of all calibres, many of them rusted and fused together; Sagger anti-tank missiles without their guidance systems lay rotting amongst the bullets. Then to my horror, I realised I was crunching something metallic underfoot...Russian Pomz stick grenades which must have been 40 years old, American plastic grenades with the detonators in but rusted green, all scattered around and abandoned like an Aladdin's Cave of weaponry. I tiptoed out and closed the door. "Yup, that's a problem", I agreed. I heard years later that the place exploded while the new regime was using prisoners to throw the stuff into the Nile.

There were many, many days like that in the next few months: brushes with High Commissioners, literally homicidal RSMs, paranoid, traumatised soldiers and heroic anything-to-survive civilians. Our little BAT Team seemed oblivious to the real picture outside and we carried on regardless. In the end, the Obote Government fell to pieces. The enemy leader, Yoweri Museveni, took over and remains in power today. He brought relative peace to the country, and did wonders with the economy and their rampant HIV problem. OK, he's now clinging to power, as do most African leaders, but this still begs the question, why didn't we back him from the beginning?

In summary, Dear Reader, I enjoyed it all - well, most of it - and given the chance would do it all again!

# ON LOAN TO THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

#### By John Burns R SIGNALS

It seemed that I was destined to be 'loaned out' by my Corps to other units during my service. I had already been attached to the RAF and Royal Navy at the Joint Communications Centre in Bahrain, followed by three years at the Royal School of Military Engineers in Chatham, and then three years with the 4th Royal Artillery Regiment, in - above all places Catterick! A far flung posting for someone in the Royals Signals.

And then there was my tour of duty with the Queen's Regiment!

I remember arriving in Werl in late 1977 in the early evening to be greeted at the Sgts' Mess by the Mess Orderly and Bar Waiter, a strange-looking guy with a distinctive appearance who advised me where my room was across the road, and that it was best to have a tie and jacket on for dinner and a drink in the bar.

After settling in, I then returned to have a meal and looked forward to a drink with my new comrades. The odd-looking bar waiter stood at attention along with three or four other members on my entry, and I was swiftly given my drink. I was warned that the RSM was expected any minute and to make sure I greeted him properly as this was 'The Queen's Regiment'.

Sure enough, within a few minutes, the said RSM appeared and rather loudly and sharply ordered his usual, the seniors present all acting very formally in his presence. I was introduced, and rather taken aback, at how soldierly all those present acted, the bar waiter in particularly running around here and there on command. This carried on for the best part of an hour before the whole thing unravelled and it turned out that Messrs Juhel and Pyper (Sgts) had stitched me up, and that the bar waiter was indeed the REME S/Sqt and the RSM was the Catering Sqt!

A 'lot of drinks' later, I was escorted to my room for the night. The following morning, I was up early and into uniform ready for my first day and breakfast. Problem was I couldn't get out of the room. On opening the door I was faced with a wall of bricks. I had been stitched up again and had to climb out of the window.

Such was my introduction to the regiment.

Over the next three years, there were some great memories for myself and four other Signallers making up my Rear Link Detachment and manning Zero Bravo (0B), our FV432 tracked vehicle providing communication for the battalion second-in-command. Many an exercise in



1QUEENS Shooting Team



BAOR is remembered, with one in particular having the Royal Engineers dig a hole big enough to have the whole vehicle in it with only the antennas above ground; and while the infantry lads

were lying in ditches in the freezing snow, our crew and the 2IC had a tarpaulin over the engine louvres of the vehicle so that the heat was pushed all the way back into our tented area. I think the meals that were provided for the 2IC and crew were some of the best ever served on exercise in Germany. We tended to look after our needs somewhat, until the RSM found out I was served wine with the meal. But that's another story!!

While in camp, there was some irritation among the troops as the living accommodation, kitchens, NAAFI and messes were on one side of the camp and the vehicles, stores and workshops were on the other side, divided by a main road. This meant at NAAFI break it was a 5-minute walk to the Mess and NAAFI and a 5-minute walk back, leaving only 10 minutes for the break. However, one day, whilst driving through Werl, I noticed an old electric cooker and oven being thrown out. It was duly 'collected' by our Land Rover and taken back to our Rear Link store, which happened to be by the gate leading out on to the road on the vehicle and store side of the camp.

The cooker was immediately put into action so that my Signals lads didn't have to go across to the other side of camp. Before we knew it, we were selling bratwursts, bockwursts and pies out of the store window to all and sundry. It became a very successful and prosperous business and soon we were also taking the enterprise on exercise! Apparently it was too successful and I was summoned to the CO's office to be made aware of the NAAFI's bitterly complaining, and I was politely told to close the enterprise down. C'est la vie....

On the sporting side, I was welcomed as a football player representing the battalion, and for about a year was the Manager/Coach assisting the RSM.

Better still, as I was a member of the Royal Signals Corps Shooting Team and pretty good at it, representing the Corps many times at Bisley, I was very pleased to assist in the training of the Battalion Shooting Team with Sgt Major Paddy Ryan. The team went on to win the Divisional Championship, much to the pleasure of the CO.

However, the most important time for me personally was to accompany the 1st Battalion on the Northern Ireland tour of Belfast in the summer of 1978 as the Office Manager in the Battalion Intelligence Cell.

I had already completed a tour in the summer of 1976 as 'Shotgun' for the 2IC of 4th Royal Artillery Regiment in Belfast, walking behind him everywhere with SLR at the ready. So this time around, I preferred the civilian clothes and being involved and assisting in intelligence operations. The transformation of a fun-loving, but professional camaraderie in BAOR, into an active unit in 'policing operations' in Belfast was something to behold and admire. It was a privilege to serve with the young guys and to watch their development, and to learn from the old hands who had been on many, many, tours. In particular, it was a learning curve in which Sgt-Major Paddy Ryan's friendship was greatly appreciated.

Finally, although there are many more stories to be told, in particular the way the Senior NCOs celebrate Albuhera Day in the Mess, (what happens in the Mess stays in the Mess), I have to say that being part of the Queen's family was very much the highlight of my Army service. To that end, I am proud to say that at one point I was asked to consider re-badging and, while it took a great deal of thinking about, eventually I decided to stay with my Corps. But 1 QUEENS – 'Thank you for the memories!'

We were training at Werl for our next tour in Northern Ireland and you as a young platoon commander were in charge of the live firing of the 9mm Browning on the 10 metre range. We took charge of our weapons and were ready to fire and you were most impressed with my firing stance. You gave the order to fire and we blasted away. After making safe we inspected our targets and my target was totally untouched. My rounds had hit the target to my left, which pissed the guy off. You weren't amused either!

'Smiler' Christopher Cobbett as told to the Secretary

### By Bob Fisher

### **NAMIBIA**

In 1991, I was serving as the CSM of C Coy 1 QUEENS in Minden, Germany when I was summoned by the Commanding Officer. Needless to say, I doubled up to his office! He informed me that my company was going to be amalgamated to form a composite company for an exercise in Canada. To say I was disappointed would be an understatement, but the CO 'sweetened' the deal by offering me a short-term loan service posting to Namibia to instruct on the newly formed Namibian Defence Force (NDF) Company Commanders' course. Without thinking, I jumped at the chance, which surprised him as he thought I might wish to talk to my wife. I rushed home to tell the wife the fantastic news, which left her less than pleased as I hadn't discussed it with her!

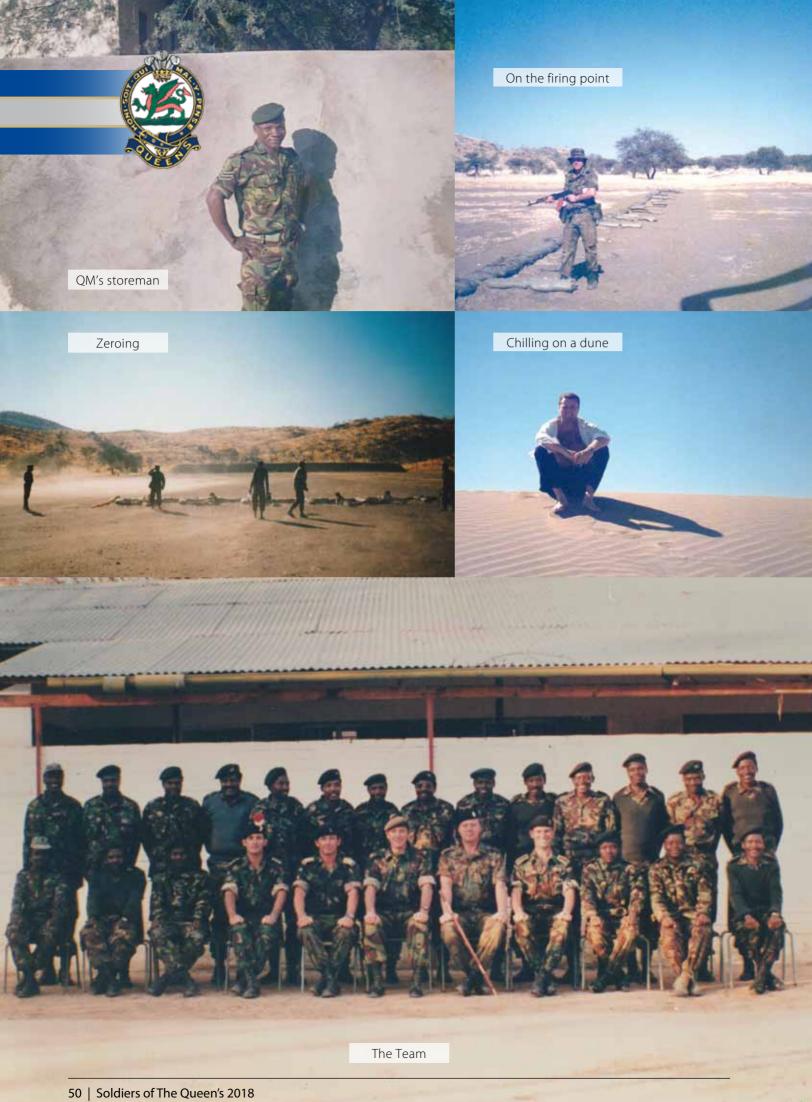
We flew business class to South Africa then on to Namibia and the only problem I had was explaining what my pace stick was for, which I got around by sticking around the airport; a demonstration is better than explanation! We finally made it to our new home in a barracks just outside Windhoek and settled into our accommodation, which was fine, although we decided against eating in the cookhouse on advice from the permanent loan service team. To eat, we went to the local café which was made up of the settlers that were of German descent: and not overly keen on the British but they liked our money! Having come from BAOR, it was like being there but with sun.

We quickly settled in, and after a week of setting up and doing the recces, we finally got to meet the members of the NDF on the course, a mixed bag to say the least. They were mainly drawn from the regular members of the West African Territorial Force (South African) and the Peoples Liberation Army of Namibia, which was odd as they had been fighting each other a year before. This was brought home to us when we were doing a TEWT about attacking a Forward Operating Base.

One of the students started to explain how he had attacked it a few years before and the next thing we knew, another student told us how he was defending it at the time. This was weird having two people from opposing sides explain how they fought each other. The thing I found hard to believe was that they actually



The Block



managed to shoot each other, as they were the worst shots I have ever encountered! We were given brand new AK 47s which we cleaned with petrol as they were covered in grease; explaining to them all that smoking wasn't a good idea was difficult, to say the least. Once we had them cleaned, we took them to the range to zero and that's where the problems started, as they had no idea about grouping and zeroing. We had to explain to them that zeroing required them to group some shots so we could adjust the sights. After many hours, we finally managed it and because they thought they were now brilliant shots, they challenged us to a falling plate competition. It didn't end well for them but gave them some idea of what well-trained soldiers could do with a rifle - so a valuable lesson.

Other things that they were poor at were logistics, planning and fitness. We took them on a webbing run and I took a jerrican of water in my Bergan which amazed them when I took it out for a drinks break mainly because none of them could keep up with me. Things like that I now pay for but that's another story. The other thing we found peculiar was how they tended to treat their soldiers. I was collecting the stores from the QM when the storeman upset him, so he started to slap the storeman and when he had the temerity to run away, he started throwing stones at him. Oh, so different from most of our OMs.

The whole thing was a great learning experience for me and made me realise that the British Army is a welltrained, well-led and well-equipped Army. I also enjoyed passing on my training to foreign students who were going to be a major influence in the NDF in things that we took for granted like fitness, shooting and planning.

### **IMBER VILLAGE**

Recce always played the enemy, setting up ambushes, defending emplacements and so on. On one exercise on Salisbury Plain, we had just been overrun on a hilltop and, as the rest of the battalion went on foot towards their next objective, we jumped into the 'Lannies' and headed to the next position in Imber Village. We hurriedly picked our positions and waited. 'Hurry up and wait' - the Army's motto! So we waited and boredom set in. As a comrade and I were staring out of an upstairs window looking for the approach of the oncoming force, we peered into the wall cavity that was exposed due to the removal of the window frames. My comrade pondered and asked: "What would happen if we dropped a flashbang down there?" "Dunno. Let's find out."

So one of us, and I can't remember who, struck the thunderflash and dropped it into the cavity as we stared down into it. We quickly realised what we were doing and pulled our heads back just in time before the almighty 'BOOM'! Plumes of dust shot up the cavity. We looked at each other, pissed ourselves laughing, and then stuck our heads back out of the window to see the end results. 'Holy Shit!' The wall below the groundfloor window had been blown out, leaving a damn great hole! Just then our new platoon commander's head came out of the ground-floor window and shouted "Who the f\*\*k did that?" We both looked down at him, denying any involvement, and so if it wasn't us, it must have been someone down there. Maybe!

By Pte Markham



# MOROCCO ÉCHANGE **U PAIR**

By Scipio (Ed: Don't ask!)



'Join the Army and See the World' was still the recruiting slogan when I enlisted, to be replaced shortly afterwards, by 'Join the Army and see Bassingbourn, Belfast, Bielefeld and Bulford'! So I was lucky when I managed to blag a trip to Morocco.

I was standing on the ranges at Warcop when the field telephone rang and a crusty colonel in UKLF told me that I had been selected, on the basis that I was supposedly a French speaker, to do an échange au pair with the Moroccan Army. I thought, naturally, that it was a spoof and it wasn't until I returned to the Depot some days later that I found out it was, in fact, true.

Getting a briefing was difficult. When was I to go? What kit was I supposed to take? Eventually, the crusty colonel suggested that I take Mess Kit ("They will obviously have a dinner for you"); Service Dress ("You may need to go on parade"); a suit ("Standards, dear boy"); Winter Warfare kit (in July? In Morocco?) and Denims ("But don't bother with webbing"). My leatherwork, Sam Browne, Mess Wellingtons, brown shoes, black shoes, casual shoes and Boots DMS took up all of my baggage allowance and I had to pay for my other suitcase which just contained clothes! I ditched the idea of winter warfare

There were two of us (an RCT subaltern and myself) on the flight out to Casablanca and he disappeared on arrival to go into the Rif mountains. I think that I was an afterthought, as the Moroccan Sergeant-Major who met us was slightly surprised to see me, and was not sure as to where I was to go, so I hung around the capital, Rabat, for a couple of days before being put on a night bus to Agadir some 300 miles on the southern coast. As Moroccan officers tended to live at home or in lodgings (so much for Mess Kit!), I was put into the (then) only 5-star hotel and was picked up each day and taken to the infantry battalion that I was foisted upon. An obviously British couple at the hotel (he - long shorts, long socks, Panama hat; she – large floral sun dress) paid me an unknowing compliment in broken French by asking what a Frenchman was doing in British Army uniform!

NCOs were not important to the Moroccans and while the soldiers marched to the range, the officers, naturally, went by vehicle. It apparently needed nine officers to run a rifle range but most of the time they sat in the shade drinking mint tea, discussing with me the (then) impending marriage of Princess Anne to Capt Mark Philips.

Like most battalions in barracks, there was not a lot for the soldiers, or the officers for that matter, to do. So, after a week, I was despatched (by bus again) south to the detached company at TanTan near to the Spanish Saharan border. TanTan was at a junction of trading and smuggling routes and was even sleepier than Agadir (a modern travel guide states Tan Tan must be one of the least exciting places in Morocco. There are no traces of ingenuity put to practice anywhere.') but there was a Mess, of sorts, to accommodate me and I was introduced to the delights of the Arabian lavatory, complete with a can of stones instead of lavatory paper. Fortunately, I was aware of this and had brought my own, probably with deleterious effect on the town's sewage system!

On the Sunday that I was there, I was invited, much to the chagrin of my fellow officers to lunch with the Commandant who was married and lived in the big house on top of the only hill. The complaint was that they had been at the post for three years and that they had never had an invitation. Lunch was interesting. The women were sent out to the kitchen to serve food to the men. The meal was, naturally, roast goat and cous cous and eaten entirely with the fingers. As I was burning my fingers, the Commandant obligingly tore off a hunk and, to tidy it up, bit off both ends before handing it to me! Arabs have, after much practice, the ability of grabbing a handful of cous cous and rolling it into a ball with one hand before eating it. I, on the other hand, with no practice, only managed to spread my handful of millet up my arm and over everything in the vicinity.

Lunch was followed by a football match between the Army and the town. As the Guest of Honour, I was introduced to all the players and then, horrors, was kissed by the extremely hairy town goalkeeper.



Tan Tan 1972

Returning to Agadir, I presented to the Colonel a Ronson table lighter (he was a chain smoker) and my 'Michelin Map of Morocco' which he had coveted since my arrival; mapping did not appear to be a Moroccan military skill! In return, he presented me with a silk table cloth and a brass tray which still hangs on my kitchen wall. I returned to the UK with my leatherwork case still unused with the exception of Boots DMS, an appreciation of the hospitality of the Moroccan Army that I had encountered and a desire to do more of the same.

I have no idea where my counterpart Moroccan Army officer went to in the UK or even if he appeared at all. Neither do I know if the exchanges continued but it was fun all the same!

C Coy Ops Room, Flax Street Mill, February 1975. Signaller "Smudge" Smith on duty with the watchkeeper. The civil phone rings.

Smudge: "Belfast 765430"

Irish voice: "Oh, Ay'm terrably sorry - Ay seem to hov dayled the wrong nomberrr"

Smudge: "Well dahn't blame me mate, you f\*\*\*in' dialled it!"

Jonathon Riley

Joining your regiment or battalion for the first time is always a worrying experience. However, for me the first exercise in Germany at Sennelager was also to prove tricky going. On the first night, I discovered that not only was there an Officers' Mess but that we were expected to dress properly for it, which included having a tie. Regrettably, my belongings had none. Fortunately the Adjutant, John Davidson, was able to come to the rescue and provide a tie, so all seemed sorted. That was the case up until I was about to start on a nice drink in the bar when accosted by a new unknown fellow officer with the exclamation "I bet you did not get a hole in one!" Most embarrassing – and my golf is still very very far short of John Davidson's.

Jeremy Coke-Smythe



## NIGERIA 1969-70

#### By Paul Gray

I was posted to Nigeria in November 1969, a welcome change of scene as I was stationed in Brecon at the time. The appointment was to the International Observer Team to Nigeria (OTN). This had been set up by the United Nations in 1968, at the behest of the Nigerian Government, to investigate charges of genocide made against the Nigerian Government by the Ibo secessionist state (Biafra). The original team quickly discharged its duties, finding no evidence of genocide, but the Nigerian Government decided to keep OTN in being so that if further charges were made against it, the team could quickly investigate.

The team consisted of two representatives each from the UK, Canada, Sweden, and Poland. There were also two UN personnel, a senior diplomat from the West Indies, and a Brigadier from the Pakistan Army. I was the junior UK representative; my boss was Colonel Douglas Cairns, late Bedford and Hertfordshire Regiment, but who had spent almost his entire service in the Gold Coast Regiment; he had been selected by a previous senior UK representative of the OTN for his considerable knowledge of West Africa.

Our method of operation was to visit the four sectors surrounding the Ibo secessionist state; North at Enugu; East at Port Harcourt; South at several places in the Delta region; and West at Owerri. From some hotel in those places, we would venture out to somewhere near the front line - but not too close! - under escort by the Federal Army, to see what was going on, and investigate anything which had been notified to us. Life at the front was fairly basic, but we did enjoy a good hotel in Owerri, with some excellent Bulgarian wine! In Enugu, we were accommodated in the Club which in colonial days had been the centre of the local social life but in our time was scruffy and uncomfortable; but what should or could we expect somewhere near the front line?

In Lagos, I was accommodated in the Federal Palace Hotel overlooking the sea. The Nigerian Government paid for everything. The team had very little to do for the first weeks that I was there, and I spent a lot of time swimming! There was a very active social life, with the High Commission, oil company expats, and with Colonel Cairns's friends - he seemed to know everybody! Some kind oil company families, who I had met in church, looked after me over Christmas.

It was as well that we had this quiet time at the start of my duty, as we did have to earn our keep in January 1970. From various sources, it became apparent in December that 'something was afoot' but, as we had had so many of these alarms before, we were inclined to be sceptical. In fact, it was on a routine, and previously arranged tour of the front, that we heard that the civil war was over. While I was at a Brigade HQ on Sunday 11 January, I was told that Colonel Ojukwu (the secessionist commander) had fled. And the next day, while still up country in another Brigade HQ, I was told that Colonel Efiong, one of the other leaders, had surrendered.

On return to Lagos, we found the press needing a story, as the Nigerian Government had prevented them from going up-country. The senior members of OTN did their best, but we were not well trained in the methods of the media! OTN realised that the opportunities for taking revenge were just as great at the end of the civil war as during it, and so the team went up country again to see what was going on. We found evidence of ill-discipline, looting and general mayhem, and it was evident that peace and relief could never start until this was stamped out. This was quickly done by senior officers of the Nigerian Army, and when we went back to the enclave four days later, the improvement in conditions was remarkable. There were also signs that the relief organisations were able to distribute food, refugees were returning to their villages and traders were opening their shops.

We then wrote our report. By the time it was published, everyone had forgotten about Nigeria, and it hardly got a mention in the media. The President of Nigeria, General Gowan, with whom I had been at Eaton Hall Officer Cadet School, RMA Sandhurst and my young officers' course at Warminster, gave a farewell party at State House to OTN and the diplomats of our countries just like a Regimental Dinner Night!

It had been a most interesting experience; not one I need to repeat, but to see the end of a civil war when actually near the frontline, is not often part of military service!





# THE SULTAN'S ARMED **FORCES**

#### By Bishop Johnnie Mac

Back in 1974, when I was commanding the Anti-Tank (AT) Platoon (with WOMBATS) in 2 QUEENS in Werl, I was summoned to the CO's office. "John, you've now been back with the battalion for over two years and we need to think of a change of posting for you to gain wider experience. The Regiment is looking for a junior officer for an exchange with the Royal Marines and I think you might be just the chap". Well, I was fit enough and I knew how to swim, but I can't say that the idea filled me with great joy. "Give it some thought and let me know", Colonel Mike Newall said.

As chance would have it, we received a visit a couple of weeks later from Brigadier Jack Fletcher, a former commanding officer of the battalion who knew me well. He had recently been commanding the Dhofar Brigade in Oman during the little known 'jebel war' and was to be largely credited with the final success of the Sultan's forces against their communist-supported foes.



Johnny Mac in Mutrah



Heli-resupply Dhofar

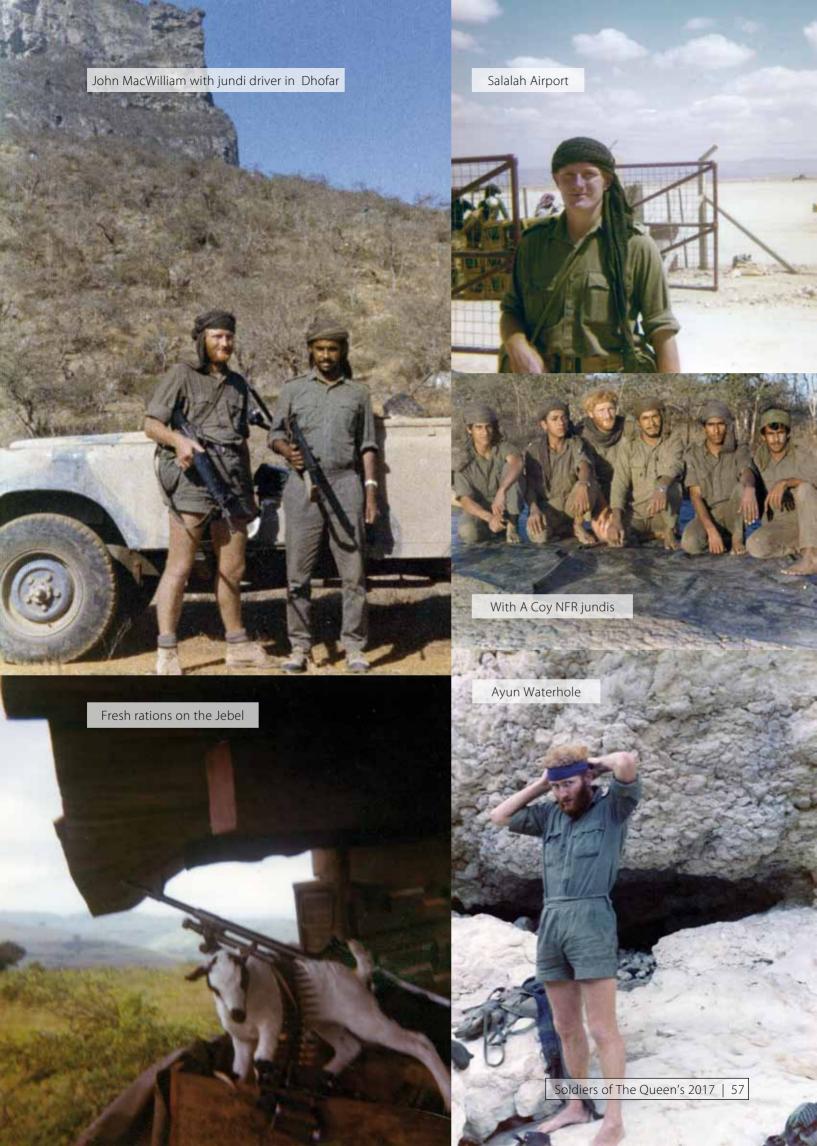
"You don't want to go to the Marines! You are ideal for SAF. Your father served three times with 'Arab' forces and these opportunities are disappearing fast. Take my advice and apply for a two-year secondment."

And so it was that after interviews with various senior officers, I was appointed to SAF and sent for my twomonth Arabic course at the Army School of Languages in Beaconsfield. In fact, the first month was at a private school in London, since ASLB was over-subscribed, but the charming Egyptian woman teacher got me up to speed, even if much of the vocabulary was more kitchen than military!

Arriving in Muscat, I discovered that I was to be appointed to the Northern Frontier Regiment (NFR) commanded by Colonel John Pollard, who had succeeded Colonel Bryan Ray, both QUEENS. I had every reason to feel at home. NFR were 'on the Jebel' and so as soon as I was kitted out, I found myself at Diana 4 base in the hills overlooking the Salalah plain. Within the first week there, I was under fire, but not from the adoo (the enemy insurgents). I was leading a night recce patrol in the nearby wadi when our neighbouring Jordanian forces came under fire. Their reaction was to pepper the whole area with mortar bombs, including the area where we were patrolling. Fortunately my sidekick, a blunt Yorkshireman, explained to them by radio the error of their ways and no-one got hurt.

I spent much of the first year of my secondment in Dhofar, mostly involved with resupply of fixed bases, local patrolling and a few larger operations. We then moved to the north of the country. I was puzzled to see on the movement order that 'the AT platoon would move by road'. I hadn't realised that we had anti-tank guns, since the enemy had no armour. I then found out that it was the donkeys and their handlers: 'the Animal Transport Platoon'!

Life in the North, at Bidbid and Ziki, involved a lot more b\*llsh\*t. We had to smarten up, provide honour-guards for the airport, polish our buttons and even make bedblocks, thanks to a brigade commander whose nickname was 'Scrubber'. I remember the CQMS coming back from the sug at Nizwa, having been sent to buy cotton with





which to make up 'hussifs' for the soldiers (not that any Arab soldier would dream of repairing his uniform himself!). He couldn't find enough green cotton, so he bought a mixture of colours which

could, in a later day, have made a complete Gay Pride flag!

One very valuable two-month experience I had was as SAFLO, the SAF liaison officer to the Iranian brigade in Dhofar (it was still the Shah in charge in those days). Considerable patience and diplomacy were required with our allies who had learned (from the Americans?) much that didn't fit in with our way of thinking. Their conscripts didn't know that they were serving abroad. Every day aircraft would fly in fresh bread, orange juice and even ice for the comfort of the troops (at least until they built themselves a bakery and an ice-makingmachine). Much more seriously, they had the wicked habit of planting land-mines around their bases and on tracks without recording them, and this was to result in casualties among the local population and their cattle. The nearest I ever came to being shot was by one of their sentries who had not been informed that I would



Storing munitions Diana 4 Dhofar

be bringing a civilian contractor to see to repairs to the approach road to their camp. I learnt rapidly that the Farsi word 'Aast' means 'Halt'!

When I had finished my two-year secondment I rejoined 2 QUEENS in Andersonstown in Belfast (what a contrast!) I knew that the experience would mark me for life. Little did I think, however, that one incident would push me to the extreme of becoming, much later, a Christian missionary bishop in a Moslem country, as I now am. I had been crossing the desert in Dhofar by Land Rover, just the Baluchi driver and me, when he asked if we could stop for him to pray. Having checked that there were no snipers around, we stopped and he said his prayers on the left of the vehicle, turned towards Mecca. I stayed respectfully on the right of the vehicle and said some prayers of my own. I later reflected that it was such a shame that two people praying to the one God should be separated by whatever that Land Rover represented. Yes, SAF went on to win the war and the Sultanate survived the Cold War attempt to make the Arabian Gulf a Soviet sphere, but for me and perhaps others, the sharing of such a life, despite the rat-infested sangars and the monsoon-rotted onions, carried a new challenge which, little by little, can also only end in peace between peoples. In sha' allah.



John MacWilliam at Bidbid

The CO was out with his driver, RSM etc, one evening when we were in Aden. We were driving down the main street out of town which was about a mile long with a roundabout halfway down. Over the radio there came a contact report. The driver was a Sgt. "Away you go" he told the driver. Approaching the roundabout the Sgt asked, 'which way Sir?' 'Straight across,' shouted the CO which he did. In the back were the RSM, Adjt, Provo Sgt and 3 C42s. The veh was nearly a complete write off and its occupants needed medical treatment!

Tony Talman

## VISITING OUR OLDEST ALLIES

#### By John Powell



Between 1985 -1987, 1 QUEENS was based in Gibraltar. During that period, in an effort to maintain military skills, individual companies and then the complete battalion were sent off the Rock on exercise. The battalion exercise (from which there were a wealth of stories) was in Sennybridge but this one concerns A Coy's deployment to Portugal. By 1986, I had returned to the battalion from instructing at the Depot and was the Mortar Officer. However, because A Coy was without a 2IC, the Commanding Officer, Mike Ball, decided I should go as 2IC A Coy to Santa Margarida training area (home of the Portuguese Army's NATO commitment).

The 'Q' advance party included Captain Vic Ebbens and Corporal Ron Brill. The MoD had hired the cheapest boat they could find to take vehicles and stores by sea from Gibraltar to Lisbon (the Spanish would not allow military movement across the Frontier at Gibraltar). A rickety old tub would have been OK, had it not been for the storms that kept them at sea for an additional two days. When I arrived at the Portuguese barracks with the OC, Major John Harcus, it was to find a very grumpy Quartermaster's group; however, Vic soon recovered and set about enjoying his lot in Portugal - his calm demeanour was not to last for long.

I had been tasked with designing the field firing which was a joy in Portugal. I could follow Pamphlet 21 to the letter without the additional restrictions imposed by 'Range Standing Orders' and beady- eyed range wardens; at one point, whilst I was designing a close quarter battle range, I noticed that the range danger area template slightly impinged on a nearby village - "Not a problem" said my Portuguese Army Liaison Officer, "we'll move them out for the day!"

We were fortunate (or so we thought) that we had a surfeit of 84mm HEAT ammunition. This particular batch

had originally been designated for Libya but after the breakdown of relations between our countries, ended up in Vic Ebbens' store. The Liaison Officer took me down to their purpose built anti-tank range, complete with a US M60 hulk for a target. It all looked good except that the purpose-built firing point was only about 100m from the target and I didn't really think it would be a particularly challenging shoot. Looking around, I noticed a ridge about 300 m from the tank and decided that it would be far better to design an anti-tank stalk with a challenging approach and a decent distance from which to fire. Getting my range templates and map out, I started to plan whilst Lieutenant 'Billy' Bolton, one of the A Coy pl comds who had come out with me, wandered off to poke about the tank.

Though I say so myself, the field firing period of A Coy's exercise was a tremendous success! The company experienced serials that, up until then, you could only experience at Brecon; overhead and flanking fire, proper obstacles to breach, all platoon weapons available to fire (albeit the 66mm was a sub-cal) and being allowed to 'post' grenades rather than throw them. Great training



Portuguese Anti-Tank Range



tremendous fun without even the most minor of casualties; but it was a close run thing.

The anti-tank stalk with an 84mm Carl Gustav worked

well. On this occasion, the CO had arrived for a visit, and having watched a couple of serials, went away happy with what he saw. The only slight downside on the exercise was the seemingly disproportionate number of 'blinds' and misfires we had - a conspiracy theorist would no doubt have a view, given the original customer the ammunition was meant for. As the day went on, the safety staff and myself got into the swing of things and all went well - at least for us.

Having packed up and returned to barracks, I happened on a very concerned Billy Bolton who related that he and Vic Ebbens had spent the day driving around watching the field firing (I was puzzled at this since I hadn't seen them).

After a cup of coffee, Vic had declared that he'd like to visit the troops out on the training area. Billy, with nothing better to do (he was the platoon commander after all), was pleased to oblige and act as a guide by announcing that he knew the way, having bimbled around the area the day before with me. A stripped-down Land Rover was summoned from somewhere and off they set. The range area was an arid stony place covered in thorny scrub with dry river beds and dusty tracks criss-crossing it; there were few hills but a fair amount of little 'ups & downs', just enough to make it interesting.

Suffice to say, it all looked pretty 'samey' and the mapping wasn't of your usual OS standard. In an attempt to confuse anyone who might have been following, a circuitous route was taken and finally, largely by stopping every now and then to listen out for loud bangs, the vicinity of the anti-tank range was found. Some features were recognisable and OC 2 Pl was convinced he was in the right spot. A further clue was a very young and terrified-looking Portuguese conscript who had been detailed off as a range sentry for the day. He spoke no English and the visiting party spoke no 'Pork'n'cheese'. However, the young soldier knew, when confronted by confident English officers, how to leap to attention and salute, which he duly did, and once having done so. he held that position rigidly, deviating from this stance only to nod furiously and say, 'Si, si,' whenever he was looked at or spoken to - and he waved them through.

Bolton recognised a track that led up from the dip, where the sentry was nodding and saluting, to where he and I had been the day before, so off up the track, quite a steep incline, they went, with the QM muttering, "Are you sure this is it? It doesn't look like a f\*\*\*ing anti-tank range to me!" At the top, they were greeted by a VERY loud bang from not very far away to their right, followed by another loud bang to their left. Mr Bolton was moved to say, "I think we've found it, Vic". Capt Ebbens replied, from an extremely prone position, something along the lines of, "Get down you twat. Found it? We're f\*\*\*ing in it, mate!"

Looking on the positive side, at least they had the experience of suddenly being subjected to an overheadfire demonstration by the 'Charlie G' with the target just 100m from them!



John Powell with some of A Coy

## A KIWI IN AFRICA

#### By Kiwi Carter

I boarded the 18 Transport Company Vauxhall Chevette in front of the IJLB Officers' Mess and looked skywards as snow threatened.

In early February 1986, I was comfortably ensconced in business class of a BA 747 with a glass of something cheering in hand (the joys of serving on what was technically an attachment to the Foreign Office) as we taxied through the heavy snow and lurched into the sky; onward to Harare.

Ten hours later, we descend into Harare International Airport, renamed in the last year as Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport. I expect that another revision will be required following the recent leadership adjustment in that country!! (They are a bit like the Australians who refresh their Prime Minister on a regular basis without necessarily bothering the voters!)

So from freezing temperatures and snow in SE England to 26°C in Harare overnight. Quite a shock to the system!

I was met on arrival by the Nyanga team ops officer; a charming and cheerful officer, one Alan Ladd of the Glosters, (not to be confused with the movie star of the same name.)

It is a 3½ hour trek from Harare to the Battalion Battle School in Nyanga in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe. At 1,679m above sea level, it took a few days to acclimatise to the thinner air. Some 20 kms short of the village of Nyanga, Alan turned off to a large house notable for some pock-marked brickwork, which later turned out to be left-over from the an attack on the property during the bush war. This was to be my home for the next six months, shared throughout that time with a number of other officers from the team. It was called 'Anderson House' after the owner, a large and formidable Rhodesian woman

Here, we were looked after by two hilarious African 'house boys' (their name for themselves, not mine, before I'm accused of racism!); they lived in their rondavel at the bottom of the garden and were excellent EXCEPT if they got their hands on some liquor, when there would be mayhem! It was like having two teenagers (although both were over 50 years of age) working amongst us but they kept the place cleaned, washed and ironed our clothes and cooked our meals. We purchased our own food, which involved a long round trip to the nearest equivalent of a supermarket in either Rusape or Mutare (Umtali).



Anderson House



I met the remainder of the BMATT training team next day. Many of the old and bold will recognise Tom Silverside (ex-Oueen's) who was commissioned into the RWF. Tom and I were in

Meikles Hotel in Harare when, shortly after midnight on 19 May 1986, South African commandos bombed an ANC office in downtown Harare. After a brief discussion in the hotel corridor, we agreed it was a bomb and returned to our rooms and went back to sleep. I was, however, assiduous about wearing British uniform with prominent Union Jacks on the sleeves in the city the next day and cleaned the dust off the BMATT insignia on my vehicle as I negotiated the many police and army road blocks on the way back to Nyanga.

John Cooper went on to reach Lieutenant-General and completed his career as Deputy Commander of Multi-National Force Iraq. Queen's Div Depot hands may recognise John "Nosh" Edgar RRF who was the HQ Company DS in our team and major-domo of Anderson House.

We were each issued with a civilian vehicle. I was fortunate to score a Peugeot 504 pick-up with a box body which was my day-to-day workhorse and my home in the field. A favourite vehicle in Africa, they are remarkably tough and can handle tremendous punishment. I found this out when I inadvertently left the road on one occasion and went down a rather steep bank at speed for some distance, necessitating a short drive up a river bed to find an exit point from which to rejoin the road!

Each of the Tac Wing BMATT officers was charged with overseeing a Zimbabwe National Army [ZNA] Training Team of a major, a captain and a number of NCOs. This team would then be responsible for the tactical training of a rifle company of the newly formed ZNA.

My team leader was Raymond (ex-ZANLA guerrilla) with considerable combat experience, including as a

company commander during the ZNA intervention in Mozambique in August 1985. We took a while to get to know one another when he joined the team following the 'transfer' of his predecessor. He became a thoroughly good DS.

The C Coy training team 2IC was an excellent officer, Captain Isaac Mabuka, originally of the Rhodesian African Rifles. He was a very sound operator and a great asset. Again a man of considerable operational experience, he was a great friend during my time with the team.

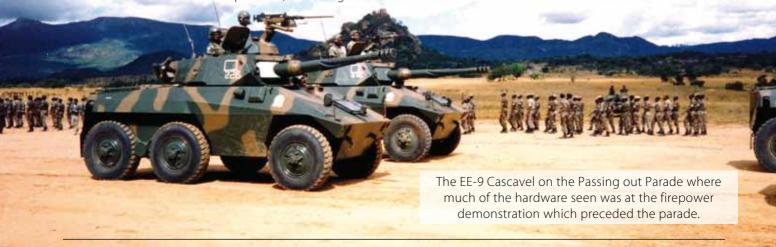
These officers provided a good balance for each other. Towards the end of my tour, I took both of them to dinner at a cottage that had belonged to Cecil Rhodes and had been converted to an up-market restaurant/quest house, as a thank you for their support. The reaction of some of the 'white' customers was interesting!

There would be two battalions in training at the Battalion Battle School at any one time. One battalion would be doing its basic training and then they would transfer across to our teams for the company and battalionlevel training in conventional warfare of advance, attack, defence and withdrawal.

The tactical training phase would last about 8 weeks for each battalion and finished with the inevitable withdrawal as the conclusion to the defence exercise. Then this happened to 1/1 Battalion!

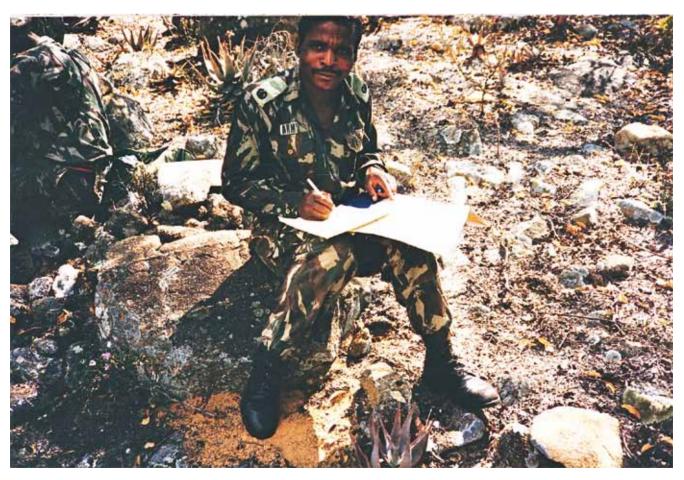


Whoops!





L-R John Cooper KOSB, Tom Silverside RWF, C/Sgt Jowitt LI, Simon Yaind RA, Nigel Jackson RGJ, QMSI, Nosh Edgar RRF, Col Tim ? DWR, Allen Ladd Glosters, Terry Nicholls [QM], Danny Painter PARA



Major Raymond



The 15 km withdraw would now be on foot!

The withdrawal began just prior to first light, was well executed and soon the companies were strung out

tactically along the road to the new defensive position. Slowly, it became apparent that the soldiers had begun to compete to overtake the companies in front of them and it was equally apparent that this was not going to go unchallenged. The pace of the withdrawal became such that, eventually, it was an all-out race, dragging support weapons and the like for the last 5kms. The ZNA soldiers and the BMATT trainers loved it. It was a great way to finish the training of that battalion and showed their amazing spirit.

At the end of a battalion training cycle, most of the training team would travel down to Harare to get our vehicles serviced and have a couple of days break, staying at Meikles Hotel while we did so. The BMATT Mozambique team was also down and we were in uniform in the lounge bar enjoying a cool one, when Sir Geoffrey Howe, the then Foreign Secretary, joined us. He spent an hour with us and stressed how important the work we were doing was. A charming gentleman and he got his round in!

The last battalion group that I was involved with came from the notorious 5 Brigade and their impending arrival in the area created considerable disquiet. They had been responsible for the Gukurahundi massacres in Matabeleland in the early to mid 1980s. 5 Brigade had originally been trained by the North Koreans (unlike the rest of the army who had been trained by BMATT)

and was criticised for its apparent political nature as it was composed only of ex ZANLA fighters, the military wing of ZANU. The Brigade reported directly to Robert Mugabe. They had now been reorganised and were to be retrained by BMATT. They had a professional Brigade Commander who was very interested in the performance of his officers and NCOs and appeared to be determined that the Brigade would be transformed. There was a tension about this group that hadn't been apparent in the previous battalions and that wariness extended to my trainers as well.

They were also unfortunate that their battalion second-in-command had absconded with their only working vehicle and the battalion's pay half-way through their training. He was recaptured a short time afterwards. I never did hear what happened to him! Most of the C Coy officers seemed keen to learn and included a young 2 Lt who had just graduated from Sandhurst.

By this time Raymond, Isaac and the ZNA NCOs were very capable of running the training. I did however, run the TEWTs and this was always a good day out and a chance to get to know the company officers and SNCOs.

Not all ZNA officers and NCOs were totally fluent in English and most of the soldiers not at all which is why one of the soldiers didn't understand when I told him to 'remove himself off' when he tried to use my shoulder as a firing rest! The subsequent two rounds he fired from his AK47 before I chased him down the hill intent on doing him serious physical harm, provide a ringing in my ears to this day.

The HQ Coy logistics element spent an age camouflaging this truck and it did look good right up to the moment



the grass caught fire on the exhaust pipe! Thankfully it was extinguished without too much damage being done.



Cammed up!

If we had lost this vehicle the next solution would perhaps have been:



Alternative Transport

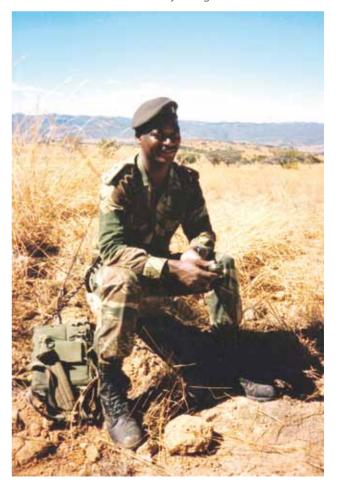
There were occasional quest appearances by the various armoured vehicles which the Rhodesian Forces had acquired. Below is one of the eight T55s which were confiscated by the South Africans from Angola and provided to the Rhodesians.



There were still a good number of white Rhodesians who had remained in the area who, once they had finished abusing us for the British Government's failure to use the British Army to support their independence, were more than hospitable. Principal amongst these were John and Jeanette, 'mine hosts' at the Pine Tree Inn, a quaint guest house and watering hole, thankfully only a short distance from Anderson House and where the team used to foregather on Friday nights for Happy Hour.

I was also able to bring my son out, aged 11 at the time, during my 10 days leave at the end of my tour. We enjoyed a canoe safari down the Zambezi from below the Kariba Dam to Mana Pools, camping on an island in the river or on the river bank and were fortunate to share the experience with a British family who were working on contract in Harare. My son and I then went to Hwange Game Park and finally Victoria Falls. An amazing adventure for an 11-year-old, made even more so when we boarded the Air Zim Boeing 707 to return to Harare and, there being a shortage of seats, the crew installed him in a jump seat in the cockpit. Beats having to sit on the two boxes of live chickens in the aisle!

Overall, this was an amazing experience in a stunning part of the world, working with some amazing people and one for which I will always be grateful.



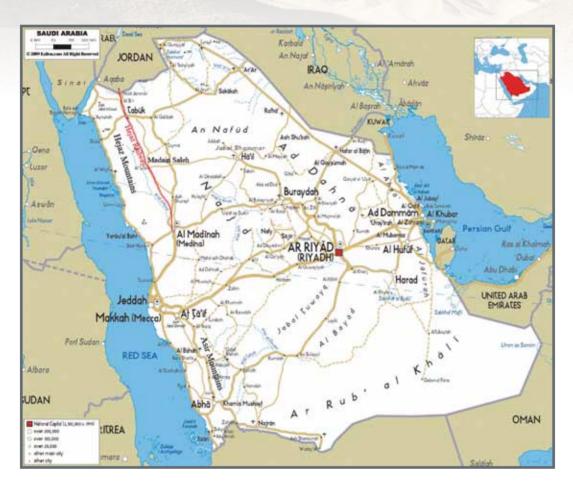
Captain Isaac Habuka



# ADVENTURE IN THE DESERT KINGDOM

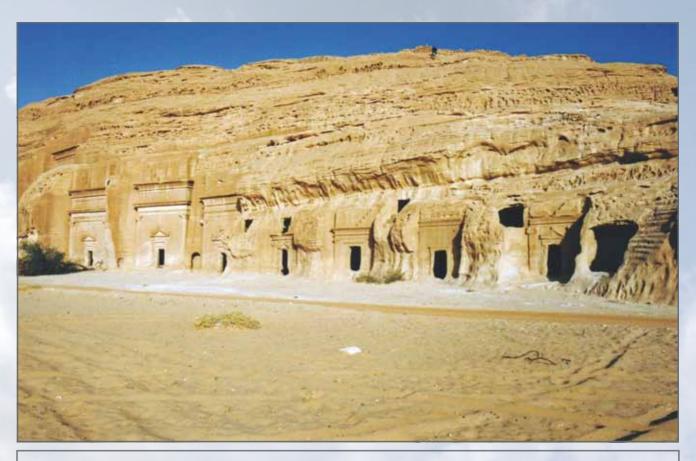
1991-1993

By Roger Gancz

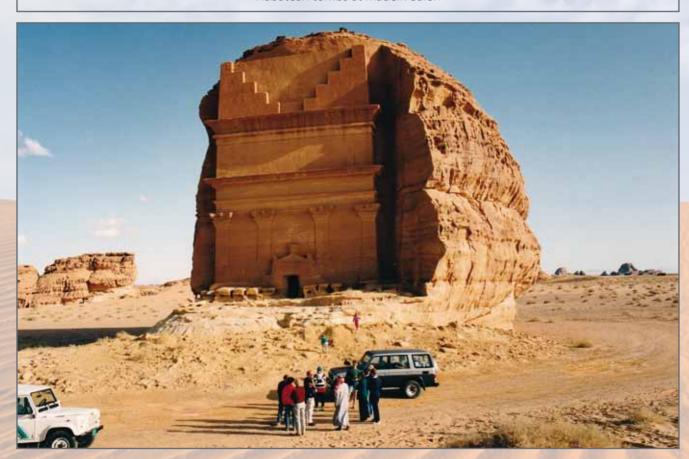


I was nearing the end of my three-year tour in MOD London as an SO1 in Land Systems Operational Requirements when my phone rang. The man from MS was trying to persuade me to take up a post in UKLF. "But you'll be briefing Generals every week" he pleaded. I laughed, "What the hell do you think I've been doing for the last three years?" I had my sights set on something much more interesting and adventurous. And so it was that, after a ten-week Arabic language course, I was off to Saudi Arabia on secondment to join the British Military Mission to the Saudi Arabian National Guard (BMM to SANG).

BMM to SANG was, and perhaps still is, one of the least-known organisations in the British Army. It was established in 1963 when the Saudis asked the UK for advisers for the 'White Army' (from the traditional white Arab dress or thobe). It was also known as the National Guard and was commanded by Prince Abdullah, who was to become the King of Saudi Arabia from 2005 to 2015. SANG is a tribal force forged out of those tribal elements loyal to the Saudi royal family. Its mission includes protecting the royal family, quarding against military coups, quarding strategic facilities and resources, and providing security for the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Unlike the army, navy and air force, it is not under the control of the Ministry of Defence. It reports directly to the King. Its command and communication structures are entirely separate from those of the Ministries of Defence and the Interior. It is deployed in three regions: Central with HQ in Riyadh, Eastern with HQ in Dammam, and Western with HQ in Jeddah. Each SANG region is governed by a prince.



Nabatean tombs at Madein Saleh



Grand Nabatean tomb at Madein Saleh



BMM to SANG was, and still is, commanded by a brigadier, with a colonel as 2IC, eight lieutenant-colonels and a WO1 Chief Clerk. Most of the team was based in Riyadh, except for three of the

infantry members based in Eastern Region at Dammam, in Western at Jeddah, and at Ar'ar in the north of Central near the Iraqi border. We wore SANG uniform with our own regimental headdress. BMM's mission included providing advice and training assistance to SANG in order to promote regional and national stability and to build SANG's capacity for internal security operations.

I arrived in Jeddah to take up the recently established post in the Western Region at the conclusion of Operation GRANBY. British forces were engaged in recovery back to the UK. SANG was expanding rapidly. The Western Region had one light infantry brigade based in Jeddah, with whom I was based; a second was forming with its headquarters in Taif, nearly 2000m up in the Hejaz Mountains about two hours drive from Jeddah. These brigades had responsibilities for internal security operations in the region, especially during the Hadj when millions of pilgrims descended on the region from around the world for the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina.

The military commander of the Western Region was a lieutenant-general who had probably started his military career long before the White Army became SANG. I never saw this venerable old soldier leave his office, but I made a regular habit of calling on him at least once a month. As I was to discover, these courtesy calls proved invaluable for British influence within the region. An American major barged into his office during one of our meetings, mistaking him for the general's orderly! You didn't have to speak Arabic to understand the general's displeasure. I never saw that major again, nor the mutawa (religious

policeman) who complained about my presence and was rebuked by being told that I was there to help!

I quickly discovered that the military controller of the Western Region was the general's Chief of Staff (COS), a brigadier who had attended the Army Staff College at Camberley a few years after me. He spoke excellent English, which he proudly told me he had learnt by candlelight in a mud brick house in the desert. He became my principal point of contact for many of my activities with SANG and an invaluable source of information and advice.

Within weeks of my arrival, the Western Region brigade moved its headquarters to Mecca in preparation for the Hadj. It was well within the holy area from which all non-Muslims were forbidden entry. How was I to visit the brigade? I took my problem to the COS, who smiled and said, "Roger, you wear the uniform of the National Guard. You may go where you please". And so it was that, by a circuitous route through the desert to avoid the many police check points on the roads, I arrived at the brigade headquarters. I explained my presence to the very surprised brigade commander, who then took me through his operational plan. Apparently, no British or American officer had been granted this access before. Some days later I was discussing the Hadj with my American Special Forces counterpart, advisors only to SANG, who had also asked to visit the brigade and had been refused. It dawned on me that I was in an incredibly privileged position. I was to find, as I travelled widely throughout the Kingdom, that the SANG uniform and identification card allowed me unhindered access to go almost wherever I wished.

Within a few months, the second brigade headquarters was established in Taif and I set off to introduce myself to the new Brigade Commander. He also spoke very good English and, like me, had been a graduate of Mons Officer Cadet School. Having these connections with





two of the three brigadiers in the Region was to give me easy acceptance into all the battalions. Most of the new recruits for this brigade had had to move out of the comfort of their air-

conditioned homes in the towns to live in tents at nearly 2000m on wind-swept mountains, which were freezing in winter and baking in summer. Very few Saudis lived as Bedouins in the desert anymore! It was little wonder that many soldiers went absent. I wrote a report on all this for the COS and the Prince. For six months I heard nothing. I was beginning to think I had wasted my time when, one evening, driving back to Jeddah along a desert track from one of my visits, I came across a track that I had not noticed before. I followed it to find a huge new barracks being constructed. I mentioned this to the COS; he smiled. The lesson for me was that although advice had been given, it did not mean I would be informed or involved in any decisions taken.

Much of my time was spent with the battalion COs and 2ICs, who were mostly American-trained, receiving considerable training support from the very large US team in the Kingdom. However, for internal security operations, it was to the BMM that they turned. The runup to the Hadj was my busiest period. Other members of the team would come across from Riyadh to help run short courses for officers and NCOs. I spent many days with individual battalions, usually at their request. The CO of one of the new battalions in Taif had asked me to help them with respirator training. On the appointed day, I set out on the spectacular, but very dangerous escarpment road to Taif. I walked into the CO's office. He gave me a bemused look and asked why I had come. "The respirator training", I said. "Oh, we had to cancel it", came the reply. By this time, 'I-am-not-amused', must have been written right across my face. He got up from his chair and asked me to follow him to see whom he could find. There, drawn up across the parade square, was his whole battalion with their respirators. We laughed; a treasured moment. I spent the whole day in the gas chamber. God knows how many soldiers went through. I was knackered and the CO thought I was super-human!

Another battalion asked me for help with their riot drills. They had been told to put on a demonstration for the Western Region Prince to show their preparedness for the Hadj. The Battalion 2IC and I put together a training plan and I returned to see how they were getting on. I had watched their riot drills before and found them rather sterile. A lot of marching up and down banging shields with sticks. On the agreed day, I arrived with a

jerrican of petrol, empty wine bottles (labels removed), some rag, and a large fire-extinguisher. Having prepared my petrol bombs, I gave the signal for rioting to commence. The rioters went about their business with great enthusiasm. I lobbed my petrol bombs and the whole thing started to look very realistic. It finished on a high with the soldiers chattering excitedly. The Battalion 2IC was delighted but, with a smile on his face, was curious to know from where I had acquired the wine bottles. The British Consulate in Jeddah, of course, but I didn't tell him that I had consumed the contents! The demonstration for the Prince attracted a lot of attention. It was well executed, earning the Prince's praise for the battalion.

I spent some time with Lieutenant-Colonel Mike Argue MC PARA at Ar'ar, close to the Iraqi border. For him and his wife, it was the most isolated of places. His escape was to stand in for me in Jeddah when I went on leave. Strolling through the town together, I was surprised to see red-haired, blue-eyed Arabs; a throw-back to the days of the Crusades, he said!

Ten years previously, my travels through the Sahara desert from Nigeria, including Timbuktu, Tamanrasset and the Hoggar Mountains, had given me a taste for desert travel, which I was keen to repeat. Saudi Arabia provided that in spades. Inspired by the books of Lady Anne Blunt, T.E. Lawrence and Wilfred Thesiger, I travelled in my trusty SANG-provided Land Rover the length and breadth of the country on many training exercises and private expeditions: a south to north crossing of the An Nafud desert with its distinctive red sand dunes (Blunt); the Hejaz railway (Lawrence) from the Jordanian border in the north-west, south through the Hejaz mountains to the old railway station at Medina (also a city restricted to Moslems only, which I was able to enter!); south from Jeddah into the spectacular Asir Mountains to the Yemeni border; east to explore this southern border and the Rub' al Khali, Empty Quarter, (Thesiger) to find a prehistoric lake amongst majestic sand dunes; and east from Jeddah to Riyadh and the Arabian Gulf coast.

I am privileged to have dined with Princes in palaces and with humble Bedouin jundi in the desert. Almost without exception, I was received with traditional Arab hospitality everywhere, particularly within SANG, and drank countless cups of Arab tea and coffee. I could not have wished for a more interesting and adventurous job to end my Army career; far more rewarding than briefing generals in UKLF every week!

# **QUEENSMAN LODGE 2694 MAKES HISTORY**

By Kevin Midmore

I, like many others during my spell in the 3rd Battalion, came into contact with 'Mr Angry' (Regimental Sergeant-Major John Edwards). Who would have thought that some years later we would meet up again as brothers of a Masonic Lodge?

On 3 December 2011, I was the first Oueensman to be initiated into the newly named Queensman Lodge 2694. I started to climb the ladder within the Lodge (Inner Guard, Junior Deacon, reading and learning the Craft) before being inaugurated into the chair of the 'Worshipful Master', the biggest prize of them all.

Earlier this year, I was the Lodge Senior Warden or 2IC, six months away from reaching the top, when John and I had a conversation: "Kev, we have a chance to do something very special. We may be initiating two, not one but two holders of the Victoria Cross." After a couple of weeks of talks and thousands of emails flying to and fro, it was confirmed that we were going to do it. The Lodge started to prepare the initiation. We thought it likely that some two hundred Freemasons would attend and I would be the Senior Warden. It couldn't get much better than that. Or could it?

The date of the meeting was set for 8 May 2018. Ray Heathfield was the Worshipful Master and I was due to be installed as the Worshipful Master two weeks later at a separate lodge meeting. Out of the blue came an email that was to change everything. The powers-that-be at Metropolitan Grand Lodge informed us that as we were bringing forward the June meeting to accommodate the two VCs, we must also install the new Worshipful Master for the ensuing year. That would be me!



Sgt Johnson Beharry VC

W M Kevin Midmore

Cpl Daniel Keighan VC



Our Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro John Edwards, put together an abridged version of an installation which was much shorter than usual, so as to allow sufficient time to carry out the initiations at

the same time. Word spread throughout masonic circles and this got bigger by the day. Research had shown that in over 300 years of Freemasonry, two holders of the Victoria Cross had never been initiated at the same time into the same lodge. The Queensman Lodge was about to make history.

The Metropolitan Grand Secretary, W. Bro David Swain, an ex-naval officer, informed us that because of the prestigious nature of our meeting and the likely numbers, he felt that we should use the Grand Temple to hold both ceremonies. None of us at the lodge could get our heads around just how big this had become. Hundreds were booking in to watch this unique ceremony take place.

The day started with Ray Heathfield opening the Lodge in front of 600 Freemasons; John Edwards carried out the job of Director of Ceremonies with true military precision, as one would expect from an ex-RSM. The first part of the day went extremely quickly. The Immediate Past Master, who was by now Ray Heathfield, stood in front of me and in a firm manner stated: "Worshipful Master, you may now rule and direct YOUR lodge." I couldn't believe it. I was now the Queensman Lodge's new Worshipful Master.

After a short break, we were all back into the Grand Temple to start the main event of the day. The numbers had swelled to an incredible 1,100 Freemasons all coming to see history being made and to be some small part of it. Knocks on the door signalled the arrival of some very senior masons, the equivalent of a few colonels, brigadiers and perhaps the odd general! We were all settled when more knocks on the door signalled

that the two initiates were waiting outside. Over 1,000 pairs of eyes were on the door as it opened and in stepped the two initiates, Sqt Johnson Beharry VC and Cpl Daniel Keighran VC of Australia, standing, just as kings and carpenters had done before, as candidates for Freemasonry. Many others played their part in the ceremony: Brother Richard Mooney was outstanding delivering the Ancient Charge, as was Andreas Von Thun Hohenstein delivering the tools of an Entered Apprentice Freemason in perfect English (not his mother tongue); Ged Deutrom as Junior Warden, Jim Burgoyne as Senior Warden, Leigh Thomas as Inner Guard, both of the Deacons, namely Steve Gaskell and Terry Crosby, excelled. All but a few were ex-Queen's Regiment, and all still proud to be wearing the tie and badge of our regiment.

Proceedings were then handed back to me to finish and we completed the ceremony of the initiation when 1,100 men gave a moving rendition of 'Jerusalem' and then sung the National Anthem at the top of their voices, practically lifting the roof off the Grand Temple. We processed out of the temple, I shook hands with hundreds of people, posed for some pictures, removed all the regalia and went off to the Grand Connaught Rooms for the festive board.

The festive board was full, 650 men all standing, waiting to receive "Their Worshipful Master and the Candidates". To a round of applause that shook the building, we were led by John Edwards to our seats at the top table. I was the proudest and luckiest person on this planet for those few hours. I had not only became the first ever Queensman Initiate to become Worshipful Master of the Queensman Lodge, I had also became the first ever Worshipful Master to initiate two holders of the Victoria Cross at the same time, thus putting the name of the Queen's Regiment firmly into the annals of Freemason history.

The Rev Basil Pratt was the 1 QUEENS padre in Berlin in the early '70s who introduced himself as "Hi, my name's Pratt - Pratt by name and Pratt by nature!" Following an unfortunate incident at a 2 RRF guest night, Basil decided that port did not agree with him so in future he decided that he would drink the Loyal Toast with Newcastle Brown Ale. This he was enabled to do by the Mess Staff, using a silver bottle holder to disguise the slightly infra-dig bottle!

Rocky Hitchcock

### 6/7 QUEENS(V) - A CO REMEMBERS

#### By Mike Dudding



I started my military career as a regular officer of the Royal Fusiliers. Shortly after, I took early retirement in 1974, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Ogilvie, then commanding the newly-established 7 QUEENS (V), invited me to lunch. He was about to give up command, to be succeeded by Foster Herd. That left a gap as 2IC - would I consider joining? It was a good lunch, and, as a newly-appointed civil servant based in London, I knew my employer could not object. So I joined. But I nearly failed as a Territorial at the first hurdle. As 2IC, I was also PMC of the Officers' Mess. So at my very first dinner night, with General Dick Craddock, Colonel of the Regiment, as the principal guest, I was seated at one end of the table. This was a new experience as the Royal Fusiliers had had no toasts and nobody sat at the end of the table in a Fusilier mess. I had mugged up beforehand the complicated toasting procedure of the Queen's Regiment with its three royal toasts, sitting not standing. Come the night, that went well. But as I relaxed, I failed to stop the subaltern sitting on my right from seizing the decanter, drinking and passing to his right – the wrong way! By the time I had realised what had happened, the decanter was about four places

away - what to do, recall it or let it continue? I opted for the latter. But I could then see the Colonel of the Regiment telling the CO that he had made an unusual choice of 2IC.

The following year, 6 and 7 QUEENS(V) were amalgamated and I was retained as 2IC of the new battalion with its headquarters at Horsham. In December 1978, I was appointed Commanding Officer. Finance – as always – did not allow for a large permanent staff at Battalion Headquarters; the two principal officers were Major Reggie Morgan MC as Adjutant and Major Ron Lucas MBE as Quartermaster. Reggie had fought at El Alamein and had been wounded in Libya in 1942 and sometimes still experienced pain from his wounds. Possibly as a result, he could be slow to process things. On one occasion, a young officer sent him a writ for non-payment of TA pay - Reggie did not appreciate the joke that it was! Before he was dined out by the Officers' Mess in late 1979 on retirement, I had obtained a copy of the citation for his MC. I read it out at the dinner, and I can only say it was a show-stopper. A profile article on Reggie appeared in the 'Journal of the Queen's Regiment' of December 1979.

Ron was a different kettle of fish. A short, energetic man, he could be rather brusque in his manner. "What do you want wood for, it doesn't grow on trees you know" is the sort of response a subaltern might get to a request. But Ron had a heart of gold, knew all the tricks of the QM's trade and would meet the request if at all possible. He told a nice story, from his days in the Royal Sussex Regiment in Southern England after Dunkirk, about a battalion training run. A staff car drew up alongside some of the runners, and a high-pitched voice asked for the Commanding Officer. The CO was not on the run. By the time the battalion returned to barracks, the CO had been sacked. The voice had been that of Lieutenant-General Bernard Montgomery!

When we were in Sennelager (probably the worst lager in the world!), we were in the middle of doing an attack on the enemy with smoke and tank fire when all of a sudden we heard this bell ringing. We turned to our left and saw a blue Mercedes van on the training area, with the driver shouting to us trying to sell 'pommes frites' and bratwurst. Some of the boys rounded up the van, got food and then resumed the attack. Umpires not impressed!

Chris Holmes



# THE 24TH DIVISION MEMORIAL

#### in Battersea Park, London

By Michael McNish

I came to London in 1981 after university and started to live close to Battersea Park. Wandering into the Park, it did not take long to find a rather forgotten WW1 statue memorial – for the 24th East Surrey Division. Beneath are its unit badges and I immediately spotted the Royal Sussex badge, amongst other former regiments of the Queen's Regiment. I had briefly served with the 3rd Battalion before university (in a barracks with still quite a lot of blue and orange paint around) and I continued to wear the badge while a member of the University Officer Training Corps.

Over the years since 1981, the memorial has been better cared for, and is today a place of annual commemoration. I still visit and admire it. Only recently did I discovered its direct Royal Sussex connections and Journal readers might be interested in the story.

24th Division was raised from volunteers in September 1914, went to France a year later and remained there until 1919. The 9th (Service) Battalion, the Royal Sussex Regiment served with the division throughout the Great War and formed part of 73rd Brigade, one of the three brigades in the division; other battalions were from all the regiments that would eventually amalgamate to form the Queen's Regiment – at that time being the Queen's Royal Regiment, the Buffs, the East Surrey Regiment, the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment and the Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment) – along with others mainly from London and East Anglia. Exactly why the 'East Surrey' divisional label arose is not clear.

The division suffered heavily in many engagements during 1915-18, with 4,865 known killed, 24,000 wounded and 6,000 missing. In 1921 the former Commanding Officer of the 9th Royal Sussex, Lieutenant-Colonel MVB Hill DSO (attached from the Royal Fusiliers), agreed to sound out the only artist he may have known, to find a designer for a suitable Divisional Memorial. This was Eric Kennington, an official WW1 war artist who had spent some time with 9th Royal Sussex in France in December 1917. Earlier in the war, Kennington had served with two battalions of the London Regiment (the 1st/22nd Artists

Rifles and the 13th Kensingtons becoming a war artist after being medically discharged in 1915. His first main work 'The Kensingtons at Laventie' (oil on glass and now at the Imperial War Museum in London) had caused a sensation when exhibited in London in 1916. He immediately offered to carve a 24th Division Memorial himself, seeking no fee.

In 1922, Kennington commenced work on a twelveton block of prepared Portland stone in his studio in Chiswick. The 24th Divisional Association also then decided to locate the memorial in Battersea Park, perhaps convenient enough for many former members. Work took time, but by 1924 the memorial was at Battersea for completion, with the twenty badges on its pedestal being carved by Lucy Sampson, a student at the Royal College of Art. The Memorial was finally unveiled on 4 October 1924 by Lord Plumer, former Commander Second Army.

To quote from notes attributed to Kennington, the memorial comprises three figures 'as the various natures of British soldiers could not be represented by one man' but 'they insisted on facing the same front and each chose his own personality. The foremost and youngest is light-hearted, carefree, physically exuberant and irrepressible. On his right is a man who, with maturity, has gained self-mastery, sound judgement and the knowledge based on experience - while retaining the strength and energy of youth'. To the left was a man 'more profound than his fellows, being at once soldier, athlete, poet and intellectual'. Kennington summed up: 'All three have boundless strength, courage and resolve and their progress is unimpeded by the common danger at their feet. They are British soldiers in uniform and also men journeying through life - the enemies which they overcome are not so much German soldiers as the internal, inner, enemies of all of us'.

As late as 1981, Lt Col Hill identified the three figures as - in the centre, a happy young platoon sergeant of 9th Royal Sussex who was 'houseman' to Kennington during his stay with that battalion. It seems possible this was Sgt



The 24th Division Memorial

Frank Wood (from Coxham Lane, Steyning), previously twice wounded in the shoulder (hence shown with two wound stripes) and in January 1918 decorated for bravery during the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) - although he is also listed as from 2nd Royal Sussex. To the right of Sgt Wood is Tpr Thomas, a former cavalryman and part of a 24th Division heavy machine-gun unit. On the left, shaking hands with Sgt Wood, is no less a figure than the well-known writer and poet Robert Graves, a captain in the Royal Welch Fusiliers and also formerly of the Division.

Around the time of its completion and unveiling, the press hailed the memorial as original and likely to be 'one of the very small number of significant war statues'. One writer concluded that it 'will not appeal either to the military tailor or to the drill sergeant, but it will leave a deep impression on the imaginative person'. Another described it as offering a much-welcome change within a genre characterised by falseness and mediocrity since the end of hostilities. The country has been overstrewn with sentimental and uninspired war statuary, which bore nobody more than they do the ex-combatants.... Except for the Cenotaph, it is the best conceived modern war memorial I have seen in England'.

It is good indeed that the Royal Sussex Regiment (and indeed all founder regiments of the Queen's Regiment) is not associated with mediocrity. I can recommend a visit to the 24th Division Memorial: it is today in its original but improved setting and is easy to find in Battersea Park, which has much else to recommend it.

#### By John Davidson

I was a member of Intake 11 at Sandhurst and was made a Junior Under Officer in our senior term. I was also chosen. together with Peter Alderton, from amongst all the JUOs to carry the Academy Colours on parades. The whole of Intake 11, some 300 strong, was privileged to become closely involved in the build-up to the Coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth Il on Tuesday 2nd June 1953. The Sovereign's Company (Ypres Company), led by SUO Neil Cantlie, marched in the procession and the remainder of the intake lined the route on the south side of Parliament Square and that part of Broad Sanctuary up to the entrance to Westminster Abbey. The Colour Party, with the Queen's Colour, was positioned next to the Band of the Royal Marines and opposite the entrance to the Abbey. As we were to be in our positions for 6 ½ hours, some relief for individuals was essential, not only for the call of nature but also for Colour Bearers to relieve the strain on our right arms. Therefore, we worked out an elaborate drill movement to change over. I should add that for at least a month before the Coronation, RSM JC Lord MBE had us on parade for an hour every morning in front of the mirrors on the edge of Old College, just standing to attention holding the Colour with our right forearms parallel to the ground. At the end of an hour, lifting the Colour and carrying out a Royal Salute was sheer agony.

For us, Coronation Day started with reveille at 0220 hrs. We marched to Camberley Station and boarded a train at 0430. We de-trained at Vauxhall Station and marched to Millbank Barracks for breakfast. At 0800 hrs, we set off marching the

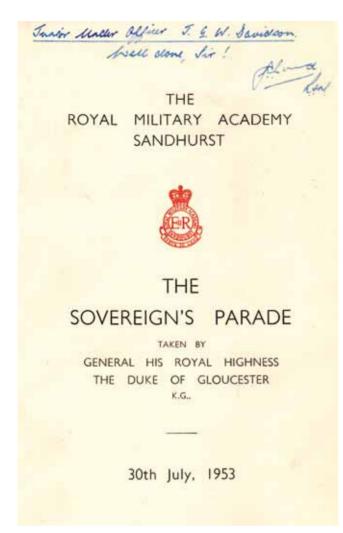
mile to Parliament Square. We were in position by 0830, and settled down in time

for the arrival of the first procession, that of the Lord Mayor. We remained in our positions until we finally marched off at 1445 hrs. It rained continuously throughout the day.

The Queen's Coach arriving at the Abbey

All of us privileged to be there that day will no doubt have our own memories. I have many, including the pomp and ceremony of the day (only the Brits can carry out ceremonial like this); the agony of innumerable Royal Salutes; the amusement of the enormous crowd beside us taking the 'mickey' out of Andrew Myrtle's words of command; the passage of the Queen of Tonga in her coach accompanied by a skinny little man in a morning suit and bowler hat, dubbed by the Press as 'her lunch'! But uppermost for ever will be that of the Crowned Queen in the State Coach passing some 3 feet in front of me whilst carrying out the Royal Salute.

As soon as the procession from the Abbey had passed, we marched back to Millbank for another meal and then took the train back to Camberley. We and the Colours were of course soaking wet, but the enterprising RSM Jack Lord had reserved a compartment - no corridors on the trains in those days - where we stripped





the RSM's congratulatory Note to me

RSM J C Lord MVO MBE uncasing the Queen's Colour;

to our underpants, dried off our uniforms and the Colours as best we could, before de-training at Camberley, marching down the High Street and through the Yorktown gate before marching off the Colours on the square at Sandhurst. Most of us then rushed back to our rooms, changed into 'mufti', put on our Herbie Js and returned to London to enjoy the evening's festivities with the many who were still lining the streets and celebrating. So ended a fabulous and very tiring day.

Years later, at the instigation of Maj-Gen Guy Watkins, in discussion with the Commandant of Sandhurst, Maj-Gen Paul Nanson and the Royal British Legion, it was agreed that a contingent, from those of us who had taken part in the Coronation, should take part in the Veterans march past the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday, 12 November 2017. Guy, who had previously organised the 'Last Hurrah' of surviving members of Intake 11 at the Royal Mews in Buckingham Palace, emailed us all and asked for volunteers to join the march. Fifteen valiant old soldiers answered the call and we were joined by Gerry Corden's son, Paul, who joined 1 QUEENS in November 1979 as a newly commissioned 2Lt just after I had handed over command. The Commandant very kindly arranged for us all to be sent new Sandhurst berets and badges and formally agreed to us being called 'The Coronation Intake'. The Royal British Legion sent us official armbands for the left and right markers. We also decided that we would all meet up after the March, with our wives, for lunch at the Villandry Restaurant in Waterloo Place.

We assembled on Horse Guards at 0915 and hung around practising our umbrella drills, before getting in position in our prescribed order of march facing Horse Guards Arch. Shortly after 10am, the parade started marching through the arch and assembled all along Whitehall for the Service of Remembrance. We were fortunate that it was a bright sunny day, albeit with quite a cold wind whistling down the street. We were grateful that we had decided to wear overcoats. We were able to follow the service on a large TV screen in front of us.



The Coronation Intake on the march

After the service at 1140, the parade started marching and we reached the Cenotaph 20 minutes later and did an 'Eyes Left'. We continued marching along Parliament Street, Parliament Square, Great George Street and Horse Guards Road, and giving 'Eyes Right' to the Earl of Wessex at the Saluting Dais by the Guards Memorial. We finally "fell out" on Horse Guards at about 1245. After assembling against the Admiralty wall for a team photo, we walked to the restaurant and met up with our wives. We had a very enjoyable, if crowded, lunch in a private room where, inter-alia, we managed to consume 18 bottles of well-earned wine.



Beret and armband

It was for all of us a memorable day. Very tiring with a lot of hanging about and marching about 1½ miles. The BBC alleged that there were 9,000 Veterans marching. My abiding memory will be of the camaraderie amongst all on parade. A young Green Jacket veteran standing beside me in Whitehall even offered me a slurp from his hip flask! The crowds packing the pavements all along the route were wonderfully supportive; they applauded us all along the way and made a great number of gracious comments. It was all very emotional and well worth all the very tired legs. We have universally agreed that we will not do it again, but we plan to meet up again in London next year as a group on the 65th anniversary of the Coronation.



Veterans from the RMAS Coronation Intake on Parade at the Cenotaph on 12 November 2017

Back Row: Paul Corden (not of the intake!), Gerry Corden, Allan Skelton, John Tatham, Guy Watkins, Derek Sibley, Donal Merrylees, Michael Young, Tim Street, Peter Bloomfield, Alan Whipp Front Row: Brian Forsyth, John Davidson, John Landau, John Benjamin, Rodney Ellis

#### SOLDIERS' WITHDRAWAL



Together they marched into battle, Together they drank in the Mess, Together they stood before the flag, The elite, the very best, One by one they marched into history, Good friends who did their time, But those old soldiers have never died, They've just withdrawn behind the line.

Together they fought for freedom, Together they travelled the globe, Together they trained in the jungle, Together they trained in the snow, Forever these brothers, side by side, March on though the years unwind, But those old soldiers will never die, They'll just withdraw behind the line.

So for those who will walk in their footsteps, For those who will follow the flag, For those who swell the depleted ranks, Be proud of the times you'll have, And like those that marched before you, No better comrades will you find, And like those old soldiers, you'll never die, You'll just withdraw behind the line.

Andy (Smudger 23) Smith



### THE TERRITORIAL ARMY PUBLIC INFORMATION **OFFICER**

By Gerry Bartlett

There are those who would seriously question the sanity of a 45-year-old national newspaper man who 'volunteers' to be beasted around Sandhurst for a month with regular officers half his age. This followed a conversation with his editor about the opportunity of being commissioned into the Queen's Regiment as the Army's first Territorial Army Public Information Officer (TAPIO).

Commissioned as a Captain prior to arriving at Sandhurst, I was marched, double-marched and endurance-tested by pace-stick wielding martinets: "Captain Bartlett Sir, you're bloody idle, I'm watching you and stop fidgeting, you dumpling!"; "Captain Binks (an Army Lawyer) Sir, you look like a penis with a cap and belt on!" All good humilityinducing stuff for sensitive Army doctors, dentists, nurses, vets, pharmacists, vicars and now a TAPIO, already provisionally commissioned for their professional expertise, taking part in the Service familiarisation CMDVLP course or more commonly known as the 'Vicars and Tarts' Course - a colloquialism which suggests a doddle, yet belies the hard reality of a course which left resilient 22-year-olds wondering out loud how much more hassle they were expected to take. However, despite the legendary Sandhurst embuggerance factor, the abuse, the physical and psychological pressures subtly applied, it was for the majority of us an intensive Army training experience of a lifetime.

For me, the oldest course officer and only TAPIO, it was something more: fulfilment of a lifetime's ambition to 'Go to Sandhurst", which began with a peremptory bang on my bunk door with a Colour Sergeant's pace stick and ended in driving snow confirming my Commission on the hallowed Old College Parade Ground, culminating in marching up the steps of Old College to the refrains of 'Auld Lang Syne'.

The intervening weeks were taxing and obsessively busy, long days crammed with lectures, demonstrations, map-reading, drill, frequent changes of uniform, section attacks, patrols, weapon-handling, firing on the range, laid-back periods in the Signals Wing and not so laidback sessions in the gym with enormous amount of

punishment press-ups. Oh yes, and long arduous shining parades after busy working days, burning off the bumps from our service dress brown shoes with hot knives and spoons and then bulling them to a mirror shine. Then there was the entertainment of shrinking the beret to acceptable proportions: "Do you have a pair of knickers to match that beret, Capt Kay?" - yet another pithy epithet from Colour Sergeant David Gregson, our platoon Colour Sergeant or "Staff!" to us lesser mortals: service dress ties soaked and stretched for nights on end and steam ironed to ensure that they were at least eight foot long and no longer 'sprog-width'. "It'll make you look less of an arse when you get to your regiments", although I still don't understand why!

"You're a knob, Sir!" as my mess tins flew out of my bunk into the corridor during room inspection. "Your room is in bog order! You're not telling me you cleaned those, are you?" "No Staff. I mean Yes Staff! I mean I don't know Staff!" We decided to run a sweepstake for the first vicar or tart to be put on Show Parade. I won for fidgeting on the parade ground. "Show parade, Capt Bartlett, you bloody dough bag, showing yourself standing still!"

From day one, we were injected at an incredible rate of knots with as much information as our Directing Staff (DS) could muster on everything from the role of the Padre, how to behave as an officer, soldiers' pay and radio procedure to military law, service writing, principles of leadership, pistol familiarisation, CEFO/CEMO and 'O' Groups.

There were personal triumphs such as passing one's battle fitness test in great heavy boots and denims over a three mile circuit, successfully hosting a member of the DS on a formal Dinner Night and giving a passable set of orders. And there was ignominy too when it became patently obvious that you couldn't "read your way out of a paper bag", when your BATCO instruction refused to translate, when you had to be nudged awake during yet another interminable vu-foil lecture when you'd had just three hours sleep, or when the Company Sergeant-Major ordered "Left Wheel!" and you turned right and you were offered a 'pace-stick up your nose'. 'Interviews



Gerry Bartlett

without coffee' came fast and furious to some who gave a crappy set of orders "which would have almost certainly meant certain death for both you and your patrol!", for falling asleep on guard, for being idle on parade, for having a negligent discharge during "for inspection port arms!"; all this delivered with aplomb by our Platoon Commander, Major Alasdair Goulden, a horrified man when he discovered I was joining England's Senior and Finest Regiment, but who steered his fellow Queensman through many a sticky patch with kindness and enormous patience.

There were times when some felt like opting out of a course which occasionally seemed set on breaking our spirits, when the requirement to balance precariously on a metal climbing frame made out of scaffolding poles 30 feet above the ground shouting out number, rank and name while not being allowed to hold on, or careering hell for leather on the 'death slide' across the Sandhurst lake; but then you realise that the pressures are quite deliberate, that as officers you must function and function well whatever the odds, and if you don't, you are utterly useless to your soldiers if you cannot. Suddenly the physical and mental pain, the anguish and the sheer embuggerance ladled out in liberal doses by the DS began to make sense and you determined to endure and survive it, come what may.

The culmination of our training was Exercise TERRIER involving three days in the field practising attack, defence, withdrawal, recce patrols, fighting patrols etc, etc. Did I mention sleep? There wasn't any. It was during this that I discovered that it was impossible to get away with anything. In the middle of the night, when it was absolutely pitch black and you couldn't see your hand in front of your face, I was on guard, accompanied by a delightful chain-smoking female doctor who whispered to me "Do you think the Old Man will know if I have a fag?" to which a voice came from directly behind our trench "Yes, I will!". The Platoon Commander had moved silently onto the position to check on us. Caught again!

The exercise over, we returned to Sandhurst for a few days preparation for our Commissioning Parade. Exhausted, elated, fitter and smarter, my chest swelled with pride as I climbed those steps into Old College. This marvellous course, run by those dedicated and professional DS, taught me so much in the space of one short month which enabled me as a TAPIO on future assignments to accompany troops from across the Army in difficult and sometimes dangerous situations without putting them or myself into harm's way.

(Ed: Captain, later Major, Bartlett has continued his connection with the Regiment over the last 30 years and has only recently relinquished the appointment of Divisional Secretary of the Canterbury, Ashford, Whitstable and Herne Bay SSAFA, the charity's biggest British division and along with the rest of his volunteers looks after many of our comrades. Our thanks to him. PS: He was the scruffiest individual I had in any of my Sandhurst platoons! Looks a bit smarter now!)



### CONFESSIONS OF AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT AND WHISTLEBLOWER

#### By Roddy Mellotte

In 1977, 1 QUEENS was in Werl, and in London the Labour administration under James Callaghan was moving into its death throes. The Defence budget was under severe pressure and was increasingly affecting everything we did. A freeze of pay and allowances was biting, training and ammunition was limited and a severe shortage of spares meant that, for instance, my Land Rover was VOR (Vehicle off the Road) for over three months awaiting a replacement starter motor. I even tried to buy one from the local British Leyland agent but to no avail. Morale was dipping and all the normal signs were there; recruiting was declining and wastage rates increasing. In my experience, morale had never been lower. There was a great deal of discontent at all levels but the proverbial straw that broke my back was when the Armed Forces Minister denied it all at the Adjutant-General's Conference and was not challenged by a single General. Spontaneously, I sat down and wrote a letter to the Sunday Telegraph which had reported the Minister's denial. It had to be anonymous, of course, and I got Cpl Small, my company clerk, to type it having sworn him to secrecy. I believed my letter reflected the views of just about every serviceman in BAOR so that, when it was printed, I bore no regrets and the many positive references to it that I heard confirmed my view although, of course, I never dared reveal myself as its author. A copy of it is attached. I was later to discover that it achieved some notoriety, not least in the hallowed portals of Parliament...

If I thought things were bad then, I was in for a rude shock on my posting to Canterbury shortly afterwards, when I was clobbered by the massive overweight charges levied on our unaccompanied baggage. Overweight charges had been trebled without any compensating increase in allowance, despite having not been increased since 1948, so they were then way out of date. This was despite some heavy items (washing machine etc) coming back on the Battalion PRI bus, the odd large case coming home with other travellers, the family flying back with their extra baggage allowances and our estate car packed to the gunwhales and a large overloaded roof rack. If nothing else, surely we should have been allowed to move home on the same charge

basis as we had moved out. All in all, I felt a deep sense of betrayal and was very bitter about the unfairness of it all, particularly when my monthly pay slip came in showing a large debit balance! What were we supposed to live on? I determined to try and do something about it and I knew someone who might be able to help.

A friend of mine and a godson's father, Robert Banks, was an MP. Being an active RNR Officer, if any politician did, he understood the serviceman's plight, and we had talked about the Army's problems many times, albeit mostly before he had become an MP and before I had got married. He realised the serviceman's dependency on the Government's goodwill to obtain a fair deal in pay and allowances. That swingeing increase in overweight charges became symbolic to me of the Government's total disregard of its duty in this respect to service personnel. We had no union or association to represent us; not that anyone I knew wanted one, but we did expect to be treated fairly. I had certainly told him about the state of the Army in Germany and the equipment shortages and the 'joke' that was the radio with which we were then equipped.

Taking my courage in both hands, I wrote to him asking him whether he would be prepared to help over the MFO situation which was then my main priority knowing that we were shortly going to be on the move again. The larger issues about which I had written to the 'Sunday Telegraph' now took second place. He replied that he would certainly listen to what I had to say but asked me to set it out in writing first. I therefore wrote him a detailed letter explaining the whole system and how it worked - or didn't work. He invited me up to the House of Commons to meet him. We had lunch in the Members' Dining Room. This was a fascinating experience in itself, looking around and seeing so many famous faces I had only previously seen on TV! During lunch he crossexamined me and asked me to obtain some further details, which I did.

My timing, purely coincidentally, was perfect, with the annual debate on the Army due to come up shortly. Robert had an interest in Defence matters anyway, so not being a constituent of his was not an issue. To give

him his due, he clearly did a lot of research into a number of issues besides mine and I came to realise that he had been taking in a lot of what I had said on previous meetings. I also offered him a copy of my letter to the 'Sunday Telegraph' and was flattered when he said that he already had it but was therefore very interested to meet its author! Furthermore, he told me that many MPs had a copy but when he introduced me to one as the author, I asked him to be more discreet -

we were rather too near the MOD for my liking! He really 'went to town' on many Defence issues and my concern was but one; clearly, he had many other sources on the many matters that he covered. Obviously, he had a political motive being in Opposition, but he probed the Government benches with various questions and he had further research done on my MFO complaint. Nevertheless, it was easy to see some bits where he was quoting me or using the information that I had given him.

Robert spoke about morale, pay and allowances, equipment allowances were

inadequacies, lack of training ammunition and spares, to mention but a few of his topics, most of which we had discussed. In his researches, he discovered that it was illegal to apply a pay freeze to allowances where they were based on actual costs. In the face of this 'double barrel', the MOD conceded almost immediately and MFO doubled overnight, pending a full review, and some other allowances were

increased, too. There was, however, an ironic touch. For the first and only time in my career and our family moves, the one to Denmark entitled us to use a container all to ourselves, so that there was effectively no weight allowance but only a space of one large container. Had we wished to do so, it could also have taken our car!

It is only fair that acknowledgment is made to the support that I received in my 'campaign'; General Rowley Mans, who wrote to many newspapers, including the News of the World and lobbied the MOD, which he was entitled to do as Colonel of the Regiment; Anne Armstrong of Soldier Magazine, in particular, but also the many other lower-profile individuals who contributed sometimes confidential information, risking being traced as the source in doing so. All this helped feed Robert to build his case and open the doors which led to the discovery of the illegal aspects of the freeze. The allowance scandal put the MOD on the back foot and conceding the increases so ignominiously was extraordinary. Usually, such U-turns are carefully managed and presented as new polices. Furthermore, it was the enabler for several other allowances to be increased, despite the Pay and Allowances freeze. Not exactly a coach and horses job, but a pretty good hole.

## THE SCANDAL OF SOLDIERS' PAY Ve ask only

The article "Troops on the Poverty Line" by R. H. Greenfield, Defence Correspondent, last week brought in many letters to the Editor. We reproduce the following from a serving officer in a garrison fown.

H. article last week on Service pay was, like the junior N.C.O.'s letter you also printed, both accurate and to the point.

The now frequent Minister-fal pronouncements that Ser-vicemen's morale is unaffected by their lagging rates of pay or that the frequent defence cuts have not affected the Armed Forces' operational efficiency Forces' operational efficiency and capability rayeal either an appalling ignorance or straight-forward dishonesty.

The insensitive remarks of Mr. Brown, Minister of State for the Army, at the Adjutant General's conference showed a total lack of understanding, as did his apparently unreported and ridiculous suggestion that the Services started the landalide of high wage claims by their 1975 30 per cent rise. Mr. Brown is obviously unaware that that pay rise actually amounted to about 8 per cent. after deductions. after deductions.

It will not have escaped the notice of Servicemen that the Government have not been prepared to make a firm com-mitment similar to the one that they have conceded to the fire-

GREENFIELD'S men who are already better

Their old open-ended commitment about correcting the situation "when the pay policy permits" will not feed and clothe our children or heat our houses in the meantime. Nor will it satisfy our bank mana-

Furthermore, most Service-men will find it sad that so few Labour MPs valued our votes or cared sufficiently to attend the recent debate in Parlia-

We do not want a union since we can sort out our own prob-lens ourselves much more effectively. However, as far as pay is concerned, the seed of doubt is now well emplanted.

We muse over what union would have allowed a pay rise which actually left some mem-bers worse off, or what union would even discuss a 40 per cent cut in allowances, let alone see their members fall 30 per cent behind on basic wages.

Servicemen are very conscious of the country's financial plight and do not really expect an accurate comparability rate. If we did we would either not have joined or else would now be very rich on our frequent Northern Ireland tours, our three-month stints in submerged

By R. H. Guar week in Sunday Telegraph.

submarines or just with all the "unsocial" hours we have to

work.

We ask only for some reward for our (normelly!) unshaken loyalty, our many unpleasant roles, our frequent and tong separations and the burdens of responsibility which we are obliged to carry.

Our allewances are often botally inadequate, are usually well below Civil Service and Foreign Office rates and there are redictious anomalies in the

are ridiculous anomalies in the whole system. Indeed, an overseas posting

Indeed, an overseas posting now normally carries with it a financial ponalty through now normally carries with it a financial ponalty through expenses incurred by moving ones family and home with un-accompanied baggage allow-ances that are hopelessly un-realistic and carry hefly overweight charges.

#### Defence cuts

But the current dissatisfac-tion runs much deeper than pay and allowances. The suc-cessive defence cuts have left us with insufficient and outns with insunceent and only dated equipment for which spares are nearly always in short supply. (My Land Rover was "oil the road" for three months because of an unobtainable starter motor).

Our "tail" has been clipped to below an acceptable level, so that every aspect of operational efficiency and day to day routine is adversely affected.

There are dangerously inhibfting restrictions imposed by financial controls on the train-ing, transport and communica-tions of all the Services, particularly Rhine Army.

It is even debatable whether the inefficiencies caused by the tight purse string cost more than the army of civil servants who audit the Armed Forces' every breath. What job satisction there was is fast dwind-

The Government's continuing The Government's continuing refusal to improve the Service man's situation is having far reaching and damaging effects on the very fibre of the country's defence, which it seems to take for granted. Most Servicemen wish to serve on but the question is can they afford to do so. Many of us are reaching the agonisms decision that we cannot.

It is with regret that I amobilized to sign myself.

obliged to sign myself, A Serving Officer



Looking back on the whole episode now, and with my later Ministry of Defence experience when I learned how complex such things are

and particularly the power of the ever-resisting Treasury, I marvel at what was achieved and in such short a time. Whilst I only blew the whistle and Robert and his team did the hard work, it certainly boosted my morale, knowing what had been achieved.

#### What do Nice Girls do for Diamonds?

A very proper officer was posted away from the battalion for a couple of years and his beautiful labrador bitch was left in the charge of a brother officer. While he was away, said brother officer taught the dog a new trick which was demonstrated on the proper officer's return. "What do nice girls do for diamonds?" was the executive order. The response by said hound, much to the amusement of all present with the exception of the proper officer and his proper wife, was to roll over onto her back and spread her legs!

Anon!

### THE STARS OF VIMY CRESCENT

#### **Bv Trevor Millett**

We were in Bulford, where we inherited a previous Scottish battalion's starring role in that classic war film in the making, SKC's "KEEPING THE PEACE"- an epic MOD training film based on Military Aid to the Civil Power (MACP) in an imaginary part of the UK, with an internal security problem where the republican and loyalist element had resorted to violence on the streets.

'A' Coy were the troops in flak jackets etc, and other companies supplied 'waifs & strays' supported by wives and children who actually lived on the set - Vimy Crescent in Tidworth. Vimy Crescent was a street full of Victorian terraced married quarters that should have been gifted to the National Trust 20 years earlier!

Other elements of the battalion, dressed in British police uniforms, attempted to link arms and hold back the screaming hordes. Filming took far longer than expected because the hordes had been issued with brick and rubble-shaped pieces of rubber mattresses painted to look authentic which we could throw; throw while the 'Luvvies' brought down from London were dispersed amongst the hordes, and given 'key' speaking roles, such as 'Kill 'em! 'Get 'em!' etc. The delays in filming came about when a 'Luvvie' shouted to his pal on the opposing side that his 'bricks' were being thrown too hard and were actually quite painful...("You're hurting me, Ricky!" was echoed by the SF on more than one occasion throughout the next Belfast tour in every riot!).

Delays also came about when the bricks and rubble were hurled at the SF, who fell about laughing when a volley of house bricks bounced into the sky off their steel helmets. The real fun was had on Day 1's shoot by those in police uniform, who, when fallen out for lunch, took themselves off by car to Amesbury for a liquid lunch. Imagine 20-30 fully dressed PCs slightly the worse for wear, roaming the town, redirecting traffic into the bus station, sending passing-through traffic back where it came from and the little old lady who ended up with seven 'coppers' checking her car tyre tread. The one solitary member of Wilts Constabulary on foot patrol came round the corner to spot four 'coppers' relieving themselves down an alley adjacent to the George Inn. The staff in the George must have thought there was a police raid on their place as the door burst open and a dozen or so noisy, thirsty 'coppers' piled in.

Needless to say the filming continued, but at the end of each shoot, police jackets and caps had to be handed back to 'Props', who incidentally were blamed for the Amesbury incident and told by the authorities not to let the 'Luvvies' off the set in police uniform again.

The battalion was obviously not involved. How could they be? After all, as I mentioned in the opening paragraph, we had picked this task up from a Scottish battalion and we were, regardless of shape, colour or age, wearing Glengarry bonnets!

### A QUESTION OF LEADERSHIP AND TRAINING

By Peter Barrow

It was one of those events that occur regularly in Garrison towns. The Turk's Head, on the route into town, was a favoured meeting place for members of the Oueen's Regiment who had adopted the rather seedy spit and sawdust pub as their watering hole since their arrival in the town. The arrival of the King's Regiment in the other barracks, which lay some three miles further out from the town, at first caused no trouble, despite the obvious rivalry that existed between the two battalions.

No-one knows where or when the seeds of conflict were laid, but that Friday night, soldiers from the King's decided that The Turk's Head would be their pub and set about evicting the Queen's soldiers. The fight was fast and furious with considerable damage being done to the pub's fixtures and fittings. By the time the civil police arrived, the King's soldiers had occupied the pub and the Queen's were outside trying to regain possession. Not unnaturally, the police assumed that the Queen's were the aggressors and proceeded to arrest them. They were then handed over to the custody of the Military Police who had now arrived on the scene. Those arrested were charged and then returned to barracks.

It was on Commanding Officer's Orders on the following Tuesday that the seven arrested soldiers, one corporal, four lance corporals and two privates paraded to have their case heard. It was clear that there were others involved who had escaped arrest but no-one was volunteering to provide further information, especially names. As there were no extenuating circumstances and they pleaded guilty, there was little option for the Commanding Officer to accept their plea and sentence them accordingly. Justice done, or seen to be done, it occurred to the Commanding Officer, whilst discussing the case with the Regimental Sergeant Major and Adjutant, that something must be wrong with their training. Laudable it might be to uphold the Regimental Honour, but only if one was victorious. If not, it might prove wiser to effect a tactical withdrawal and live to fight another day at a time and place of one's own choosing. This must have been taught on the Junior NCOs' Cadre and, if it was, the NCOs concerned had not learnt the lesson or had failed to apply it. Clearly they needed to be reminded about minor tactics and leadership. It was to this end that the NCOs concerned were assembled in the Training Wing by the Regimental Sergeant Major for a fifteen minute lecture by the Commanding Officer.

About three weeks later, the Commanding Officer was rung up by his counterpart commanding the King's to complain that some of his soldiers had been assaulted and that it must have been by soldiers of the Queen's. Apparently, the night before, two separate parties of the King's soldiers returning to barracks after a night on the town were jumped in the dark on a deserted stretch of the main road leading to the barracks. They were stripped of their clothes and sent on their way naked. Their clothes, tied in neat bundles, were lined up behind the hedgerow and discovered the next morning when the incident was being investigated. No description of the assailants was available apart from the fact that they had short hair and, apart from hurt pride, no damage had been done and nothing stolen. In fact none of the King's soldiers had so much as a bruise.

All the Commanding Officer could say was "Prove it!" as he smiled to himself at a lesson well taught and learnt. It was noted thereafter that the soldiers of the King's selected another, longer, route to and from town that bypassed the Turk's Head, which reverted to the Queen's.

When running the Rash shoot in Omagh, I was phoned by Mike Scott and asked if he could shoot on Saturday. I told him to bugger off as he was supposed to be on patrol in Fermanagh, for the reply to come back "That's Brigadier Mike Scott!" who happened to be my Brigade Commander. He got the gun!

Alasdair Goulden

By Billy Bolton

On the subject of Pte Mount (the OC's driver): he and some other Tangier Coy worthies had befriended some of the Andrew's (Ed: Old RN slang for themselves) finest whilst out on the town in Gibraltar one evening. In the warm glow of inter-Service camaraderie, our lot went back to HMS Rusty Bucket(?) for a nightcap. The following morning at muster parade (remember those?; call the roll, fall in the officers, thirteen, fourteen, one-two, etc). Pte Mount was not present. There was a slight clue to this being the case as the OC was not collected from his quarters at the appointed time and was accordingly late for his own parade! We minions rather had the feeling that it was going to be 'one of those days'. The CSM was the same legendary man who, having called out Pte Thornton's name, asked where 'Taunton was' and was surprised to hear, 'in Somerset, Sir' from a wag in the rear rank. Poor chap, he'd not had much luck on company muster parades - during an earlier iteration, when shouting, 'GET ON PARADE!' his false teeth jumped out and were then marched over by some rather uncharitable members of 1 Platoon (then mine)-who were of course, right of the line. I digress.

Pte Mount was duly posted as being Absent Without Leave. Imagine the surprise in the 'Puzzle Palace' up at Lathbury Barracks a few days later when CO 1 Queen's received a signal from the Captain of HMS Rusty Bucket, reporting that 23 knife fork and spoon Pte Mount was alive and well and performing his duties in a smart and seaman-like fashion on board his ship! It turned out that HMS R-B was due to sail on the morrow's tide early in the morning and when she was a few hours steaming from Gib, Jolly Jack discovered Mount fast asleep in a hammock, or the modern equivalent thereof! They tried to keep him concealed and found him a set of blue baggy overalls, much loved by the Senior Service in those days, but he was discovered at 'Rounds'. Realising that they were hugely honoured to have a member of the 2nd of Foot's successors amongst the ship's company - strong Naval links and all that - Mountie became somewhat of a celebrity and was jolly well looked after. And, upon his eventual return to dry land, his AWOL charges had to be dropped as he could prove that he was 'on duty', albeit aboard one of Her Majesty's ships!

### PUBLIC BOLLOCKING

#### By James Mills

In the last edition of the journal, Stephen Kilpatrick recounted getting a bollocking from Stephen Dowse at BATUS, which reminded me one of the biggest and most public 'bollockings' that I was on the end of.

I was running the Carl Gustav range at Lydd Ranges as part of 3 QUEENS annual live firing. It was getting towards the last detail of my third day on the ATk range, on a late autumnal afternoon when there was a tap on my shoulder. One of the boys said "Ere Sir, there's a bloke back there who wants a word with you". I looked back down the range: about 400m away in the Admin Area was a figure waving me towards him. I set off at a brisk stride and about halfway there he roars out; "When Brigadier Infantry UKLF calls for you, you fucking run." So I broke into an officer-like double and executed a reasonable halt in the midst of A Coy, saluted and gave him an explorative "Good afternoon Sir!". "I'll give you good fucking afternoon." he replied and proceeded to launch into a tirade. I can recall such phrases as: "What sort of rabble are you in charge of here?", "Call yourselves Infantry! You're worse than a load of fucking Gunners!" and he ranted on in similar vein, leaving me totally open-mouthed. He kept going full blast; it was somewhat surreal in the fading light. I remember thinking that it was a master-class in giving a full public bollocking, when my eye was caught by the sight of his driver behind him collapsed over his steering wheel in a fit of laughter. I thought he must soon run out of abuse when he noticed that I had a button undone on my combat jacket, which only gave him renewed vigour. I did think that he could have stood closer to his razor that morning but didn't think I was in a position to mention it. Anyway, all good things come to an end and he eventually got into his Land Rover and sped off. I asked someone why he'd stopped and, apparently, to relieve the excitement of the Admin Area, the boys had been throwing stones at the range hut: why not?

I had an hour's drive back to Dover to mull things over and it took me only five seconds to decide to keep the episode firmly under wraps. When I got back, I bumped into Major Mike Ball and gingerly enquired if he knew anything about Brigadier Infantry UKLF. He responded "Oh, that's Scrubber Richardson, I know him well. You didn't have a button undone, did you?" To which I sheepishly admitted that I did, but kept schtum about the rest and hoped that would be the end of the story.

Roll the clock on by two or three months and 3 QUEENS R Group arrived at Bessbrook Mill where 2 GREN GDS were about half way through a South Armagh tour. We were all escorted into Battalion Headquarters to be greeted by their CO, Mike Hobbs, and the our CO, Gavin Bulloch, introduced each one of us in turn. When it came to me, Mike Hobbs said "Nice to see you again, James", which caught Gavin Bulloch's attention. My immediate reaction was that we'd never met before, but rather than appear a total prune, replied "Yes, indeed." With a wink and a broad smile he said "I was driving Scrubber Richardson when he popped in to see you at Lydd last year". A while later, I thanked him for not letting on and we both had a good chortle.

Memo to self: never loiter on the range!

### PHOTO OF THE YEAR!

#### The Rockies in my Shreddies

By Pete Archer

I was a young Lance-Corporal in 1974 and Maj Tim Trotman thought that it would be good team-building stuff for us to go off into the Rockies to bond. Led by Lt Mieville, Cpl Phil Dobson, Cpl Henry Higgins (the battalion photographer), and Ptes Kenny Kean, Brian Hockins, Bronco Lane and Skunk Irwin, plus an SAS Cpl too secret to have a name. The SAS Cpl taught us how to light a fire with matches and had a knife with a spike on it for extracting boy scouts from girl guides - or so he said.

It was a beautiful summer's day and we set off into the wilderness and pitched camp after a few river crossings, travelling through glorious countryside. We woke up in a foot of water with torrential rain coming down. Not to be put off by such minor inconveniences, Lt Miéville insisted that we carry on and we climbed higher and higher, getting wetter and wetter and gradually crossed the snow line. Thankfully, we came across a mountain hut with a large pot belly stove and a stack of firewood. Rapidly, we dried our clothes and watched our green nylon army socks drip down the stove as they melted.

While this was going on, I decided to water the Alpine plants outside and headed off in my shreddies and bush hat. Before I knew what had happened there was

the flash of the camera and the door was slammed in my face, with me contemplating how cold it was in the Rockies in July - hence the photo!

We continued for another day before Skunk went down with altitude sickness and Lt Miéville decided that the risk of hypothermia was too great and so we returned to base.

Was the aim achieved? Of course it was! Brilliant trip with great mates!



#### By Catherine Holt Assistant Curator

This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the Museum being opened at its current location within Dover Castle. This is a great milestone for the museum and could not have been achieved without the support of our friends, donors and volunteers many of whom are former Queensmen. While this is a time for celebration, it is also a great time for us to reflect on the future of the museum.

Although the Museum at Dover was 'cutting edge' when constructed in 1987, it has changed very little since then. This is something that we are working hard to change over the next 5 years.

To begin with, we are delighted to announce that the Museum has received a grant from Dover Port Authority as part of its community fund. This money, which has been match-funded by the PWRR, will be put towards improving the public services provided by the museum. This project will involve creating a research centre and a community space/classroom in two of our underutilised rooms. This will give us the space and facilities to have a greater interaction with the local community as well as with special interest groups, such as the Queen's Regimental Association.

The display area, currently referred to as the "India Room", has been converted into a research centre. It will have a number of desks and computers available for researchers to use as well as access to the museum's cataloguing system. The regimental archive will also move to the museum and help enhance the new Knowledge and Research Centre (KRC). This will enable not only schools, students and researchers, but anyone with an interest in the regiments to have public access to this resource. This, in turn, will improve awareness and allow people to gain a better understanding of the Queen's Regiment, Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and our forebear regiments, and how they have influenced history.

The 'outer office' upstairs is being converted into a community space which will be made available to regimental associations, researchers, local history groups etc. It will be a flexible space which can be used for formal and informal learning sessions for small groups.

Our project is ambitious, but once complete it will breathe new life into the museum and it will become a 'must see' attraction. The local community will benefit from the new KRC enabling them to engage with the regimental history and traditions of our organisation.

In order to even further extend our ways of engaging with the public, we have also created a 'pop- up' museum. This will be used for events across the local area to promote the museum and its facilities. We hope to expand our outreach activities to Canterbury, Folkestone and Thanet once we have established the displays.

As exciting and beneficial as this project will be, it is only the beginning. As you will have read in the last two articles about the museum, the museum is planning a programme to upgrade and revamp the museum's current displays.

Much of the current traditional interpretation in use in the museum is in fact just 'information' that fails to bring the objects to life. This is something we want to change.

Our aspirations are to produce a series of themed exhibitions that will help shed light on different eras of the regiments' past. This will include the less well-known stories of the forebear regiments' involvement in various wars and conflicts, as well as create new displays that will reflect the 26 years of the Queen's Regiment and in particular its commitment to Northern Ireland, the Cold War and colonial operations.

There will also be a number of new displays that will focus on the 25 years of the PWRR. This will be achieved using up-to-date interpretation methods, interactive technology and multimedia to bring the past to life.

In order for us to be able to achieve this we need your help. We need objects for display as there is currently very little to represent the 26 years of the Queen's Regiment and this cannot change unless these objects get donated to us. This could be anything from uniforms to medals, equipment, certificates, photographs, anything that you would be willing to donate from your

time serving in the regiment. Please dig out your garages and lofts, give us a call and we will come and collect whatever it is that you have - items such as these donated by Sqt Pete Archer.







Rubber Bullet

Even though I reckon I was a good soldier, I was bit of a skiver. Every week, on a Wednesday afternoon in Werl, we were supposed to do sport activities. Most guys played football, etc. I thought bugger that, running round and getting kicked about. That's when I thought that there must be something I can do and that's when 'Operation Skiver' was instigated. I would go to the CQMS and get a compass and a local map, saying I was going orienteering; only I would go as far the woodland just far enough from the camp and in undergrowth thick enough not to be found. I made a basha with quite good cover and which was totally concealed. I would get food and milk from the Naafi at lunch time, and I was all set. I would run off, past the WOs' & Sgts' Mess and go straight in to my safe haven. Over time, it got quite homely, with a radio, alarm clock, groundsheet and a camo smock which made a great pillow. Nobody ever knew - until now!

'Smiler' Cobbett



### SURREY INFANTRY **MUSEUM**

#### By Stephen Johnson



The Lovelace Tankard



The Safe!



Safe-breaker's detritus!

The twelve months since the Surrey Infantry Museum's (SIM) last report have been both busy and productive. Farcroft, our restoration company, has been working steadily through the recovered material, returning a few hundred more medals to us, along with the Lovelace Tankard mentioned in the 2017 report: this piece demonstrates the extraordinary skill of the craftsmen involved the tankard has been fully restored to its original condition using less then 5% of new additional silver. Not only does this give us confidence that items previously thought to be beyond repair might be restorable but we were delighted when Farcroft waived its fees as a goodwill gesture. We have now selected sixty 'key pieces' out of the hundreds of items available and their restoration



Maj-Gen Whitfield's Legion of Merit

has been approved by our insurance loss adjuster. Farcroft has begun the work but also advised us that the process will be very lengthy. The repair of items such as Orders and Decorations is also proving problematic - all items, such as these awarded to Major-General Whitfield, lost their enamelling in the fire and re-creating an acceptable modern substitute for the original enamel recipe is a challenge as yet unsurmounted.

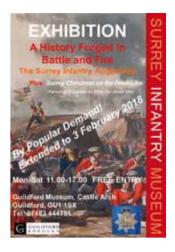
One of the 'casualties' of the fire was the SIM office

safe. In December 2017, the safe was dragged from the basement at Clandon Park onto the West Sweep and attacked with drills , angle grinders and jemmies. Unscathed amongst the liberated contents was the Death Penny for John McNamara VC, some foreign decorations and, crucially, the key to the safety deposit box containing the Museum's original Victoria and George Crosses.



Friends of Surrey Infantry Museum

Progress with the plans for SIM's future as part of Guildford Museum (GM) has also been delayed. Structural problems with the existing GM buildings be fixed before need to work begins on the main refurbishment and expansion project. It looks increasingly likely that we will remain based in the Surrey History Centre until the end of 2019. However, we have forged closer links with GM



during the last year, mounting a major exhibition and a civic reception in the main gallery.

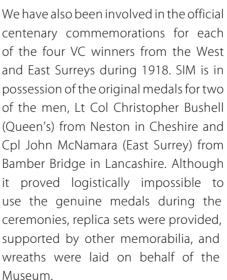
Meanwhile SIM has been allocated two cabinets as permanent display space in the 'Industrial Room' on the first floor of GM. The intention is to present four separate topics at any one time and change at least two of these each year to keep the display fresh and interesting for returning visitors. As at time of writing the cabinets contain sections on Regimental Emblems, 1918 VC Winners, Ludendorff and the 100

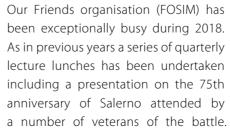
Davs Offensive and The Medenine Gun.



Pop-up display

The Museum continues to work with schools, local history groups and other organisations, delivering lectures and mounting exhibitions. During 2017-18 SIM attended events at Burgh Heath, Elstead. Cobham, Stoughton Barracks and Henley Fort.







Guildford Museum







Working with schools



Volunteers



Surrey VC commemoration



In May, 50 FOSIM members spent four days touring the Western Front around Ypres and Arras, following the Regiments' involvement in the actions at Hill 60 and during the German

and Allied offensives of 1918; a very informative and thoughtprovoking trip, enhanced by a very moving 'Silent Toast' in a small WW1 Cemetery containing the bodies of members of all four of the Queen's forebear regiments. FOSIM hopes to organise another tour in 2020 focusing on the 80th anniversary of the

Queen's and East Surreys' exploits at part of the British Expeditionary Force in Northern France and Belgium.

'New' material continues to arrive at the Museum by donation: along with a number of medal groups from both World Wars and some interesting photo albums, the most unusual item received is a Russian helmet from the 26th Infantry Regiment, allegedly taken at the Siege of Sevastopol in 1855 by a member of the 31st (Huntingdonshire) Regiment.



Russian helmet plate

#### **Vel Exuviae Triumphans**



Surrey Infantry Museum Battlefield Tour

I was MT Sgt B coy. One of my drivers decided to take his APC 432 for a spin without asking me first. He had gone no further then a mile when the engine blew up. There was no coolant as it had been drained by the REME. Cost of damage: £75,000. On CO's orders, the Colonel said, "You cannot expect the public to pay all that. Fine £5. March out!

Tony Talman



By Alasdair Goulden

Benevolence and supporting our members who have fallen on hard times or are in need is at the core of the Association's activities. Since the last Journal, a total of 68 cases were investigated and 65 individual grants-in-aid were approved the other three were dealt with separately by other agencies. A total of £99,785.63 was requested and paid out, mostly for help in paying for mobility assistance, household expenses, debts and rent arrears, but they included some funeral expenses and help in paying for training courses. £27,335.91 came from the Queen's Benevolent Fund as we were able to secure the remainder from other sources, thus preserving our funds. Every case was assessed by a SSAFA caseworker.

Our gratitude goes to Ms Diana White at RHQ PWRR who deals with the day-to-day administration of our Benevolent Fund. The Trustees would again like to pay tribute to the Army Benevolent Fund which is always helpful with prompt action and advice. SSAFA, Forces Help Society and The Royal British Legion investigate the majority of our cases and we are particularly grateful to their caseworkers for all their assistance, without whom we would not be able to ensure that those in need of our help get support.

Needless to say, we have to maintain our funds to ensure that we have sufficient to continue to support all ex-Queensmen and their families in the years ahead. While the majority of the fund's income comes from investments, the Trustees are particularly grateful for those members of the Association who go to great lengths to raise money on our behalf. In particular they would like the following efforts to be commended, and their reports follow:

Queen's Regimental Riders Association The Queen's Regimental Association Corps of Drums Queensman Lodge 2694 London Branch

If you are ever in need of assistance, please contact the Secretary and phone SSAFA on 0800 731 4880. Please do not delay asking for help. It's there for the asking.



Queen's Regimental Riders present their fundraising cheques at HM Tower of London



# ONE AIM RALLY - 5TH SHOT

By T-Bar

The 'One Aim Rally' - 5th Shot was held over the first weekend of July. A great deal of work by the riders of the QRRA was carried out building the bar/stage and setting up tents. The first day of the event started with our visitors arriving on bikes, trikes and cars; prime spots were quickly taken with the erection of a colourful sea of tents and the sun shone gloriously.

At 1800 hrs, the show commenced with Alex Miller the Piper blasting out melodies on his bagpipes, and then our first band, Black Roze, started to play and quickly whipped up the crowd into a party mood. The atmosphere is always a friendly one with ex-veterans, bikers and families and the mix works well. The riders were kept busy throughout the rally emptying bins, stocking the bar, greeting visitors and getting the bands organised and on stage; this is done meticulously by our Band Manager, Jon McEwan, who deserves a mention for his hard work in achieving this.

During the weekend event, there was much entertaining going on apart from listening to bands. Medusa MC challenged the QRRA to see how many of the respective groups could fit into a porta-loo! They, being more petite and better organised, won by getting 13 of their

members in against the QRRA score of 11! For some of the visitors it was all a bit too much!

As the light started to fade, the stage came alive with bright lights and sounds from The Rocket Skates with the Relics closing the evening. The mood was great as visitors stumbled back to their tents for a well-earned rest to recuperate for the following day, which kicked off at 1100 hrs with the first live band. As people stumbled from their tents, they could smell the nearby stalls which were cooking a variety of meals from hog roast to jerk chicken and our nearby café was dishing up hearty breakfasts.

As the day turned into night, we again had some great bands. One of our favourites, Vexed, really got the crowd up on their feet - as they always do. This year we had Sham 69 as our headline act to close the show and they went down a storm.

I would like to thank all the QRRA who took part to make this another truly great event, but special thanks should go out to Steve 'Grizzly' Adams who ran the outside bar and was kept on his toes throughout the rally; and finally of course to our wonderful WAGS without whose help we could not achieve anything!



Our reward for all this hard work was that we raised £14,883, which was made up to £15,000 from Club funds for the Queen's Regimental Benevolent Fund and that is what we are ultimately about.

(Ed: In addition to this outstanding achievement, the Riders also raised a further £1,818.18 at the War and Peace Rally which with Gift Aid translated into £2,272.73. The cheques were presented to the President and Major-General Doug Chalmers DSO OBE, Colonel of the PWRR respectively at the Tower of London. To date, the Riders have raised a magnificent £34,987!)





### CPL RAYMOND 'PLOD' SPENCER MM

#### By Alasdair Goulden



Plod Spencer

At this year's AGM it was unanimously agreed that a headstone should be placed on the grave of Cpl Raymond 'Plod' Spencer MM. On 4 August, led by our President, Col Anthony Beattie, ten friends and colleagues of Plod gathered with Plod's partner Ann and family to dedicate the headstone in his memory. A short service, conducted by Canon Brian McConnell, was followed by Colonel Beattie who made a short address describing the environment and some of the incidents in which Plod was involved that led to his being awarded the Military Medal. He conclude by saying

"Today we commemorate Cpl Plod Spencer by the unveiling of this headstone and I would like to ask Ann, Plod's much-loved partner and Jock Hail, one of Plod's best mates and fellow section commander during that tour, albeit in 8 Platoon, who has been so instrumental in campaigning for this headstone, to unveil it".

Ann and Jock Hail then unveiled the headstone and the assembled gathering repaired to the pub to celebrate Plod's life.



Cannon Brian McConnell, Ann and Jock Hail



The Headstone



Plod's family and friends

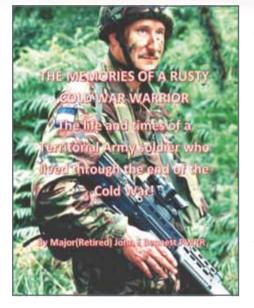
On another incident in the Creggan in 1976, I joined a patrol commanded by L/Cpl Jock 'McGinty' Hale. At one point I dashed across the street and crashed into a doorway. An elderly lady came out and threatened me in most unladylike language with a full milk bottle. I said to her: "don't do that you might break the bottle and lose all your milk". She shouted back: "F\*\*k off. I will report you to your commanding officer". I didn't like to tell that she was speaking to him. I then turn round and saw the patrol commander, McGinty Hale, wetting himself with laughter. This was an incident that he frequently recalled when we met in the bar of the Union Jack Club.

JGW Davidson

## BOOK REVIEWS

### THE MEMORIES OF A RUSTY **COLD WAR WARRIOR**





One of comparatively few authentic, yet fascinating books on life and times in the Territorial Army, has been written and published by a former officer of the Queen's and Princess of Wales's Royal Regiments.

Major (Retd) John Bennett, born and educated in Canterbury, Kent, and now living in nearby Bossingham with his wife, Sue, thoroughly enjoyed his 27 years in the TA, the laughter, the tears, his progression through the ranks and the satisfaction of 'being paid for having fun.'

This incredibly moving and thoughtful book paints a colourful picture of being a Citizen Soldier during the Cold War. So many of the fascinating stories touching on the annual TA cash bounty, heavy double-lined uniforms which retained the rain, short boots and puttees, training frequently abandoned,

will strike a poignant echo for anyone who served during the period.

Major Bennett joined the motor trade in 1973 and trained as a mechanic. In 1978, he joined the Territorial Army, partly to assist his work progression and partly through curiosity, as his uncle was in the TA from 1938 through to his sad death in 1941. Through the memories of his mother and a vast number of photographs and letters, his interest in becoming a Cold War Warrior was born; and as Winston Churchill once said: "The Reservist is twice the citizen."

John was extremely proud of the Territorial Army and in 1978 walked through the TA Centre gates to begin what very senior officers called "an outstanding part-time paid career" in the then TA (now the Army Reserve).

He worked his way up through the ranks, ending up after almost 30 years service as a major in the 3rd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. But it did not stop there, and he completed his uniformed service with the Cadets in the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

Today, Major Bennett continues to work with the PWRR Regimental Association, the Regimental Museum in Dover Castle and the Regimental Heritage Committee. He paid for his book to be published privately, and has promised a gift of £3 to the Regimental Museum from every book sold.

This 16-chapter book yields a myriad of memorable, bizarre, enjoyable and serious military anecdotes, which make it a joy to read - and very difficult to put down.

I would like, therefore, to content myself with urging anyone with even a slight interest in the military, to buy this book and enjoy the countless candid, no-holds-barred, enjoyable and thoughtful opinions of a caring and successful Army

Except that....I will whet your appetite with the time in John's Citizen's soldiery when he was fined £150 and sent to the guardroom for three day's punishment. Why? Surely that is over-kill, whatever the transgression?

Buy the book for £12 (which includes postage and packing within the UK)) and send your cash or cheque to Major (Retd) John Bennett, email address, johnbennett@pwrr.co.uk, and you will learn all the gory details.

Gerry Bartlett

## 2018 Wedding of the year

(Harry who?)



Bandit and Carol



Unknown to me, the youngest soldier in 3 QUEENS, which at the time was me, was earmarked as babysitter for the Commanding Officer's children. I had other plans the first time I was detailed, and refused when ordered by the dreaded Regimental Sergeant-Major. This was thought funny by many and the regimental cartoonist, John Russell, drew the following in honour of my stand!

John Boston



### **BRANCH REPORTS**

Chichester By Eddie Drew

The Branch is going from strength to strength, with eleven new members joining this year, taking us up to a membership of 70.

We ended 2017 with our Xmas dinner at the City Club and were joined by the Royal Sussex Association (RSA) when some 66 people attended. The prize for the best Christmas jumpers was won by John and Anne White.

In February, the Branch supported the Rotary Amateur Boxing evening and Dave Tilley, our Chairman, presented the 'Best Boxer of the Evening' prize with a small memento.

March saw the annual trip to London for the AGM, which was followed by our own AGM at the end of the month when we were able to pass on what we had learnt earlier in the month.

We celebrated St George's Day in Chichester Cathedral with the RSA and were invited later to continue the celebrations with canapés in the Vicar's Hall.

The Branch held its Albuhera Dinner at the Beachcroft Hotel on 19 May when 50 members gathered from various parts of the UK. The Mayor of Chichester and Lt Col Ron Tilston OBE and Mrs Tilston were our guests. Col Ron was in the Royal Military Police and joined the 3rd Bn in Lemgo for a short stint. Paul Daines gave a brief on the events of the 1811 battle and we toasted 'The Immortal Memory'. We also toasted their Royal Highnesses, The Duke and Duchess of Sussex who were married on the day. Next year we will be holding our Albuhera Dinner in the same venue on 18 May.

In June, the Chairman organised a mystery coach trip during which two trees were planted and dedicated to the memory of the late Derek (Granny) Goodacre and Rick Baker. We finally ended up in Eartham Village at the George Pub run by James Thompson, an ex-Queensman.

In August, the Branch held a 'Veterans' Lunch in the City Club. This was well attended by the RSA and the Royal Naval Association, with Lt Col Ron Tilston OBE and Mrs D Tilston and the Mayor of Chichester again as our guests, as was Mike Rudman from the PWRR. Dave Tilley then led the group in the singing of 'Sussex By the Sea', before everyone went merrily on their way.



Albert Pragnell, Lt Col Ron Tilston OBE and Dave Alloway at the Albuhera Dinner.



Dave Tilly Presenting the Best Boxer

On 8 September, a few members attended the RSA annual dinner in Lewes where we renewed old acquaintances. On 10 September, ten members of the Branch joined the RSA on a three-day coach trip to Priez, in France, to commemorate the centenary of those who died in WW1.

On 30 September, we held a Drumhead Service in Priory Park in Chichester. Later that month, several members joined the RSA on a two-day battlefield tour, visiting our forebear regiment's last battles of the Great War. We went to the site of the crossing of the Sambre-Oise Canal by the 2nd Royal Sussex on 4 November 1918 and where the attack took place across the Rhonelle River (just upstream from the canal) by the 9th Royal Sussex on 6 November 1918. The 9th Battalion advanced as far as Bersillies, where the last member of the regiment was killed in action on 10 November 1918.

In November, we had our Remembrance Service parade and laid wreaths at Litten Gardens War Memorial, in Chichester and at Worthing War Memorial. Richard Jenner laid a wreath at the Cenotaph on behalf of the Branch.

We will end a very busy and successful 2018 with our Christmas Dinner on 3 December. The Members of the Chichester Branch would like to take this opportunity to wish every Queensman a very Happy Christmas and a bright and healthy 2019.



The Chairman and the Mayor Of Chichester, enjoying their Veterans' Lunch at the City Club



Mr and Mrs Eric Hensby and Matt Rudman PWRR, tucking in to their Veterans Lunch



Pete Shrewsbury and Tony Tilley checking their raffle tickets at the Albuhera Dinner

### The Queen's Regimental Association Corps of Drums By Amy Holden



David Robinson's Regimental Celebration

Once again under the direction of the Philpott twins, the Association Corps of Drums has been busy promoting the name of the Queen's Regiment and where possible raising money for both the Benevolent Fund and the museum, whether it is by giving support to the 'One Aim Rally', being auctioned off for private parties or just playing where a bucket can be rattled. During the year, the notable events have been David and Janet Robinson's Minden Day celebration, the Secretary's 65th birthday at the Saracen's Head (and yes he did pay the going rate!), St Ronan's School with the 3 PWRR Band in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund (our BF benefited too), Christmas Carol service with the Kent Police Male Voice Choir for the Canterbury Oast Trust

(ditto), The Alfred Square 100th anniversary commemoration and celebration of the end of WWI and Remembrance Sunday amongst others.

If you would like the Drums to support an event you are running, the arrangement is that a donation has to be made to the Benevolent Fund and transport costs have to be covered. A meal for the drummers if they are operating over a meal time should also be provided. Bookings can be made either through contacting Amy Holden on qracorpsofdrums@yahoo.co.uk or by phoning 07715135238 or by contacting the Association Secretary.

The Corps is always looking for new members, so if you fancy learning how to drum or wish to improve your skills please contact Amy.



Tony Philpott

The Drums would like to thank the President and Secretary of the QRA for their continued support, as without them and the members of the Association, they would not be able to do what they are doing now.

(Ed: Amy Holden is Anthony Philpott's partner and her support and dedication to the Corps have been quite outstanding from the beginning. The President and Secretary would like to acknowledge her contribution and thank her on behalf of all members of the Association.)



Leros Remembrance Parade



The Last Post



One Aim Rally

#### Canterbury and East Kent



With 2018 being the centenary of the ending of WW1, we knew it was going to be a very busy year and full of opportunities. Our membership now stands at 155 and most are now on e-mail and receive information about the regiment and branch activities. We are developing our relationship with the Queen's Regiment Association and the Queen's Own Buffs Association

and are looking forward to working closer together in the future.



**Buffs Sunday** 

Many members of the branch are Queensmen from the 5 QUEENS era and they are encouraged to attend the Queen's Association AGM in March. This year, ten branch members attended and a good time was enjoyed at the London UOTC.

On a local basis, in May the branch held its second Albuhera Lunch at the Rose and Crown, which was well attended. Everyone participated in the Silent Toast ceremony and enjoyed the great music from the live band and the excellent food provided by the venue.

The AGM and BBQ at Manston was a success with 50 members attending with partners and we welcomed some guests from the QOBs. Other events supported by branch members included the various Centenary commemorations, such as 'Step Short' at Folkestone, marching down the Avenue of Remembrance to the harbour and the embarkation point of many WW1 soldiers. Rick Bamford supported this event with great determination in the excessive heat and is congratulated on a terrific effort. Not as a consequence, although it was tough, but having now carried the Branch Standard for 14 years, Rick has decided to stand down and we thank Rick for his dedication in representing us.

We also supported Buffs Sunday in Canterbury. The village of Charing commemorated a VC winner which the Chairman attended. We also represented the regiment at the Lord Lieutenant of Kent's Centenary Drumhead Service at Canterbury Cricket Ground on 23 September and of course Remembrance Sunday.

We have an active committee and welcome David Robinson and Shane Williams to help organising events, supporting John Bennett, Geoff Anderson, Colin Wilson and Robert Arthur. The Reverend Keith Fazzani has kindly agreed to be our Branch Chaplain and welfare support can be advised by any committee member through the Association.

We are always keen to have new members, and if you served in the forebear regiments, you are welcome to join our branch. Increasingly we are seeing more and more Queensmen joining and members from the Queen's Own Buffs, as well as ex-members of 3 PWRR and ex-regulars. Our membership joining form can be found at www.pwrr.co.uk.





'Step Short' in Folkestone

#### Frimley and Camberley Cadet Corps Carrying the Colour of the Queen's Regiment

Following a fairly aggressive campaign of posting fliers and handing out leaflets at local events, it is very pleasing to report that we have turned around the decline in cadet numbers of last year and our total of both girls and boys has increased significantly and is around the 75+ mark and still on an upward trend. This means we have had to invest significantly in MTP uniforms for all four companies (age groups 6 to 16). We have seen a change in personnel among our volunteer instructors, although we are at the same number as last year, but now with the influx of both male and female ACF qualified staff. The remaining staff have had to attend in-house training to match the legal, moral and minimum acceptable standards required to teach children and young adults.

Unfortunately due to health reasons, our fairly new RSM has had to leave, but we have been extremely fortunate to recruit Captain Brendon Cooney MBE as our Commandant, who in the last few months has certainly hit the ground running with enough energy for two, and is now looking for his own RSM. As well as arranging and implementing mandatory training of staff and cadets, we have organised an Easter Egg Hunt for our 6 to 9 year olds, held our 110th Anniversary Drum Head Service, auspiciously on the Glorious First of June, and had trips to RAF Odiham, the RAMC Museum and RMA Sandhurst Heritage Day, held our prize-giving in September, had an Old Comrades Parade in November, carried out a Poppy Collection in October and November and taken part in the Armistice Day Parade on 11 November. Our Carol

Concert is taking place in December and we are already planning next year's camps!

Our official marquee, staffed by uniformed instructors and cadets plus parents at the RMA Sandhurst Heritage Day, where our Queen's Colour was, of course, on show, was a success again this year, with several old(er) Queensmen making themselves known, plus a couple of the Queen's Riders, who complimented us on our turn out. We invited them all to our Prize Giving in Caird Hall, Camberley on 28th September. Compliments were also heaped upon our fairly new Corps of Drums who performed magnificently alongside our main marquee.

We are now privileged to have a dynamic 'Friends of the F&CCC Association' (formerly the Parents' Association) who have already organised a barbeque, a dinner dance with a WW1 and WW2 theme in December, plus getting to grips to raise badly-needed funds for the Corps as we receive absolutely no financial support of any kind from any external source.

Yes, it's still an exciting, dynamic Corps to which we belong, and at trustee level we are looking to raise funds to purchase the land we have lived on for the last 90+ years as the lease runs out in 8 years time.

For more detailed information contact our Admin Sqt on sewell01@virginmedia.com



Emplaning the Chinook at RAF Odiham



F&CCC Cadets with Brig G Bartlett MBE, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Surrey



#### The Queen's and PWRR Golf Society By Bob Jeffery

The Queen's and PWRR Golf Society is the latest organisation to join the Association as a branch. It is open to all past and present members from all battalions and invariably a minireunion takes place each time we play. We have old, very old and some young budding stars, so don't delay - come and play with us today.

Our current membership is made up as follows:

Royal Sussex Regiment	04	1 PWRR	05
1 QUEENS	13	2 PWRR	01
2 QUEENS	33	3 PWRR	02
3 QUEENS	16	4 PWRR	01
QUEENS TA	00	Total:	75 active members

Contact Steve Richards our Captain on Facebook, Messenger or at stevechelski@yahoo.co.uk or me, as the Secretary, on rj6263@virginmedia.com for membership.



Armed Services Charity Day - Bramley GC Guildford Dressed ready to do battle, also the eventual winners of the event, L-R Griggs, Jeffery, Whistler & Reddick.



Triangular Queen's Divisional Match
The winning team of the Triangular Trophy against the
RRF & Anglians first time in 17 years of trying.
The team: Ian Harding, Malcolm Dodds, Pat Donnelly,
Paul Whistler, "Captain" Steve Richards, Tom Reddick,
Tony Harwood, Dave Sharland & Peter Mclachlan



A resident bandit, no team escapes this Bob Jeffery



Some veterans from days gone by. Bob Jeffery, Bob Fisher, Radar Cope, Dave Body

As always, the Horsham Branch year kicked off with a well-attended reunion at the Horsham Cricket Club.

May saw a coachload of Horsham and Farnham Branch members take off across the Channel for a battlefield tour based in Arras. Our first stop was Mouscron, in Belgium, where wreaths were laid at the Risquons-Tout memorial. Duty done, we adjourned across the road for a swift libation before carrying on. This became a slightly longer stop than planned when the ex-mayor of Mouscron turned up and insisted on buying a second round for all of those present, which of course needed to be reciprocated! Days 2 and 3 saw visits to the sites of some of the key actions from the German March Offensive before moving on to cover the British Expeditionary Force's exceptional 'Hundred Days' campaign which ran from 8 August up to the Armistice in 1918. Highlights included finding unexploded ordnance in Avuley Wood and exploring the ruined bunkers of the Hindenburg Line. Whilst many commemorations of the First World War that have happened over







the past few years have been very moving, it is a shame that not enough has been made of the Hundred Davs.

The Branch holds an Albuhera commemoration each year on the Monday closest to 16 May and this

year was no exception. After the reading of the history, we conducted the Silent Toast to 'The Immortal Memory.' The Horsham Branch 'loving cup' was passed around from member to member, the silence only broken by the 'glug glug' sound of



**Avuley Wood Cemetery** 



Danger UXB - Paul Rassel and Mark Harrold (Ed - who should have known better!)

the cup being recharged with champagne at appropriate points.

After the Silent Toast, a curry supper was served, which was followed by a great deal of banter and catching up from the members

The Branch's 2019 Albuhera commemoration will be on Monday 13 May at the Horsham Cricket Club and we would welcome any who have served with the PWRR, Queen's or other forebear regiment and who are in the vicinity of Horsham, to join us on that night. We welcome all members and guests to participate in the Silent Toast and the curry supper afterwards.

#### **Cheats Never Prosper**

Running round the drill hall practising gas attacks, one bright spark discovered how the respirator outlet valve worked. Blocking the outlet valve open made breathing very much easier. All was well until a number of weeks later when we were on exercise on Salisbury Plain, carrying out the usual tasks of making range cards, digging in etc, when the platoon sergeant came round the position with a CS tear gas stick with white vapour pouring from it. We all shouted "GAS! GAS!" as we dragged our masks out of our webbing and pulled them on. Said 'bright spark' wasn't so bright as he had forgotten to take out the block that he had put in the outlet valve and as a result had a lung-full of CS, thus proving that cheats never prosper!

Robin Clark

It's that time of year already when I turn my mind to the last year, to satisfy the Editor's demand for news of what we as a branch have got up to. Last September saw the new presentation of Colours to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions PWRR at Canterbury; a very successful day which saw the largest reunion of Queensmen since amalgamation. A great day was had by all and many old friendships were rekindled. The branch played a full part in the planning and the execution of the day, which culminated in a QRA group photo.

As a branch, we then took part in another successful Cenotaph Parade in November with a well-attended curry lunch after the parade.

The Army v Navy Rugby match with a regimental bar in the car-park was well attended again this year. This event has grown year on year and will, I am sure, continue to do so. In future years, we will be making a consolidated regimental bid to Infantry Rugby to include all four PWRR battalions as well as the Association, so that we can generate comradeship between the old and the new. This will mean that we can all sit together in one block. Major Giles Walsh and Major (Retd) Kev Hibbert again led the branch effort and I am extremely grateful to both for their hard work.

The branch continues to plan and run the all ranks Albuhera function after the Albuhera service at St Paul's Cathedral in May. This year we had a good mix of Queen's, Middlesex and PWRR attending. The lunch and drinks were very well attended and I hope to see more members in future years.

In June, the Combined Irish Regiments Association (CIRA) extended an invitation to the QRA to lay a wreath on behalf of the Queen's Regiment at their yearly remembrance parade at the Cenotaph on Whitehall, a task ably undertaken by Trevor Canton from the Middlesex Branch. The invitation came about as a result of the very close links forged between the Queen's Regiment and, in particular, The Ulster Defence Regiment during Op BANNER. I was told, anecdotally, that many of the RSMs who had served with the UDR had come from the Queen's Regiment, with many more Queensmen serving in a variety of other roles. The CIRA are very keen to see a much larger Queen's Regiment contingent in 2019 and the QRA Secretary and I will be attending their next committee meeting to see how we can make that happen in 2019. The parade is, as you would expect, great 'criac', with all participants retiring to the Civil Service Club after the parade for suitable refreshment. Next year is the commemoration of the end of Op BANNER and a large attendance from QRA members would certainly be appropriate and most welcome.

In July, we held a successful, informal, Past and Present function at the Union Jack Club. On the day, we managed to raise £800 for the Benevolent Fund. We look forward to more of the same in the coming year.



Albuhera Silent Toast to the Immortal Memory



Since the last QRA Journal, our Lodge has continued to grow. We have had some real interest from the 1st Battalion to keep Brother Paul Le Masonry happy and in the last year we have initiated seven new Brethren and had many other ceremonies conducted for us around the

country. We have held another Blue Table event at which we invite non-Masons into the Lodge as a taster and this has proved to be very enjoyable, judging by the kind letters of thanks that we have received. Should you like to attend a Blue Table lunch to see what we are all about, please contact me at johnedwards518@sky.com.



Chris Maynard & WM Cloisters Lodge





Graeme Monks passing in Devon



W Bro Ray Heathfield with two Initiates into the Queensman Lodge. Bros Monks and Gettings



Eric Raising with the WM



Festive Board

Very proudly, as a Masonic Lodge, we have made Masonic history, putting the name of the Queen's Regiment to the forefront. Why this is, is covered elsewhere in the Journal.



The officers of the Lodge with the initiates Bros Gettings and Monks



Carol and John Edwards



Raising Albert Prangnell





## The Queen's Regimental Riders Association

By Terry Price (T-Bar)

It has been quite a busy year for the Regimental Riders.

We kicked off the year by attending the Remembrance Parade at Leros Barracks where a wreath was laid by Donk and Frosty, which was guite a moving experience. This was followed later in the year by visiting the city of Ypres in Belgium where we paid our respects at the Menin Gate Memorial, dedicated to the British and Commonwealth soldiers who were killed in the Ypres Salient of WWI and whose graves are unknown. This magnificent monument is inscribed with the names of those poor souls. Whilst there, we took the opportunity to visit Berks Extension Cemetery. This is a Commonwealth War Graves Commission burial ground in Belgium located in the village of Ploegsteert. It is hard to walk these places without a tear in your eye and feeling very humbled. We moved on to the War Museum at Hooge Crater where there are still open trenches and relics from that sombre

time. This was all rounded off with a bite to eat and a nice refreshing drink in the on-site café!

To lighten the mood, the QRRA was delighted once again to put on the annual Easter Egg Hunt in Wingham. This was attended by local children along with their parents, our WAGs, the Queensmen family and the biking fraternity. Sadly, this year it was raining, but we still had a great time with a bouncy castle, ice creams and of course the Easter eggs all paid for by our members, The children had a great time as did 'Cut Throat', aka Steve Kemp, who donned a lovely Easter bonnet.

Our next ride out took us to Bovington Tank Museum which offers a great experience, where not only can you see some great tanks from 1915 to the present day but also walk in the footsteps of a WWI soldier - from the recruiting office to the front line trenches; of course Bard had to play with a mounted machine gun, with an enthusiastic Donk and Chokeknob raring to get in on the







QRRA War and Peace Revival

Cut Throat in his Easter bonnet

action, but Bard being Bard had that demonic look in his eyes and could not be shifted.

Some of our members rode out near Le Mans in France for the Brothers-in-Arms event, meeting up with military motorcycle veterans from all over the world. We also attend many functions and motorcycle rallies all over the UK and Europe, flying the flag throughout the year, gaining support and keeping our great regiment alive and in the public eye.

One of our members, Steve Bailey, took part in a charity boxing match to raise money for Cancer Research and, being one of our riders, we were pleased to say that he was the champion and won the fight.

To complete the year, the QRRA attended the War and Peace Revival where we pitched up our marquee and set out our wares, to help once again to raise money for the Benevolent Fund. We were well received by the public and stall holders who had many questions which were answered by the team on site - a big thank you to all the members who took part as it was sweltering heat, and to Steve Barden for doing what he does best - 'yakking' - and getting Joe Public to part with their hard-earned cash in the main arena every day. Joe Arnold performed spectacularly by bringing people into the marquee to part with their loose change or notes into our QRA charity tubs. Of course like all good ex-soldiers, the evenings were finished off in the local bar and it would be remiss of me to tell tales, such as members getting lost, ending up in ditches on their bikes etc. You know who you are, Bard, Donk and Frosty! On site we also met 'Big Phil' Campion. We are pleased to announce that we managed to raise £1,818 which when Gift Aid is added comes in at £2,272.50





Hooge Crater Ypres Ride Out



QRRA also had a ride-out to support the Frimley & Camberley Cadet Corps at their End of Summer BBQ. We were delighted to support them as they still parade under the Queen's Regiment

cap badge and carry the Queen's Colour.

Finally, I'd like to give a big thank you to all the members who work tirelessly to put on events but also attend. Also

a big thank you is due to the WAGs and families: without their support, we could not manage. We would like to give a big shout out to all Queensmen, our sponsors, bands, stall-holders, supporters and our biker-fraternity who have all made this year such a memorable one.

Lastly we are sad to announce that our tenancy is up at our site in Wingham. The land-owner is selling for development, so we have to be out by December 2018. If anybody has six or seven acres we can use and put a clubhouse on please let the QRRA know ASAP.



Wessex By Billy Bolton

The Wessex Branch continues to flourish in an understated fashion. We have tried not to take the apparent unpleasant recent interest in Salisbury shown by the Russians too personally, and Novichok notwithstanding, several gatherings to mark various occasions have occurred in 'our' City!



Gary Bourne, Jon Wright, John Russell, Mike Jelf, Rocky Hitchcock, Gavin Saunders, AAAB, Me.

Some members of the Branch visited the Western Front again in April and were joined by Alain Chissel. Based this time in Arras, together with that location, they visited Thiepval and the Canadian National Memorial at Vimy.

A second trip across the Channel took place in early September, this time to trace some of the Middlesex Regiment's actions, to re-visit the Somme and visit and pay respects at some notable graves; amongst others, Capt Billie Nevill at Carnoy and Cpl Edward Dwyer VC of the East Surreys.

On Albuhera Day, representatives from the Branch visited the Infantry Mess in Warminster for the Silent

Toast and a jolly (if somewhat 'dry', as the President was heard to mutter whilst travelling home afterwards in Capt Bolton's staff car) lunch. The presence of the Loving Cup and the Latham centrepiece both at the ceremony and on our luncheon table certainly added to the occasion. We were delighted to welcome Col Jon Wright back to the fold and he had the honour of reading the Special Order of the Day to those assembled. He had just recently returned to Blighty, having spent the last three years or so as 'our man' in Colombia and has come back to be put out to grass.

The annual pilgrimage to Herne Bay and the 1st Battalion's reunion was also undertaken in May where much lampswinging and sandbag-pulling was in evidence.

On high days and holy days, the Queen's Regimental flag is still flown in Bulford outside Branch HQ.



Capt Billy Bolton's HQ



Capt Billy Neville's Grave



By far the most significant event this year has been the amalgamation of the

Farnham Branch with the 5th Queen's (Royal West Surreys) OMA Branch. Following consultations between our branches, it was decided at an Extraordinary General Meeting that as we had all served in the same regimental family, and we wanted the associations to continue, we must look to present-day serving PWRR members to join, if not now, then later in life; therefore, PWRR should be included in the new title.

We also decided that at the same time that 'West Surrey' might give a wider and more historical appeal and so we have a new name. Our official title is now 'The West Surrey Branch of the Queen's Regimental Association and Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (PWRR) Association or 'West Surrey Branch' for short!

During the past year in addition to Remembrance Day and the Regimental Association's AGM in March, representatives of the branch have attended the following events:

In March, The Commonwealth Day Flag Raising Ceremony. In May, several members joined the Horsham Branch on an extremely well-organised battlefield tour centred round the WW1 Operation Michael German Offensive.

In June, the Joint Services Charity Church Service at Guildford Cathedral. Also in June, the Armed Forces Day Freedom Parade by 2 PWRR in Guildford..

A Branch BBQ was held again this year at Frimley Lodge Park. This was a well-attended family event, including numerous pet dogs. Our other annual branch event was the Christmas party at the Hog's Back Hotel in December, which was once again well attended.

On Sunday 16 September, representatives from the branch attended the 100th birthday party for Sidney William Robertson at the Langrish House Hotel Petersfield. Sidney served with the 1/5th Bn Queen's (West Surrey) Regiment, joining on 15 July 1939. He embarked for France as part of the BEF on 2 April 1940. In May 1940, Sidney's carrier platoon engaged with German tanks whilst defending bridges over the River Escaut. Following two days of heavy fighting, the Queen's were forced to withdraw. Sidney's carrier platoon was subsequently attached to 5th Bn Royal Sussex Regiment

but only for a short period before 1/5th Queen's were reformed.



Chairman, Bob Hill and Sydney Robertson

On 27 May, Sidney's battalion moved to Strazeele and the carrier platoon, sent forward, encountered a force of German tanks. The official history of the Regiment mentions this action, praising the skill of the carrier platoon. Eventually 1/5th Bn withdrew to Dunkirk. Sidney embarked from the Mole on 31 May. He was wounded at some point during the withdrawal, purportedly whilst giving a 'V' sign to a German aircraft. Once back in Britain, he was transferred to Alder Hay hospital for treatment. As a result of his injuries, Sidney was discharged from the Army. It was a privilege to meet him and his family. Bob Hill, our branch chairman, presented Sidney with a Queen's Regiment tie, which he insisted on wearing for the group photo.



Fm L-R Ray Morris, Bob Hill, Sidney Robertson, Dick Scales, John Fleming

### **ASSOCIATION BRANCHES**

#### **ASSOCIATION CONTACTS**

President - Colonel AAA Beattie, Barn Cottage, Fisherton de la Mere, Warminster, Wilts BA12 0PZ

Secretary - Major Alasdair Goulden, 5 Alfred Square, Deal, Kent CT14 6LU

Email: queensregimentassociation@gmail.com

Mobile: 0771 484 4069

Web: www.queensregimentalassociation.org

#### 1 QUEENS BRANCH

The 1 QUEENS Branch meets on an ad hoc basis and all past members of the Queen's Regiment or their associate Regiments are very welcome to attend any event. The annual reunion will be held at the Herne Bay Ex-Servicemen's Club, 35 William Street, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 5NR. All are welcome to attend. Details are posted on the 1 QUEENS Branch website. For more details of the branch please contact:

Steve Parsons: Mobile: 07392 572 312 Email: steveparsons@1queens.com

Web: www.1queens.com

www.facebook.com/groups/61525655230/

#### **CHICHESTER BRANCH**

The Chichester Branch meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm in the City Club, North Pallant, Chichester. They hold an annual Albuhera Dinner and always march with their Standard at the Chichester Remembrance Day parade.

For more details of the branch please check the website or contact:

Chairman - Dave Tilley, 3 Mumford Place, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2BG - Email: davetilley@hotmail.co.uk

Secretary - Eddie Drew: Tel: 01243 866887 - Email: edwindrew@btinternet.com

or use the 'Email us' facility on the website: http://www.freewebs.com/qrachichester/

#### EAST KENT BRANCH OF THE QUEEN'S AND PWRR ASSOCIATIONS

This branch has agreed to be a part of both Regimental Associations and welcomes everyone who served in the Queen's, PWRR and forebear regiments. They meet informally in Canterbury on a regular basis.

For more details please contact:

Chairman - John Redfern TD: Tel: 07989 582211 - Email: JohnRedfern@castleinterim.co.uk

Web: www.pwrr.co.uk

#### **HORSHAM BRANCH**

The Horsham Branch meets quarterly, generally on the first Mondays of March, September and December plus the Monday closest to 16 May (for Albuhera).

For more details of the branch please contact:

President - Colonel Richard Putnam

Chairman - Steve Bell

Secretary - Jonathan Purdy: - Email: j.purdy1@btopenworld.com



#### LONDON BRANCH OF THE QUEEN'S AND PWRR ASSOCIATIONS

The two London Branches of the Associations have combined and meet informally quarterly. In addition the Branch meets at Twickenham for the Army vs Navy match which will be on 4 May 2019, and after the Cenotaph Parade on Remembrance Sunday. All past members of the Queen's, PWRR or their forebear regiments are very welcome to attend any event.

For more details of the branch please contact:

Chairman - Mr Adrian de Villiers: Tel: 07941 367051

Email: adrian.pwrrlondon@hotmail.com

Queen's Secretary - Major RGC Thornton TD, 2 Norfolk House, Ellensden Road, St Leonards, East Sussex, TN37 6HZ

Tel: 01424 434002 - Mobile: 07956 586444 - Email: thorntonrgc@hotmail.com

#### SCOTTISH BRANCH OF THE QUEEN'S AND PWRR ASSOCIATIONS

The Scottish Branch meets on an ad hoc basis. All are welcome. For more details contact:

Chairman - Steve Wall, 10 Carn Elrig View, High Burnside, Inverness-shire, PH22 1UL

Mobile: 07958 596598 - Email: steve.wall@hotmail.co.uk

Secretary - Dave Lee, 36 Katrine Drive, Paisley, Renfrewshire, PA2 9BS. - Mobile: 07840 977009 (evenings only)

Email: dgldavelee@gmail.com

#### **MIDDLESEX BRANCH**

The Middlesex Branch holds four or five events a year and usually meets at the TA Centre in Edgware and all ex-Queensmen are very welcome. For more details please contact:

Chairman - Trevor Canton: Tel: 0208 368 0407

Mobile: 07891 577119

Email: queensman@orangehome.co.uk

#### **QUEENSMAN LODGE 2694**

Queensman Lodge 2694 is a Freemasons Lodge within the Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London and also a member of the Circuit of Services Lodges. Membership is open to all members of forebear regiments, Queen's, PWRR, Queen's Division and any attached personnel. Membership application is by being proposed and seconded, and by interview. For full details, please visit the website or contact:

John Edwards: Tel: 01462 834134 Email: johnedwards518@sky.com Web: http://queensmanlodge.co.uk/

#### QUEENS REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION CORPS OF DRUMS

The QRA Corps of Drums meets on a regular basis and performs for the benefit of the Queen's Regiment Benevolent Fund. To join please contact:

Tony Philpott or Amy Holden: Tel: 07715 135238

Email: qracorpsofdrums@yahoo.co.uk

#### **QUEEN'S REGIMENTAL RIDERS ASSOCIATION**

This Branch is open to all ex-members of The Queen's Regiment, PWRR and forebear regiments who own and ride a motorbike or trike. For more details please contact:

Secretary Terry Price: Mobile: 07912 845 279 - Email: tbar-secretary@grra.co.uk

Web: www.grra.co.uk

#### **WESSEX BRANCH**

The Queen's Regimental Association in Wessex, known as the Wessex Branch, meets on an ad hoc basis in the Salisbury area.

For more details of membership and any events, please contact:

Secretary - Captain Anthony (Billy) Bolton: Tel: 07530 429926 - Email: Queensmen1661@gmail.com

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/QueensWessexBranch

#### **WEST SURREY (was previously Farnham)**

The West Surrey Branch meets every third Tuesday at the Farnham TA Centre, Guildford Road, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 9QB and all past members of the Queen's Regiment or their associate Regiments are very welcome. For more details of the branch, please contact:

Chairman - Bob Hill: Tel: 01276 501644 - Email: bobhill@sky.com

Secretary - Dick Scales: Tel: 02380 694974 - Email: dickscales284@btinternet.com Treasurer - Mrs Sharon Scales Tel: 01962 826088 - Email: sturner@biopharma.co.uk

#### **VIPERS**

The VIPERS Branch meets on an ad hoc basis and all past members of the Queen's Regiment or their associate regiments are very welcome to attend any event.. For more details of the branch please contact:

QRA Secretary: - Email:Queensregimentassociation@gmail.com

#### FRIMLEY AND CAMBERLEY CADET CORPS

The Frimley and Camberley Cadet Corps, which started over 100 years ago, rebadged back to the Queen's Regiment and continues to parade with the Queen's Colour. Boys and girls, from a variety of backgrounds, aged 6 to 13, are instructed by volunteer staff in their personal development based upon military procedures and discipline. Their HQ is at Caird Hall, Camberley. They are fully self-funding as they are not supported by the Army, Army Reserve or ACF.

For more details of when they meet and how to get involved please contact:

Nigel Ferris: 1 Ffordd Dol y Coed, Llanharan, Pontyclun, CF72 9WA

Email: - nigel@fdi-european.com

Mobile: 07836 726236

#### QUEEN'S REGIMENT/PWRR GOLF SOCIETY

We are the original Queens Regimental Golfing Association. Upon amalgamation we morphed into the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment Golfing Society. Our home has always been Canterbury Golf Club and we still play annually for all the cups and trophies associated with The Queen's Regiment.

For more details please contact the two Queensmen currently running the Society:

Captain: Mr Steve Richards - Mobile: 07843 259112

Email: stevechelski@yahoo.co.uk

or

The Secretary and Treasurer: Bob Jeffery - Mobile: 07779 084570

Email: rj6263@virginmedia.com

New members of all abilities are most welcomed, just call for a membership form, and come and play.

#### **NON-AFFILIATED GROUPS**

Non-affiliated Groups which have contact with ex-members of the Regiment

Website: www.1royalsussex-3queens.com

The following is a list of our comrades who sadly have passed away since the last Journal. Members are requested to keep the Secretary informed of those who have died so that the list can be updated and other members informed. Please email queensregimentassociation@gmail.com or write to The Secretary, 5 Alfred Square, Deal, Kent, CT14 6LU, ideally giving the date of death, rank, when they left the Army, battalions in which they served and any details of the funeral.

DATE	NAME	BATTALION
2018		
21 Oct	CSgt Johnny Knowles	2nd
09 Oct	Pte Dave Simpson	2nd
03 Sep	Maj Robin Sinclair-Lee	5th
21 Aug	Capt Peter Anthony QGM	1st, 2nd, 5th, QOB and UDR
Aug	Cpl Derek Knight	Ist and QRS
07 Jul	Cpl 'Bugsy' Curtis BEM	QRR,1st, 6/7th and 6/7 PWRR
03 Jul	LCpl Tony Brock	2nd and DQD
23 Jun	Drum-Major Eric Lockwood	1st
05 Jun	Cpl Robbie Gorse	2nd and QOB
01 Jun	Cpl Mickey Dunne	5th, 6/7th and 4 RGJ
12 May	LCpl Trevor 'Tommo' Thompson	1st
02 May	Sgt David Waghorn	2nd
30 Apr	Cpl Lenny Elks	5th and QOB
22 Apr	Pte Les Harvey	1st and QRS
19 Apr	Pte Mick Hurley	1st
12 Apr	Drum Major WO2 Rick Baker	3rd
01 Apr	Rank NK Phillip Lampkin	3rd
08 Mar	Cpl Derek Goodacre	2nd
07 Mar	Cpl Terence Price	1st, 4th and MX
03 Mar	LCpl Vincent Muckley	3rd
08 Feb	Pte John Gill	1st
06 Feb	Sgt Edward Brown	2nd
03 Feb	CSgt John Rolfe	2nd, RWK and QOB
Jan	Pte Jimmy Cann	3rd
28 Jan	LCpl Tony Jarrett	2nd
24 Jan	Pte Rae Wills	6/7th
2017		
23 Dec	Cpl Derek (Slim) Sivers	3rd and R Sussex
07 Dec	Maj JDW (Jimmy) Reid	1st, Buffs and QOB
13 Nov	Cpl Ray Spencer MM	1st
11 Nov	WO1 Tug Wilson	2nd

## SIGNIFICANT DATES FOR 2019

4 March - Horsham Branch Spring meeting, Horsham Cricket Club, 20.00Hrs

9 March - Association Annual General Meeting and Reunion

- Queensman Lodge Regular Meeting (London) 23 March

27 March - Chichester Branch AGM at the City Club

Chichester Branch St George's Day in Chichester Cathedral 23 April

27 April Queensman Lodge Ladies Night (Maidstone)

- London Branch Army v Navy Rugby, Twickenham 4 May

13 May Horsham Branch Albuhera, Horsham Cricket Club, 20.00 Hrs

- East Kent Branch Albuhera Dinner 17 May

- Chichester Branch Albuhera Dinner at the Beachcroft Hotel, Bognor Regis 18 May

1 June - Queensman Lodge Installation Meeting (London)

1 June Horsham Branch Endex and Glorious First of June BBQ, Horsham Cricket Club, 20.00 Hrs

- Trooping the Colour 08 June

09 June - Combined Irish Regiments Cenotaph Parade to which we are invited

16 June - East Kent Branch Buffs Sunday

5-7 July - Queen's Regimental Riders One Aim Rally (Fundraiser)

14 July - Chichester Branch Chairman's Mystery Tour coach trip

- Chichester Branch Veterans' Lunch at the City Club 5 August

2 September - Horsham AGM, Horsham Cricket Club, 20.00 Hrs

4 September - Chichester Branch Goodwood Race Day (TBC)

- Queensman Lodge Regular Meeting (London) 14 September

14 September - Chichester Branch Royal Sussex Reunion Dinner at Lewes

7 November - Field of Remembrance, Westminster

10 November -Remembrance Sunday

2 December - Chichester Branch Christmas Dinner at City Club

2 December - Horsham Branch Winter meeting and Christmas drinks, Horsham Cricket Club, 20.00 Hrs

7 December - Queensman Lodge Regular Meeting (London)







The plight of homeless and disadvantaged veterans has been well publicised, but it remains an area where people fear to tread because individuals with complex needs require constant welfare support and money, in order to achieve some sort of stability. With the Veterans Self Build, we have rolled our sleeves up and are trying to bring a degree of coherency to the challenge. We don't just build houses with the veteran's help, we rebuild lives. There is a need to recognise that some veterans need not just a 'hand up' to cope with the complexities of transition, but also some detailed and well thought-out training that changes mindsets for the better and equips them with the right tools to live a happy life for themselves and in many case their dependents. We try to be as pro-active as possible, which is where I believe the major military charities are failing. Any donation you can make to our Just Giving Page, www.justgiving.com/csba would be most welcome, or any signpost to good trusts or foundations that we can approach.

Ken Hames

#### We're here round the clock, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

We offer a safe place for you to talk any time you like, in your own way. about whatever's getting to you. You don't have to be suicidal.

All our conversations are in private, treated in confidence and whatever your concerns we will not be judgmental.

If you need a response immediately, it's best to call us on the phone but we do understand that talking directly to someone can sometimes be simply too difficult. You may find it easier to reach us by email or text so please contact us in the way you find most comfortable.

# alktous

Whatever you're going through, call us free any time, from any phone on 116 123

You can also visit us at one of our branches. To find your nearest branch and for more information about what support we can offer please visit our website www.samaritans.org



A registered charity



Phone us 116 123



**Email us** jo@samaritans.org



Text us 07725 90 90 90

## WHEN YOU'RE GONE!

This year has unfortunately highlighted what happens if you do not make a will. Three members have died this year without making a will, with the result that their possessions have been claimed by people whom it is very strongly believed should not have inherited.

Research from MacMillan highlighted the worrying fact that two in three people living in Britain don't have a will - including 42% of over-55s. Without an up-to-date will, the law will supersede a person's final wishes and leave treasured possessions, money, property and even dependent children with someone they may not have chosen.

Even if you have a will, official guidance is that you should review it every five years and after any major life changes.

#### TOP FIVE THINGS TO DO TO HELP YOUR LOVED ONES AFTER YOU HAVE GONE

#### WRITE A WILL

A will ensures that the right people inherit from you, and while most of us know how important it is to have a will and keep it up to date, many of us don't bother. It is especially important for cohabiting couples to have a will, as the surviving partner does not automatically inherit any estate or possessions left behind. And once you have a will, check it every five years.

#### THINK ABOUT CARE OF CHILDREN

If you have children, it's important to decide on guardians, but three in five parents with children under 18 haven't chosen guardians should they die. Think about who you would want to step into this role, and ask them if they would be happy to do so. Then make sure you appoint them as guardians in your will

#### WRITE A 'WHEN I'M GONE' LIST

More than one in 10 adults admitted that it would be very difficult for anyone to handle their financial affairs after they died. Putting together all your personal and financial information into one simple document can really help your loved ones when you are gone.

#### MAKE A PLAN FOR YOUR FUNERAL

Research shows that the average funeral costs around £3,800, with one in six people saying that they struggle with the cost. Having a plan in place to pay for your funeral will mean that your family won't have to find several thousand pounds at a difficult time.

#### 5. HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH YOUR FAMILY

Having a conversation with your family about your wishes can remove a great deal of uncertainty for them in the event of your death. Two in five people who have to arrange a funeral have no clue about what the dead person wanted. Starting a conversation might include talking about your funeral wishes with your loved ones or showing them where important documents are kept.

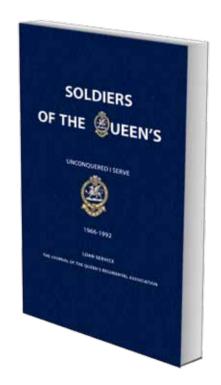
#### WHEN YOU'RE GONE, IT'S TOO LATE!



## **NEXT YEAR'S JOURNAL**

2019 is the 50th Anniversary of the 1st and 2nd Battalions going into Londonderry and Belfast respectively. The theme, therefore for the 2019 Journal is 'OP BANNER 1969-92'.

Ideally, the Journal next year should contain articles and anecdotes from every one of the 36 tours which we, as a Regiment, undertook. The idea is to complement General Riley's official history, 'Soldiers of the Queen' with your personal stories which illustrate what it was like serving in that troubled land. This is probably the last opportunity that the Regiment has to record what took place from a unique perspective.



Please do not leave it to others to write but jot down your memories and send them to the Secretary, not

forgetting to give your name, which Battalion you were in, what tour you were on and the dates.

The deadline is 7 September 2019 but do feel free to send in your story before then – it makes the whole editing process much less stressful!

## PLEASE GET WRITING!



Drummers wanted, contact Amy Holden at qracorpsofdrums@yahoo.co.uk

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