

# SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN'S

UNCONQUERED I SERVE  
1966-1992



## THE QUEENS' JUBILEE EDITION

THE JOURNAL OF THE QUEEN'S REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

2022



# FOREWORD

BY COLONEL AMÉDÉE MIÉVILLE



2022 has been a tumultuous year in many ways for all of us. It has seen the celebrations surrounding the Platinum Jubilee of our Queen and, the Golden Jubilee for our Patron, Her Majesty Queen Margarethe of Denmark. As the Journal goes to press these celebrations have been muted by the sad death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Her Lying in State and State Funeral have given us the opportunity to show the warmth, admiration and high esteem that we all had for her and for which she will always be remembered. The two Queens have been friends and known each other for many years (see the photograph on the cover of this Journal). Queen Margarethe was the longest serving monarch at Her Majesty's funeral, seated on the other side of her coffin from King Charles and the Royal Family. It is fitting, therefore,

that memories of our encounters with Queen Elizabeth, The Royal Family and Queen Margarethe form the first chapter of this Journal.

Queen Margarethe has always had very strong links with The Queen's Regiment throughout its life and has carried this commitment on into its successor, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. Her loyalty and support of the Regiment through all its ups and downs has been truly outstanding and very much appreciated by all of us. Her Majesty will have seen the pride, gallantry, ingenuity, sense of adventure, comradeship and good humour that has been demonstrated by the officers, senior ranks and soldiers of the Regiment whatever situation they have found themselves in. These attributes are at the forefront of the memories of our service in the Queen's Regiment and those that came before and after us. They can also be readily identified in the articles that follow. But there is always room for more, particularly if you have a different recognition of events just as Jonathon Riley's explanation on the date that the 3rd of Foot was formed and Roger Gancz's views on the link between gunfire and Albuhera Day!

Amongst other articles are some recollections of life and operations in Gibraltar over several tours. Belize and jungle training are covered by several others. I can't help but note that, other than clothing and equipment, nothing much has changed in the jungle since Bob Hatcher's Malayan Emergency operational tour between 1954 and 1957. There is also a fascinating article on three former members of 3 QUEENS and their efforts to get aid to Ukraine. It sounds as if they were almost on operations themselves!

Northern Ireland features strongly, in articles on operations such as Hugh Lohan's activities in the Crumlin Road Prison in Belfast and extra-curricular activities such as John Powell's free fall adventures across the Province. Both displayed many of the attributes described above. There are also some historical stories including one on the formation and activities of 8 (V) QF and another on the Jubilee and Coronation Medals and, the inevitable controversy behind who got them! No Journal would be complete without tales of adventure training activities This time it includes Bill Knight-Hughes' participation in the Zaire River expedition, the brainchild of Lt Col John Blashford-Snell RE, and Ken Hames and the Azzopardi clan's challenging cycling trip in Andalucía, the latter raising considerable sums for the homeless veterans' charity.

The obituaries section covers five brave and selfless individuals who saw long service with their Regiments: Col John Francis, the last Regimental Secretary of the Queen's Regiment who commanded the 3rd Battalion; Lt Col Desmond Wilson who was the first Commanding Officer of 6(V) QUEENS; Brig Geoffrey Curtis formerly of the 2/6th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey), and Sgt Jeff Hayward 1/7 MX who were both decorated for bravery in the 2nd World War and finally Col Charles Tarver, who commanded the 3rd Battalion.

Could I end this review by recommending you read John Taylor's article on his trips to the Seychelles to support Barry Camille who was sadly dying? There can be few better examples of the tremendous comradeship and good humour in our Regiment. I think John Taylor's support for Barry Camille is truly inspiring.

Finally, could I put a special mention in for Alasdair Goulden, the Regimental Association's Secretary, who has pulled all these articles together so successfully. The charitable activities that he and the Association's branches carry out also help keep the name of the Regiment alive and make sure our veterans are never forgotten. They deserve our support so don't be slow in coming forward with your stories!





# EDITORIAL

BY ASSOCIATION SECRETARY

MAJOR A M GOULDEN



This year saw great joy in the celebration of our Sovereign's Platinum Jubilee, an occasion complemented so appropriately by the Golden Jubilee of HM Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, the last Colonel-in-Chief of The Queen's Regiment and Patron of the Association. This was sadly curtailed by the devastating death of our beloved Queen. The outpouring of emotion from so many of you was testament to the love, respect and affection that was felt by each and every one of you for her.

I would like to thank all those members who paid their respects to Her Majesty during the period of official mourning. Many of you queued for hours, to see HM The Queen lying in state or lined streets, attended memorial services up and down the country, wearing your medals and regimental headdress and tie with pride during those events. The Association would like to express its appreciation to all those who took the time to attend these events and, thereby, promote the Regiment in a great light, as many other veterans did during that period. Some of

you were captured filing past HM The Queens on TV and in news coverage, a moment I am sure you will never forget. Thank you all for representing the Association.

The celebrations of the Jubilee were held far and wide and as you can see from some of the photos were embraced by many of you. Sadly, the journal celebrating the Jubilees had already been constructed when Her Majesty died and, after a great deal of thought, I decided to leave this edition in the format that had been prepared which is why, apart from the black border around the front and back page, it remains as planned.

As always, I have tried to include as much of the material that I was sent particularly with the stories about interaction with Her Majesty and her family, although, to be honest, I was surprised that there weren't more. Towards the deadline for articles, I was concerned that this was going to be a pretty thin issue, but a gentle reminder produced a wealth of new material, some of it eclectic in its composition. To all contributors my heartfelt thanks. The wide range of articles should provide some interesting reading for everyone covering different subjects as diverse as the experience of a young lady whose life was saved in Belfast by a soldier to memories of an expedition with the explorer, the eccentric Blashford-Snell wandering around the Congo.

Allow me an indulgence as your Editor to plug General Jonathon Riley's and my book published this year called *'The Longest Stag'* which combines the official history with your memories of OP BANNER. There is a review of it in the Book Review section and an order form accompanies this journal. All proceeds, after costs, will go to the Benevolent Fund.

My thanks as always to my three proofreaders, our President, Anthony Beattie, Mike Jelf and Nick Keyes. Without their input the very high standard which I think the Journal achieves would not be reached – ask any of my Commanding officer's who had to suffer my junior Officer essays!

Finally, with the death of our dear Sovereign and Commander-in-Chief, who so typified our own motto *'Unconquered I Serve'* I close with the traditional words:

***May She Rest in Peace and GOD SAVE THE KING!***

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# THE ROYAL JUBILEES







Maj John Bennett



Chris Benham



Westminster Hall  
2012 Jubilee weekend



Les Edwards



70 planes



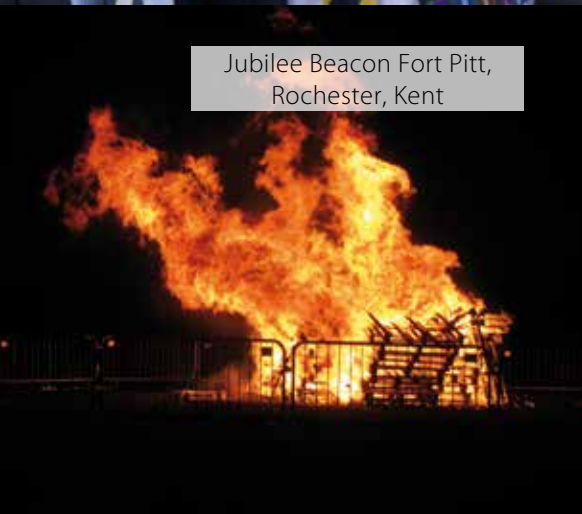
Pte Mick Richens and  
Sgt Graham Warne



Col Tony Ward shouting a  
proclamation!



Frimley and Camberley Cadets



Jubilee Beacon Fort Pitt,  
Rochester, Kent



The end of the day!





# POPPIES IN THE MOAT

By Yeoman Gaoler Jim Duncan RVM



After 40 years' service with both 2 QUEENS and, on amalgamation, with 2 PWRR, retirement from the Army loomed; it was finally time to hang up my boots in September 2011. Like many of us, retirement arrived too soon but I had done my '6Ps' and was looking forward to the next chapter in my life - with fingers crossed. Fortune smiled on me, and I was given the opportunity to join the Yeoman Body at the Tower of London. What a relief for me - still in uniform and the chance of working with a great group of ex-military men and women from all branches of the services.

During my time in the Army, I had met a few members of the Royal Family but alas never got the opportunity to take a photograph. After 10 years at the Tower of London, that all changed. In July 2014, I just happened to be in the right place at the wrong time, as we used to say. I was told to report to the Chief Yeoman Warder's office and was informed that I had volunteered to be the Moat Site Manager for the up-and-coming art installation. *"It's only a few weeks work"*, said the Chief. Little did I know that for the next five months, I'd be working day and night.

The task was simple. Install 888,246 ceramic poppies into the Moat, each one would represent a British or Colonial life lost during the conflict of WW1. The installation was to be called 'Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red' with the title taken from a poem written by an unknown soldier, which gave the artist Paul Cummins MBE the original idea. With the help of over 20,000 volunteers, from all parts of the world, the artwork was brought to life, following the design of Tom Piper MBE.





After working for a few weeks, we were told that Their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and His Royal Highness Prince Henry of Wales would be visiting on 4 August 2014. After several rehearsals (and sleepless nights) all was ready. On the day, their Royal Highnesses arrived and, after their formal welcome, walked unescorted amongst the poppies. Over the next few months HRH Prince Edward, and other members of the Royal Family also visited.

The work continued and the next milestone came when it was announced that Her Majesty The Queen would be visiting. In true military fashion, meetings were held, programmes worked on - and changed many times. At one meeting, it was discussed how Her Majesty might like to plant a poppy. After a lot of thought and many suggestions I, (yes me!), came up with an idea of making a wreath from the poppies for HM to place. Silence ensued, a few mumbles and mutterings could be heard. Meeting over. A few days later, I was told to report to the Deputy Governor. *"Mr Duncan, the Constable, and other senior members of the Tower thought you had a great idea. The wreath will be made, and you will be presenting it to the Queen on the day. Fall out!"*



On 16 October, The Tower was in readiness and I - Yeoman Warder Jim Duncan - was going to introduce himself to Her Majesty and present on behalf of the Nation, a wreath for Her Majesty to place to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the beginning of The Great War. What an honour and privilege, not only to meet Her Majesty The Queen, but to present to her a wreath that for me summed up everything the installation represented and meant to this country and our Commonwealth. It was a very humbling moment in my life, captured in photographs which went all around the World. I was later to be honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours List being awarded the Royal Victorian Medal (RVM) for services to the Royal Family. My medal was presented at Buckingham Palace by His Royal Highness Prince William.

A few years rolled by, I was promoted to Yeoman Serjeant and two years later I became the 49th Yeoman Gaoler. More people have been in space than have held this oldest of jobs in the Tower. In this role, I helped welcome the HRH Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall to join us in celebrating our 535th Year as Yeoman Warders. The Duchess of Cornwall had commissioned a cake, made in the shape of our ceremonial lamp that is used every night during the Ceremony of the Keys and she cut the cake with a dagger from the period of Henry VIII. I was offered a slice to taste on behalf of the Yeoman body. Who could refuse a command from the HRH The Duchess of Cornwall? It tasted absolutely fabulous, and I polished it off in true military fashion. Pleasantries over, it was time to escort HRH Prince Charles and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall to the new Armouries building. This was the very first opportunity that I had had to use my ceremonial axe in my duties as the Yeoman Gaoler. And I used it to escort the future King of England.



# JUBILEE AND CORONATION MEDALS

By John White

Due to HM The Queen's long reign, those serving for the last 4 years have been in receipt of three Jubilee medals (Golden, Diamond and Platinum), whereas those who served in the first 50 years of her reign, for however long, between 6 Feb 1952 and 5 Feb 2002 are generally not in receipt of any Jubilee or Coronation medal. This seems harsh, especially as officers serving on or after 29 July 2014 have qualified for the LS&GC. Here is a short review of the history and qualifications for such Jubilee and Coronation medals. Although all were issued unnamed, many recipients subsequently had their details engraved, similar to campaign medals.



The first Jubilee celebrated was the **Golden Jubilee of King George III, in 1809.**

A number of coins were created to mark the monarch's 50 years' reign. There were various versions in silver and bronze; they weren't attached to a ribbon or made to be worn. But more importantly for soldiers, military deserters and prisoners of war were pardoned and debtors were discharged, excluding those who were of French origin due to the ongoing Napoleonic Wars.



The **Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887** was the first time that an official Jubilee Medal was awarded. It was awarded to those involved in the official celebrations, including members of the Royal Family, Royal Household and government officials, as well as Envoys, Foreign Ambassadors and Colonial Prime Ministers. Military recipients included a selected small percentage of officers, sailors and soldiers of the Royal Navy and Army, and the Indian and colonial contingents that participated in jubilee activities, including the London parade and the Royal Naval Review at Spithead, where the commander of each ship received the medal in silver.



The medal was awarded in gold (to members of the Royal Family), silver (to officers and those of similar status) and in bronze (to selected other ranks and those of similar status).

The medal was worn on the left breast, originally after the insignia of orders and before campaign medals. (In November 1918 the order of wear changed, with all coronation and jubilee medals now worn after campaign medals but before long service awards.)

A Police Golden Jubilee Medal of poorer quality and design was awarded to members of the Metropolitan and City of London Police Forces on duty during the jubilee celebrations.



The **Diamond Jubilee Medal instituted in 1897** followed the Golden Jubilee Medal, issued ten years previously, both in terms of design and award criteria, with those qualifying for both medals receiving a ribbon clasp in lieu of a second medal.



A special diamond-shaped medal was authorised for mayors and provosts, presented in gold to lord mayors and lord provosts (14 awarded) and silver to mayors and provosts (512 awarded) from across Britain and Ireland.

**Queen Victoria's Commemoration Medal 1900 (Ireland)** was awarded to those members of the Irish Police Forces on duty at Queen Victoria's various engagements during her visit to Ireland in April 1900.

The **King Edward VII Coronation Medal** was issued in **1902** to celebrate the Coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. It was issued in silver to members of the Royal family, dignitaries, senior government officials and service officers who were present at the coronation ceremony, performed extra work in its preparation, or who were involved in the Coronation parade. Selected NCOs and other ranks at the Coronation parade received the medal in bronze. The bronze medal was also given to one seaman or marine of ‘very good’ character on each ship at the Spithead Naval Review held on 16 August 1902. The two members of the Queen Alexandra’s Imperial Military Nursing Service who nursed the King during his pre-Coronation illness received bronze medals. A special medal, in silver only, was awarded to mayors and provosts; and another variation (in silver for senior officers, otherwise in bronze) was awarded to police, firemen and St John Ambulance volunteers on duty during the London coronation celebrations.



As part of the King’s post Coronation visits, the following medals were issued in limited numbers to those directly involved or guarding the route not already recipients of the Coronation medal: Delhi Durbar Medal (1903) (in gold for Indian princes), King Edward VII Police Medal (Scotland) 1903, King Edward VII’s Visit Commemoration Medal 1903 (Ireland).

The **King George V Coronation Medal** celebrated the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary on **22 June 1911**. It was the first such medal to be awarded to people who were not in attendance at the Coronation and, as well of those involved in the ceremony, it was given to selected dignitaries, officials and members of the armed forces, both in Britain and across the Empire. For this and subsequent Coronation and Jubilee medals until 1977, the practice was that the British Government decided on a total number to be produced, then allocated a proportion to each of the Commonwealth countries and Crown dependencies and possessions. The award of the medals was then at the discretion of the local government authority, which was free to decide who would be awarded a medal and why. A total of 15,901 medals were awarded, including 286 to Australians. This medal was only produced in silver.



As with Edward VII’s medal, there was a separate police version which was issued this time to police and ambulance crew anywhere in Britain and Ireland on duty during Coronation celebrations, as well as to the London Fire Brigade. There were also King George V’s Visit Police Commemoration Medal 1911 (Ireland) and Delhi Durbar Medal (1911) (issued in gold rather than silver to Indian princes paying homage to their King Emperor). You could not receive more than one of these 1911 medals, so a clasp was worn on the coronation medal ribbon for those also qualifying for the Durbar medal.



The **King George V Silver Jubilee Medal** was issued to commemorate his Silver Jubilee on **6 May 1935**. As with his coronation medal, only a silver version was produced. It was awarded to the Royal Family and selected officers of state, officials and servants of the Royal Household, ministers, government officials, mayors, public servants, local government officials, members of the Navy, Army, Air Force and police in Britain, her colonies and dominions.

Similar to this Coronation medal, the British Government decided on a total number to be produced, then allocated a proportion to each of the Commonwealth countries and Crown dependencies and possessions, who were free to decide who would be awarded a medal and why. A total of 85,234 medals were awarded, including 6,500 to Australians, 7,500 to Canadians and 1,500 to New Zealanders.







The **King George VI Coronation Medal** was issued to commemorate the Coronation of George VI and Queen Elizabeth on **12 May 1937**. It was awarded on a similar basis to the George V Coronation and Jubilee medals. A total of 90,279 medals were awarded, including: 6,887 to Australians, 10,089 to Canadians and about 1,700 to New Zealanders.

The **Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal** was issued to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on **2 June 1953**. Note that it only shows the Queen as her consort wasn't crowned; and it shows the monarch's right profile unlike



the earlier Coronation and Jubilee medals. It was issued on a similar basis to the George V and George VI coronation medals. More were produced: this time 129,051 medals were awarded, with more allocated to each of the Commonwealth countries and Crown dependencies, including 11,561 to Australians and 12,500 to Canadians.

37 were issued to members of the British Mount Everest Expedition, two of whom reached the summit four days before the coronation. These were engraved "MOUNT EVEREST EXPEDITION" on the rim.



The **Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal** was issued in 1977 to mark the 25th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession on **6 February 1952**. For this award and subsequent Jubilee medals, the award of the medals was at the discretion of each national government. Thus, 30,000 were distributed in Britain, 1,507 in New Zealand, 6,870 in Australia, and 30,000 in Canada. The UK awarded medals included 9,000 to armed forces personnel, with others given to members of the Royal Household and to people engaged in a wide range of activities, including industry, trade, local services, voluntary work, the arts, entertainment and sport. From my recollection, infantry battalions received an allocation of three with the CO and Adjutant deciding the fortunate recipients, although battalions like 1 QUEENS on parade at Sennelager on 7 July received more.



The **Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal** was issued in **2002** to mark the 50th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession in 1952. The medal is of cupronickel with a gilt finish. Almost 400,000 medals were issued in the UK to serving members of the Armed Forces (regulars, reserves and cadet force adults), serving prison officers and members of the police and emergency services (including Coastguard and RNLI) who were enrolled as of 6 February 2002 and had been so for five years. 94,222 members (regulars, reserves and cadet force adults) of the Army received the medal, as did 32,273 in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and 38,889 in the Royal Air Force. Longer serving members of the Royal Household and living holders of the Victoria Cross and the George Cross also received the medal.



I was then serving as a reservist. My unit only put forward those who had qualified for their training bounty in the last 5 years and had also completed their full training commitment in the year 2001/2002. However, it was clear that some other organisations didn't worry about actual service commitment in the previous 5 years. Canada produced its own version and awarded 46,000 with 9,600 awarded to members of its Armed Forces. Only 6 Australians received the medal.

The **Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal** was created in **2012** to mark the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession in 1952. There are four versions: one issued by the United Kingdom, another by Canada, the third for the Caribbean realms of Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the fourth issued by Papua New Guinea. In the United Kingdom and its overseas territories, 450,000 medals were awarded on a similar basis to the Golden Jubilee Medal: namely to those who had been in paid service, retained or in a voluntary capacity, and who had completed five full calendar years of service on 6 February 2012.

You could receive both the Golden and Diamond Jubilee medals – the precedent between Queen Victoria's jubilees wasn't followed where a bar was awarded for the Diamond if the Golden had already been received. Holders of the Victoria Cross and George Cross and members of the Royal Household were also eligible. The medals cost the Department for Culture, Media and Sport £8m to produce. 60,000 were presented in Canada, nearly 6,000 in Jamaica, but only 10 in Australia and 3 in New Zealand.



The **Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal** marks the 70th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession in 1952. In the UK the eligibility followed those established for the Golden and Diamond medals, but the rules were made clearer so actual service in the previous 5 years was more carefully assessed:

- Serving members of the Armed Forces who have completed five full calendar years of service on 6 February 2022.
- Volunteer Reserve and ex-Regular Reservists of the Armed Forces who are currently serving and who have received 5 Certificates of Efficiency.
- Uniformed cadet force adult volunteers in MOD sponsored cadet forces with 1826 days membership (not necessarily continuous) and five effective training years of which 2021/2022 must be one. Effective training year is 15 days service between 1 April and 31 March (7 in 2020/21 and 10 in 2021/22 to account for Covid) with a parade evening counting as a quarter day.
- Frontline emergency services personnel that have been in paid service, retained or in a voluntary capacity, dealing with emergencies as part of their conditions of service, and have completed five full calendar years of service on 6 February 2022. (A friend of mine received the medal for voluntary service in dog training for Buckinghamshire Search and Rescue Dogs.)
- Prison services personnel who are publicly employed and are regularly exposed to difficult and sometimes emergency situations that have completed five full calendar years of service on 6 February 2022.
- Members of the Royal Household with one year of qualifying service.
- Living individual recipients of the Victoria Cross and George Cross.



For the first time since Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, Canada decided not to produce a Platinum Jubilee Medal. So the provinces of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan instituted a provincial platinum jubilee medal. The Caribbean realms have also instituted platinum medal issuing programmes.



# THE REGIMENT AND THE ORDER OF THE DANNEBROG (DANNEBROGORDENEN)

By John Powell OBE Regimental Secretary PWRR

There is nothing like getting a fast ball from the Association Secretary regarding the Queen's Regimental Association Journal. "John White has written a piece about Jubilee Medals through the ages, and I thought it would be good to have a piece about the Dannebrog – since you have one could you please write an article"? He did say please, and he is a friend (allegedly) so here we are.

The Order of the Dannebrog was instituted by King Christian V of Denmark in 1671 and until 1808, membership was exclusive to around fifty members of noble or royal rank known as the 'White Knights' (distinguishing them from the 'Blue Knights' who were members of the Order of the Elephant). The order is comparable to similar European orders of chivalry with five degrees in three classes (Knight and Knight 1st Class (III Class), Commander and Commander 1st Class (II Class) and Grand Cross. The Grand Cross has an additional, supreme degree of the First Class, the Grand Cross Commander – reserved for persons of princely origin – and two levels of the Grand Cross.

Today the Order of the Dannebrog is used by our Colonel in Chief as a means of honouring and rewarding the faithful servants of Denmark for meritorious civil or military service (a bit like our own Most Excellent Order of the British Empire).



The insignia of the Order is a white enamelled Dannebrog Cross (the lower arm being longer than the others). It has a red enamelled border in silver for knights and for everyone else in gold or silver gilt. The front bears the Royal Cypher of King Christian V in the centre and the motto *Gud og Kongen* (God and the King); on the top is the Royal Cypher of the bestowing monarch and the Danish Crown.

On the reverse are the royal cyphers of King Valdemar II The Victorious, King Christian V and King Frederik VI. The years 1219, 1671 and 1808 refer to the years that they ascended the Throne; the Danish Crown is in each of the



angles of the cross. The ribbon of the Order is white with a red border reflecting Danish national colours.

The insignias of the Order of Dannebrog are:

## First Order Class

Grand Cross Commanders (Royals only) wear the order with diamonds on a necklet or bow (ladies) and a star on the left chest. The number of Grand Cross Commanders is limited to 8 (in addition to members of the Danish Royal Family, only the former King of Greece, Konstantin II and the Kings of Sweden and Norway currently hold this class of the order).

Grand Cross recipients wear the insignia on a collar or on a sash in the same colours as the ribbon from right shoulder to left hip, plus a silver star on the left chest. Very rarely, the breast star can be awarded with diamonds (the only current Grand Cross holder of a breast star with diamonds is Her Majesty's Private Secretary (in Danish: Kabinetssekretær) who was awarded the star with diamonds in 2022 after 15 years of service in the current post).



## Second Order Class:

Commander 1st Class wears a breast cross on the left chest, plus the insignia on a neck ribbon. This class is awarded to the Colonel of the Regiment. The photograph shows Lt Gen Doug Chalmers CB DSO OBE wearing his neck decoration below the CB and the cross on his left breast.

Commanders wear the insignia on a neck ribbon (gentlemen) or on a bow (ladies). This award is awarded to the Regimental Secretary.

## Third Order Class:

Knights 1st Class wear the insignia with a rosette on the ribbon. This award is given to the Deputy Regimental Secretary.

Knights wear the insignia in a ribbon. Knight insignias are of silver, whereas all other degrees' insignias are in gold.



Each Danish ministry has a quota of Knights and Knights 1st class that they may use at their discretion. It is most often given to high-ranking officers of the police, armed forces and emergency services as well as civil servants; in the Armed Forces normally from Lieutenant-Colonel and upwards. Additionally, politicians may receive the award after eight years' service.

The rank of Commander in the armed forces is given from Colonels upwards and 1st Class is given for Admirals, Generals, Supreme-Court judges, senior ambassadors, and other governmental leaders. The rank of Commander can also be awarded to Ministers and other high-ranking officials after long service.

The Grand Cross is most often used for the same cohort as Commander 1st Class but reflects particular meritorious service or achievement (ie Chief of Defence, Prime Minister).

Grand Cross with Breast Star with Diamonds is most often given to high-ranking officers of the Royal Court, such as The Lord Chamberlain (in Danish: *Hofmarskal* (the person who runs the Court) or other very senior members of the Royal Court).

Danish nationals receiving the Order the Dannebrog 'work their way up' the degrees during their careers with strict guidelines as to how long time of service there must be between each possible promotion. It is customary that Danish nationals, after being awarded the Order of the Dannebrog (and each subsequent degree after that) thank Her Majesty the Queen in person in a private audience (the investiture does not necessarily involve Her Majesty).

In addition, the Order of the Dannebrog is often used as a tool of diplomacy and foreign diplomats serving in Denmark can be awarded it. It is not known when the Colonels-in-Chief of the Buffs (East Kent Regiment) and its successors started to be awarded the Dannebrog, but the award was certainly often bestowed on members of the Queen's Own Buffs Regiment and Queen's Regiment by King Frederik IX. Colonel Peter Bishop OBE tells a story from the time when he was a Company Sergeant-Major and King Frederik was to be present at the Trooping of the Colour at Lingfield in 1968:

'The other CSMs played a joke on me as I was the newest and most junior CSM. They convinced me that I was in line to receive a Dannebrog (even though they were certainly not awarded without due consideration – but it was a story I believed). King Frederik came down the line and started to present the medals - one for the RSM, one for the RQMS, one for the senior CSM and being next in line I anticipated the same – however, the King just nodded and moved on. As he moved away the RSM, who was in on the joke, said: "Sorry he gave it to the Station Master at Horsham Station".

Nowadays our Colonel-in-Chief only rewards those in the Regiment who have directly supported Her and Her Military Household (the *Adjutantstab*) in their duties: the Colonel of the Regiment, Regimental Secretary and Deputy Regimental Secretary. There is a good deal of bureaucracy involved and the Danish Government must seek permission from our Foreign Office before the award is made.



Unusually in the modern era, Colonel Mark Rayner was made a Commander of the Order when he was CO 1 PWRR. In July 1996, Princess Diana informed the Regiment that she was stepping down as Colonel-in-Chief. For Mark Rayner, asking HM Queen Margrethe to step up as Colonel-in-Chief was a 'no brainer'. She was already Allied Colonel-in-Chief and had been such a wonderful and gracious Colonel-in-Chief to the Queen's Regiment.

'It fell to 1 PWRR, based in Canterbury, to host Her Majesty, show her around the Battalion and make sure that she was aware that the PWRR was a very impressive regiment, albeit one blessed with humility and understatement consistent with her own values. Her visits combined an immaculate Quarter Guard, short displays of operational capability, time in each mess and meeting families. I think the deal was sealed over lunch in the Officers' Mess. I genuinely believe that Her Majesty enjoyed being back in the fold and the special relationship that a Colonel-in-Chief has with Her Regiment'.

Mark Rayner felt that the awarding of the Commander of Dannebrog occurred both as a result of this engagement and as recognition of the pace of life experienced by 1 PWRR with numerous operational and training deployments as part of 5 Airborne Brigade.

Although the award makes the recipients Danish Knights, the titles are not allowed to be used in this country (foreign Knighthoods were allowed to be styled so, well into the 19th Century) – however, as with any medal awarded for military service, they are worn with pride by recipients who are often asked about them by those from outside the Regiment; "...er, if you don't mind me asking, what's that decoration you are wearing?". If it's me, they will very often get a response that starts with "Prince George of Denmark in 1689 and the Anglo-Danish Alliance saw off the Dutch by marrying him to Queen Anne!...etc"



*My wife and I were fortunate to be invited to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party nearly 20 years ago. On getting through security and into the garden, I saw a recently retired General Officer with whom I'd served as a junior staff officer when he commanded a brigade. He was wearing a top hat and carrying a furred umbrella, standing near the steps leading down onto the lawn. On chatting, he said "Come back and see me after the National Anthem". He turned out to be a Gentleman Usher. The procedure is that the Royal Party comes out onto the terrace at 15.00hrs, the National Anthem is played, and then the Gentlemen Ushers quickly form 3 lanes of the guests from the bottom of the terrace leading across the lawn to the royal tea tent by the lake. The Royals on this occasion were the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and Princess Anne. Within each lane at intervals are placed guests who are to be introduced to the relevant Royal. We ended up placed as the second guests in Her Majesty's Lane. So, we were introduced by my former commander and chatted briefly to the Queen. I don't have a 'selfie' of the occasion, but I do remember briefly discussing regimental amalgamations as we were going through the process of amalgamations announced in 2004.*

John White

# CRUMLIN ROAD PRISON

By Hugh Lohan

Somebody in HQNI decided that the unit located in Queen's Street would provide the quick reaction force (QRF) should there be trouble in Crumlin Road prison. As far as I know, the unit Second-in-Command was always selected as the force leader. The force was drawn from the military and the Belfast police.

The role of the QRF was to respond rapidly to any crisis inside or outside the prison perimeter. The two key men were the Governor and his senior warden, the equivalent of an RSM. The Governor was an experienced prison officer responsible for his men, the welfare of the prisoners and security. The senior warden was in the front line and spent much of his time in the wings supporting his well-trained staff.

Built within a five-sided walled site, the gaol had four wings fanning from a central area known as The Circle. There were several watch towers enclosing the site and one main entrance.

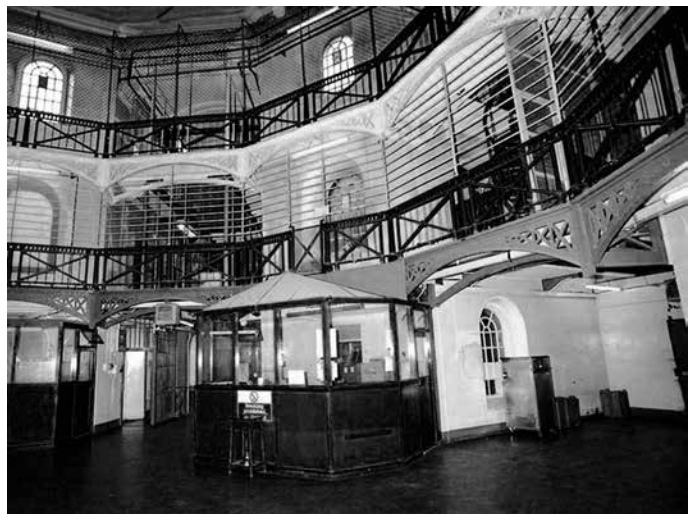
1 QUEENS was posted to Queen's Street twice when the QRF leader was serving. His first visit to the prison was on day one of the posting and thereafter he would visit on a daily basis. I think the battalion took over guard duties on their second day. He inspected the accommodation, the kitchen and the watch towers. The conditions were unacceptable. Looking around the kitchen built into the old stonework, he felt giddy looking at the wall adjacent to the ovens; the wall seemed to be moving. It was a mass of cockroaches. The kitchen was alive with hundreds, maybe thousands of these rather unpleasant insects. It took several days to get the kitchen steam cleaned and clear of all insects.

As for the watch towers, there were no instructions, no comms link, no binos or night sights for day and night, nothing. The military guards were missing an opportunity to gather local Int, look out for the bad boys or covertly take photographs of visitors.

With the support of the Quartermaster, Adjutant and IO everything eventually got sorted out. All the action was with the platoons on the ground and the QRF leader began to feel a bit of a fraud and visiting the troops day or night, yet trying not to get in the way, was not inspiring.

On 25 April 1975, the Ops Room received an order to get the QRF to Crumlin Road prison immediately. On reaching the Circle, the QRF leader met with the Governor, the Senior Warden and two or three of the staff. The inmates of C wing had beaten and tied up the wing's wardens and locked them in a cell. From outside, hoses had been used to try and regain control but to no avail. Then the inmates barricaded the wing entrance door and made their demands. The Governor said that he had lost control and requested the army, as in the standing orders, to take over.

The leader knew from his frequent visits that the upper floor, the third tier, was boarded off because floor by floor all the cells were having new cell doors fitted. If you looked up from the ground floor you could not see the ceiling and the staircase was boarded over at the top level. All the action was on the ground floor. When asked, neither the Governor nor his senior warden knew of any other route onto the top floor. An old, small, wrinkled man, the prison carpenter, standing at the back of the gathering, spoke out. He said there was a way to get there but it was never used. He led the way, and the QRF followed him silently. They eventually emerged through a small door hidden in a corner on the third floor. The handrails lead down to the ground floor. The leader asked the carpenter for two iron bars capable of levering the wooden floor cover blocking the way down. The QRF was poised to attack the rioters. Two rubber bullet gun barrels were on his shoulders and the tension was high. Two strong soldiers took the iron bars when they arrived and on command dug them into the gaps



Crumlin Road prison





and levered the planks up until they snapped. Our leader was armed with a loudspeaker. The prisoners looked up in surprise and the place went silent. Water and broken chairs and tables were scattered around

the ground floor. The prisoners stood there, no movement, no sound. Our boss raised his hand to silence the eager squad behind him. The one-way orders were spoken via the loud hailer.

*"I have a team of soldiers and police behind me. They want to sort you out. I'm not keen about that because a lot of people are going to get hurt. Before we come down, I want you all to lay down your weapons, return to your cells and close the doors. I want one or two of you to stay out and hand over the keys to the cells where the warders are locked up. I do not*

*want to see anyone get hurt. I'm giving you five minutes to think about it and then we're coming down. Your choice."*

We waited quietly at the top. A few of us were disappointed that that there might not be a fight. The prisoners were not stupid, they had made their move, failed and were not keen to face either our soldiers or the ex-B Specials amongst the police.

After five minutes, the team climbed down, took the keys, opened the door to the Circle, filed through it and let the warders get on with the job. The governor thanked everyone and explained that their action had avoided a confrontation between inmates and staff. The working relationship had not been destroyed by violence.

*(Ed: as a footnote, WO2 Vic Ebbens, while on duty at the prison discovered a tunnel that was being dug by the inmates, thus preventing an embarrassing escape attempt.)*



Vic Ebbens in the Crumlin Road prison tunnel

# ODE TO A SOLDIER

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by Frank Harrington

*We were sent to restore some peace to a land,  
Where bitterness ruled and religion was grand.  
Catholics and Protestants, two different sides,  
At each other's throats they could not abide.  
For centuries they fought all over religion,  
Seems silly now as no one now listens.  
The soldiers they came to patrol all the streets,  
No rest did they get, forever on feet.  
Both sides waged war they all lived in fear.  
Shootings and killings over the years.  
But the soldiers continued, their lives on the line,  
To separate these factions, the government said fine.  
The first soldier was killed, a land he knew not.  
Easy to say now, but readily forgot.  
And so it continued, year after year.  
Everyone living their lives in fear  
The cities burn, the streets are not safe.  
But the soldiers continue patrolling in haste.  
Fifty years gone, in the blink of an eye.  
The soldier is old and ready to die.  
For him the memories are still in his head,  
He's had his day, let's put this to bed.  
The government have now called him to task,  
To question his duty, in days of the past.  
They hound and persecute, a job he did well,  
But the government say, send them to hell.  
The soldier is old and very grey.  
No time for this rubbish, the soldiers will say.  
They sent us to do a job to the end.  
Our brains are mixed up, so when will it end?*



# IT WASN'T JUST US

By Alasdair Goulden

I received this letter from Tesha Kane following a meeting with her husband at a Regimental fundraiser and think it important that I share it. The 1000lb bomb that so badly affected Tesha's life exploded on 14 June 1985 on Chichester Street, Belfast where The Law Courts, The Police and Fire Station and various buildings where political leaders congregated were located. By sharing her story, I hope it gives her some peace.

*Dear Major Goulden,*

*I would like to introduce myself; you met my husband at a recent regimental event. The thing that struck me when he told me about you describing your new book, 'The Longest Stag', was how you said the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland was a WAR! I grew up in that war, it was all I knew for the twenty years I was there, and my father was in the RUC for over thirty years, which was a very strange thing. Unlike school friends, I could never tell anyone what he did for a living to put food on the table and provide clothes etc. for his family.*

*I am fifty-four years old, and this story happened when I was just 17 and working in Scottish Legal Life Insurance Society, in Chichester Street, in the centre of Belfast. I have lots of similar experiences and I would like to one day write a book. My parents think it won't be able to be printed for various reasons, but I think the main reason they say this, is that the fear of still living in Northern Ireland, means that for them and many people there, the troubles are still not over. They, like a lot of other NI people, just want to enjoy the ocean, the hills and mountains, the coasts and all the beauty that NI has to offer, not just its 'past'. However, for me the past is not yet passed. I am aware that these experiences and growing up surrounded and immersed in a war, has had a massive detrimental effect on me as a human being and as a woman, a wife, and a mother.*

*Recently I was returning from a hospital appointment, I drove over a ladder that had fallen off a van on the M25 and had to stop and call the emergency services to clear it and check for damage to my car. It brought what I am about to share with you back to life for me.*

*As I waited on the embankment above the road and my car, the sound, the vibration of the trucks going over the metal repeatedly, brought lots of memories flooding through my mind, firing my amygdala (an amygdala hijack is an emotional response that is immediate, overwhelming, and out of measure with the actual stimulus because it has triggered a much more significant emotional threat.), sending cortisol flooding through my body. I remembered a similar cowering body position. I remembered smaller details of the soldier who saved my life the day of the bomb.*

*I answered the phone to someone claiming to be from the IRA who gave a warning of a 1000lb bomb in a white transit van parked at the side of our building. I remembered the incredulous look on the soldier's face when I walked out the side door of the building where I worked. I had been sent to retrieve various documents and money and put them in the bomb proof safe - yes there was one of those - before I left by that side door. I remembered walking past the white transit van parked outside the window. This was next to the side door, a few feet from the window beside the switchboard where I had just answered the call, now knowing that contrary to my boss telling me it was a hoax, that there was in fact a one-thousand-pound bomb sitting in it about to explode. According to the IRA terrorist whom I had spoken to just twenty-three minutes before, we had twenty-five minutes to evacuate the building. The next thing I knew was that same young soldier, who was shocked at my sudden appearance, as he thought the building was empty, grabbed me by the shoulders and with his heavy gear ran with me up the middle of Chichester Street. We were suddenly down on the ground, him shielding me with his body, before the explosion shook every single cell in my body. I remember how he smelt, thinking he must be as scared as I was.*

*As I write this, I am thinking how he was only a few years older than me and how I would love to find that soldier and to thank him for saving my life. I would like to say how I appreciate him escorting me, a trembling, slim, wet behind the ears, snotty teenager to where the rest of my work colleagues were waiting. I would like to tell him how many different*



types of therapy I have utilised since then to help me reprocess that terrible atrocity, which has since been diagnosed as PTSD. I wish I had had the time to ask him his name, ask him did he have family back home, somewhere in the land known to me, a naive country girl, as the 'mainland'.

All I could do however in that instant was cry, have an asthma attack, take my inhaler, breathe and watch as the group of people I worked with started discussing where they could get a cup of tea. I remember thinking what on earth are you all talking about? Have you not seen all this glass from the windows that have been blown to shit?! My mum was there, she was in fact one of the work colleagues separated from me during the evacuation process. She was trying to work out how we were going to get home, a mere six miles away, surrounded by fields, trees, birdsong, the little river I played in as a kid, building dens and warming up pots of baked beans in an old pot she had given me. Where there was birdsong and a fruit and vegetable garden, where we grew everything you could eat. Looking back, I don't know where her mind took her, but I like to think it was of memories of us all picking and shelling peas or making raspberry or loganberry jam from our abundance of canes, only just removed last year.

As I write this, I realise these memories are ingrained in the same cells that were shook up the other day by the incident on the M25 which took me back to that day. I am a woman in my fifties, with complex traumatic memories that have, as time has gone on, been attributed as a contributory factor to my facial paralysis. I wonder why these close encounters with death keep occurring, whether on some level I call these events and experiences in, or whether as my husband puts it, gives me material for a book! Who knows?

What I do know is that complex trauma is like the title suggests and extremely complex.

Having spoken with you I know that it was not your regiment there on that day and that soldier who saved my life maybe cannot be thanked personally. I wish I could tell his family how brave he was, how quickly he moved me despite my being in terrible shock because if I could, perhaps I could get some closure. What I can do however, is express my never-ending gratitude to all the soldiers who put their own lives on the line, making us feel safer, and helping to maintain some order and sanity during the chaotic and violent years that they served in Northern Ireland.

Tesha Kane (Name changed to maintain anonymity).

## **Women drivers! A WRAC confesses**

*During annual camp in sunny Sennybridge, WRAC Michele Payne was driving a 4-ton truck to the ranges. I was in the front meant to be navigating but, in our case, this consisted mostly of nattering. Suddenly I saw this sign for a village called Halfway, which came as a big shock. The more I thought the more I became more geographically bemused. Then my training kicked-in and thought we'd better consult the 1:50,000 map! Our nattering had placed us down in the bottom left-hand corner of the map, some considerable way past the ranges. Needless to say, we did get there eventually and no-one was any the wiser. I admit this crime now, as I feel confident that I can't be put on a charge anymore! Gender stereotyping is of course a topic for discussion elsewhere...*

Rosie Potts



# 1572 AND ALL THAT

By Jonathon Riley

In my last article on the early origins of the Regiment (2021 Soldiers of the Queen's Journal) I explained the general inaccuracy around the origins of the 2nd, or Queen's Royal Regiment being dated as 14 October 1661. In this article I fear I must now disappoint those who think that the 3rd, or Buffs, originated in 1572. Much of the trouble originates from ill-researched statements like this one:

*The 3rd Foot . . . received its warrant from King Charles II on 31st May, 1665, as 'Our Holland Regiment of Foot'. Its officers and men were exiles from Holland, where four English Regiments had been employed as mercenaries since 1595, having been then in the service of the Queen [ie Elizabeth I]. They had expanded from a company of privateers raised by a Captain Thomas Morgan on the occasion of a review of the Trained Bands of London, held by Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich on May 1st 1572.*

This paragraph is the work of the first historian of The Queen's Regiment, Gregory Blaxland. In it, there is one correct statement – that the 3rd Foot was raised on 31 May 1665. The rest is a series of misconceptions, for which Blaxland is not responsible, but which he has unfortunately repeated. The result is a piece of historical fiction based on poor scholarship. The object of this short article is to unpick that fiction and show from historical sources what is, in fact, true.

In 1665, England was at war with the Dutch – a war for which Charles II needed troops. Like many monarchs of the day, Charles had troops available in foreign service. These troops were paid for by the host nation but were liable to recall if their own country needed them; they were also likely to be experienced soldiers, unlike raw levies raised at home. In this case, Charles had four regiments available in the Netherlands: the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th English Regiments, which had been formed in 1593, 1599, 1605 and 1616 respectively – Blaxland's first error is that of dating and his second is that the men were not exiles, but volunteers who remained English subjects.

Both Ringoir and the Victorian historian Richard Cannon then further mislead scholars by stating that either one regiment was recalled, or that the four were reduced to one. The Buffs' own historian, HR Knight, is very clear about this error:

*Mr Cannon has fallen into the popular error, that the English troops in the Netherlands were in 1653 reduced to one regiment, which was then redesignated the 'Holland Regiment' and that it was recalled, as a regiment, by Charles II in 1664 . . . the archives both at the Records Office [now the National Archives] in London and at the Rijks Archief at the Hague, show conclusively that there were four English regiments in the service of the Netherlands until the late autumn of 1664 when they were disbanded . . . for refusing to forswear their allegiance to Charles II . . .*



Musketeers by De Gheyn

An analysis of those who returned in 1664/5 shows that officers and men drawn from all four regiments were drafted into the new Holland Regiment, then the 4th Foot as it ranked below the Admiral's Regiment. Others were drafted into the Admiral's or sought places in the Guards and elsewhere. Those who returned did so at some personal risk, leaving their livelihoods and faced with the possibility of service against their former masters – with no mercy likely to be shown if they were taken captive. However, no complete formed body was transferred and thus there was no institutional continuity – and it is institutional continuity through amalgamation which establishes the dates of origin of regiments. It is also clear that many of the English did not return but were retained in one regiment by the Dutch under the command of Colonel Thomas Dolman – and it was Dolman who led the attack on Landguard Fort in Essex in 1667.

31 May 1665 is therefore a reliable date. Let us next turn to the question of the origins of the four English regiments. These all began to coalesce after 1572 –

and the point about 1572 was that it marked the start of unofficial English involvement in the Netherlands. So far from being at War with the Netherlands at that time – as opposed to 1664/5 – Protestant England was facing the enmity of Catholic Spain – the superpower of the day. So, too, was the young nation of the Netherlands which was fighting a war of eighty years to gain its independence. For the English government, the powerful Spanish Army in the Netherlands, the striking force of the Spanish Empire 50,000 strong, posed a threat that lay only 100 miles from London. Anything that would tie down this threat was of use to the English government, which believed that confrontation was inevitable sooner or later. Various bodies of mercenaries were therefore given the nod. The first of these was a company of 300 volunteers mustered at



Greenwich by Captain Thomas Morgan, many of them veterans of fighting in Ireland or France. The most important contemporary sources on this subject are Walter Morgan, and Sir Roger Williams, who gives the date of the muster as April 1572 – in other words, the men had left England before any muster of the Train Bands in May – more of which later. Morgan's company returned to England in 1574 after only eighteen months' service. Other companies came and went; some changed sides – like Sir Roger Williams himself. The picture is one of groups of mercenaries, sometimes called English regiments, coming and going year by year. No continuity from 1572 here.

The situation changed after 1585 when the English government's policy changed to one of official intervention. This eventually provoked the Spanish to send the Armada in 1588. But it is from after this date that the four English regiments began to take the form in which they existed in 1664.

Finally, then, what of the Train Bands? In parallel with the unofficial intervention in the Netherlands, the English government began to reform the militia, the oldest and biggest part of its military establishment and one in which service was, for most adult males, compulsory. To face an invasion by the Spanish Army, the Militia – also known locally and especially in London as the Train Bands – would have to be re-armed and re-trained. The muster of the London Militia in May 1572 was part of a nation-wide review. It took place after the departure of Morgan's volunteers – and in any case, militia men were exempted from foreign service by law – it lasted a few days and at the end of it, the men went back to their homes and their trades until the next call-out for training.

In conclusion, the Buffs own historian, HR Knight, had it right all along – the 3rd Foot dates from 1665. That is history. The rest is myth.

<sup>1</sup> Gregory Blaxland, *A Guide to The Queen's Regiment* (privately published by the Regiment, 1967, p. 7 – 8).

<sup>2</sup> See the account by H. Ringoir, *Hoofdofficieren Der Infanterie Van 1568 Tot 1813* (Netherlands, 1981), no page numbering.

<sup>3</sup> H.R. Knight, *Historical Records of the Buffs, Vol. I* (Aldershot, 1905), p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> For a complete analysis see J.P. Riley 'Continuity in the English Army, 1658 – 1668'. M.A thesis, Leeds University, 1989. See also Knight, p. 510 – 511; and Charles Dalton, *English Army Lists and Commission Registers 1661 - 1685*, Vol. I (London, 1892), p. 50.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Roger Williams (ed D.W. Davies), *The Actions of the Low Countries* (reprinted from the original in New York, 1964), pp. I, xi. See also Walter Morgan's MS, edited by Duncan Caldecot-Baird, *The Expedition in Holland 1572 – 1574* (reprinted from the original in London, 1976), p. 1; also R.B. Wernham, *Before the Armada* (London, 1966), p. 299.

<sup>6</sup> Morgan, p.3.

<sup>7</sup> Williams, p. ix – xi.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Queen Elizabeth's Declaration of 1572 in the Harleian MSS, no. 309, f. 171 (British Library, London).





# 3<sup>RD</sup> BATTALION IN UKRAINE

By Kevin Midmore

When the Russian military first started to mass on the border with Ukraine at the beginning of the year, I like many others was shocked and saddened. Pictures and news footage of hundreds of tanks and military vehicles, tens of thousands of military personnel, aircraft, helicopters all built up along hundreds of miles of frontage and all possibly heading for strategic towns, cities and of course the capital Kyiv. Most of us thought it was Putin putting on a show of strength to show NATO he did not like the idea of Ukraine joining the organisation, and to try to frighten Ukraine into doing as it was told. But in the back of our minds many wondered whether it was indeed just a show of strength or indeed something more sinister.

We all found that out on 24 February 2022 when they crossed the border and invaded Ukraine. The world watched as Russian artillery and aircraft relentlessly bombed towns, cities, schools and any civilian targets they could try to get Ukraine to submit quickly. Millions of women and children were being forced to flee their homes across the borders as Russian soldiers entered their homes, raping, killing, looting and destroying everything in their path.

Putin and his cronies thought this would all be over in a matter of a couple of weeks as the mighty Red Army showed its strength. Little did they realise that the Ukrainian president and his people had a very different idea. They were going to fight to the bitter end, every last man to defend their country from these unwelcome invaders and show the world what true courage and resolve they had.

As I watched the heart-breaking footage of women and children leaving their husbands and fathers behind to head across the border to the relative safety of the makeshift refugee camps being built, I wondered what I could do to help. I then decided I was going to hire a large van, fill it with as much aid as I could and head to the Ukraine/Polish border to deliver everything that I could manage to muster.

I put a cry for help out onto Facebook and other social media platforms asking if anybody could donate anything from nappies/sanitary items etc to dried food, pushchairs, literally anything that could help a family who had nothing left. The response was phenomenal.

I had offers from everywhere, first-aid items, brand new children's clothes, toiletries by the box load, all being delivered to my home or for me to collect. I knew right there and then that I was now 100% going to go.

I knew that due to the distance, and also that I would be driving through several countries with thousands of pounds worth of humanitarian aid, that it would be safer to do this with somebody else and not alone, I therefore phoned a lifelong friend and brother Damon Warren (Wozza), with whom in 1986 I actually joined the Army and in particular the 3rd Battalion. We had served together in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Portugal amongst other places and remained very good friends ever since. *"Wozza, I'm going to hire a van and drive to the Ukraine border to drop some aid off within the next 2-3 weeks, do you fancy coming?" "I'm in" he replied in a heartbeat, "and "I've got a van so let's start filling it as soon as possible."* Great I thought, the trip is on.

Over the next couple of weeks, both of us worked relentlessly to collect, pack, and itemise boxes and boxes of kit and started to load it on the van. We had so much stuff coming in that we didn't think we would fit it all in, but we squeezed and pushed into every crevice and that was it. The van was loaded, we were booked onto the ferry, we had all the information and directions we required to drop this large van load off to the refugee centre near the Polish border; we were going tomorrow.

We had been given some very good information and tips from two other ex-3rd Battalion guys who had come back a week before from helping out with the medical side of things at the main warehouse on the Ukraine/Poland border. Ian Stacey and Graham Monks had spent time helping out with the refugees so gave us some very valuable information which we were very grateful for, plus they gave us some humanitarian aid high vis jackets they had to help us get through customs etc. I also had some large magnetic signs made for the van stating we were carrying humanitarian aid.

We set off on a late-night ferry and took turns driving the mammoth trip from Dunkirk to Prsemsyl in Poland, stopping short of the border at approx 1800 the next day to get a good night's sleep, a shower and some food. We booked into the hotel and got to sleep ready for the next day and the last few miles to the border. However, the

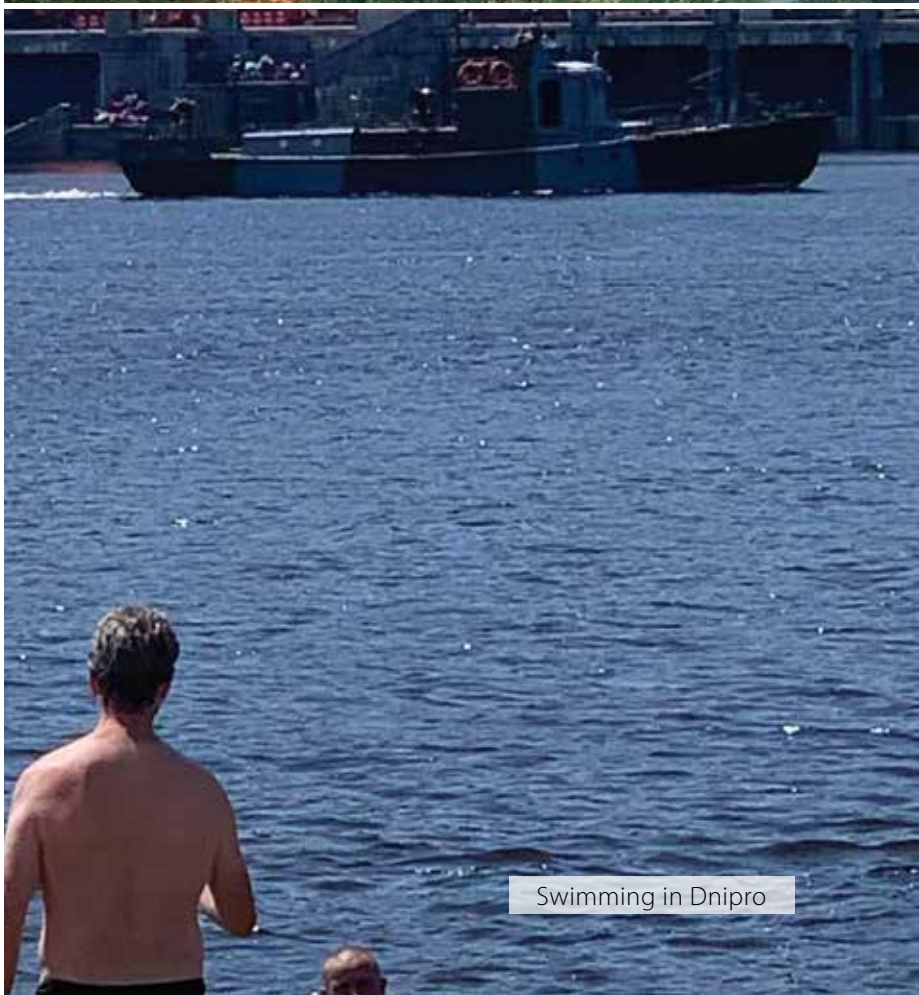




Unloading supplies in Lviv



Kyiv shelling



Swimming in Dnipro



The Legion

Soldiers of The Queen's 2022 | 23





whole concept of this trip had now changed slightly. As we were driving through Germany, Wozza with a big grin on his face said *"Kev, how do you feel about going actually into Ukraine and not*

*just to the border?"* *"Yep, all good with me"* I replied as quickly as he had to my initial question about going a couple of weeks before. Wozza had contacted somebody from Ukraine who told us that the stuff we had on board would be needed more urgently in Lviv if we could get it there, so that was it, we were going to Lviv.

The next morning nice and fresh, fed and excited, we set off again and in no time at all we were at the border, a few checks of passport, vehicle documents etc and we were on our way, sandbagged military checkpoints, army personnel, and the odd military vehicle were scattered along the route into Lviv, all of them waving us through in Wozza's big white van with English number plates and two smiling guys on a new adventure. We reached our destination on the outskirts of Lviv, a military depot, and were greeted by a team of very happy Ukrainian soldiers, both men and women who helped us unload the van in no time. Hugs all round, a few pictures taken, a few gifts exchanged then we were off, not back home but we wanted to stay in a hotel in Lviv for the night as time was getting on, so we headed into Lviv itself. We parked up the van and headed into the city centre to look for somewhere to stay. No such luck, every single hotel was full of the press, Sky News, CNN vans were everywhere. Oops, where are we going to sleep? The curfew was starting soon so we couldn't drive far, so back we went to the van to sit and think. It was whilst we were sitting in the van trying to sort things out that the first air raid sirens started. Ukraine was under attack yet again from long-range missiles.

Then we got the call from one of the Ukrainians who said we could stay with his brother a short drive from Lviv on the road to Belarus, so again off we went. We found the house in the middle of nowhere eventually, after driving in the dark and during the curfew, but we were here and were made so welcome. Food came by the truck load; we were stuffed full and knackered. It had been a long day. We experienced a few more air raids during the night so sleep was limited and then it was up early and off, saying our goodbyes to our amazing hosts, a couple in their late 60s who had given us so much food and a bed for the night to say thank you for helping Ukraine.

We headed back to the border and home. We had done it; we had delivered some very much needed humanitarian

aid right into Ukraine and were now heading home, talking about the fact that if only the van had been full of military kit and first-aid kit for the front line instead of just the humanitarian stuff! Shall we, can we? I think we both knew even before we were home that we would be going back, and this time further and loaded with stuff completely differently from before.

The planning started not long after we got home. We both put a shout out again, this time asking for any old military clothing people still had in their lofts etc, boots, sleeping bags, first aid items, plus individual soldier boxes to give to the guys and girls fighting on the front. Again, the kit came flooding in from all sides, ex-Queensmen or those that had served with us, civilian friends, it kept coming. I had a couple of fantastic cash donations as well to help with the fuel costs as these were huge, costing Wozza and myself well over a thousand pound each in fuel alone for the trips, which came out of our own pockets, so the cash donations were very gratefully received too.

I managed to secure a large quantity of batteries for drones etc plus a great deal of medical kit, dozens of sets of old combats, boots etc. We had large vehicle camouflage nets, water jerry cans, Celox, hundreds of sets of military clothing, 50 plus pairs of boots, head torches, batteries, food for the soldiers and so much more, we were loaded up again and we were going again.

The trip out to Ukraine was pretty much the same as before all the way into the base in Lviv where we dropped our first load. We dropped off approximately half of what we had on the van here, as it was going to a different area of the fighting. It was good to see some of the same faces again. There was a large parcel for us from one of the soldiers from before who was now fighting in Donbas; he had put together a collection of gifts from military patches, T-shirts and some newly released and already very sought-after Ukrainian stamps that had been released to commemorate the Snake Island episode. What a fantastic gesture from a guy going to fight who still had time to think of us. We said our goodbyes and then after a night in a very nice hotel on the outskirts of Lviv, we headed further east towards Kyiv to our next destination, a training camp for the foreign fighters, called 'The Legion'. Again, we were greeted with open arms. These fighters were desperate for kit, especially clothing, so when we opened the doors of the van and started giving these brave men and women camouflage clothing, army boots, knee pads, personal first-aid kits (containing celox/tourniquet/chest seal etc), they were buzzing. Some had only just returned from fighting and said this was going to make the world of





Avostal

difference to them. We gave them all personal soldiers boxes containing washing kit/toothbrushes/coffee/sweets etc), just something personal for them. Again, it was hugs all round, a few photographs and we were again off, this time to the capital Kyiv. We arrived in Kyiv a few hours later and were lucky to find a hotel with rooms available within a short time, so we booked in and settled in for a couple of well-deserved beers and a meal.

The van had been playing up and was very sluggish, so Wozza was planning on getting it looked at through one of the many contacts he had now managed to get within Ukraine. The news wasn't good, the turbo on the van was gone, the cooler was knackered, and the van was off the road until the bits arrived from Poland, something that could take a while considering we were in a war zone and fuel was being rationed, so for now we were stranded in Kyiv. We spent the next few days having a good look around this beautiful and amazing city. A good majority of the shops were open, the bars were operating, and people were trying to get on with their lives as best they could. The air raids were quite regular with at least half a dozen a day, but again these became the norm, and we, like everyone else, just carried on with what we were doing, from walking around Freedom Square to sipping a cold beer behind the anti-tank structures scattered everywhere.

The weather was good so while we waited for news on the van we decided to take a trip to the Dnipro River, a river with so much history. The Germans struggled to cross it in WW2 and now the Russians were also having huge problems trying to cross it, getting destroyed at

every attempt, losing men, weapons and equipment in the fast-flowing depths.

The locals were fishing trying to catch something to eat, and it seemed peaceful for now so we decided we were going to cool off in the scorching heat and go for a dip. So, we did just that and stripped off to just our pants and jumped in to some smiles and looks from all those around us - tattooed Brits swimming whilst a Ukrainian boat with 2 x 50 calibre guns mounted sails past us. We knew we were relatively safe as the beach was full of locals doing the same. When in Rome etc!

We heard that the van was still several days away from being fixed so a decision had to be made. I was starting a brand-new job in a few days' time back in the UK as Site Manager for a large construction company, a big promotion for me that I had been waiting for. Did I call and say I'd be late for my first day, or did I try to get out of Dodge? I did the latter. I decided that I was going to try to make my way back, after all we had delivered the vast amount of equipment we had taken to the heart of where it was needed, and it was now being used on the front line.

We had been asked if we wanted to go to a training camp similar to the one to where we had delivered the second drop. Wozza decided he was going to stay and wait for the van as it was his, and I decided to get home so that I could start my new job. This was not as easy as I first thought. The train lines were out of action from Kyiv to Poland as the tracks were mined in case the Russians got close again, plus parts of the track were still damaged from the previous attack before they were



forced to retreat, therefore a train journey was out. It was going to have to be a 15-hour trip by bus from Kyiv to Warsaw, and not on a luxury coach either.

I managed to book the bus very easily to be fair and arranged it for the next day. I told Wozza I was going to head back as I couldn't afford to muck up my new job before I had even started. A big factor behind the reason I decided to start heading back to the UK was that we were planning on bringing a British guy back with us in the van who had been fighting for the Legion and had simply run out of money, so Wozza was not going to be on his own and was going to have company and a wingman on the way back.

The next day, after saying my goodbyes to everyone we had met and helped, I packed a small bag with some souvenirs I had collected and headed to the bus station. The remaining kit was going to be staying with Wozza in Kyiv and finally head home with the van. After a two-hour delay and no communication as I could not understand Ukrainian tannoy announcements, the bus arrived, and we loaded up. It was packed with women and children, a few pets and bags of belongings and we headed out of Kyiv on the journey to Warsaw. It was not an easy or comfortable trip, 15 hours packed onto an old bus with no air conditioning or suspension by the feel of things as we bumped and bounced our way along the same route the Russian tanks were on a few weeks before.

We finally arrived in Warsaw after what seemed an eternity and a two-hour delay at the border making sure only legitimate people were leaving Ukraine. Two men, approx 40 years old, were escorted off the bus at the border at gunpoint and taken away so obviously not allowed to leave. I got a taxi from the bus station to the airport then boarded a plane to Eindhoven which I was able to book at the last minute; then a plane from Eindhoven to Stansted and I was back in the UK at last. I had been awake and travelling for nearly 30 hours by the time I got back home, but I was back in time to start my new job. I was home and could start to reflect on the trip and see what I could do in the UK to help Wozza to get back as quickly as possible.

I immediately started to look at collecting more equipment for the next trip. Wozza, with the van fixed, was heading home and bringing Ben back with him, so it had all worked out well in the end.

With us both back in the UK and both back at work, we are now planning the next trip, but it may be a while. None of this would have been possible without the fantastic help from all those who donated tons of gear, cash to help with the fuel and even just a pat on the back and a few kind words. It all made so much difference so a huge heartfelt thank you to everyone. We will keep the good name and reputation of The Queen's Regiment with us again on any future trips and hope that our little help makes a difference, no matter how small.

Slava Ukraini!



Kev with a tank

# 8<sup>TH</sup> QUEEN'S FUSILIERS

By Les Vial



WO2 (CSM) Les Vial B  
(Albuhera) Company  
Cyprus, 1991

In March 1984, the Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Michael Heseltine MP stood up in the House of Commons to announce the Government's plans to enhance the UK's Reserve Forces. With regard to the Territorial Army, he announced a commitment to expand it to a strength of 86,000 by 1990.

Although final details

had yet to be decided, six new infantry battalions were to be formed, in North Yorkshire and Cleveland; Yorkshire; Greater Manchester and Cheshire; Devon and Cornwall; Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire and one in Greater London.

At the time, there were two TA infantry battalions based entirely in London - 4th (V) Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets and 10th (V) Battalion, The Parachute Regiment. There were also five infantry companies detached from their parent battalions within London District. B (Albuhera) Company based at Edgware and Hornsey and D (Tangier) Company at Sutton and Camberwell were both part of 6/7 (V) QUEENS whose headquarters was at Horsham in Sussex. C (City of London Company, The Royal City of London Fusiliers) Company were part of 5 RRF whose headquarters was in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. G (London Scottish) Company 1/51 (Highland) Volunteers were based in Perth and D (London Irish Rifles) of the 4th Battalion, The Royal Irish Rangers (North Irish Militia) had their headquarters in Ballymena.

All the parent battalions (less 10 PARA) were asked to consider raising the new London TA Battalion by creating new units and/or expanding their existing strength. All declined with the exception of 6/7 QUEENS and 5 RRF. Both RHQs and HQ Queen's Division suggested that a logical step to retain the cap badge presence of the respective regiments in London was to form a new battalion that would be dual cap-badged.

It was decided to form the new battalion by the transfer en bloc of B Company 6/7 QUEENS (Edgware and

Hornsey) and C Company 5 RRF (Balham) to the new battalion along with the Camberwell based platoon of D Company 6/7 QUEENS. A new BHQ and HQ Company were to be raised at the recently renovated TA Centre at 27 St John's Hill, Clapham.

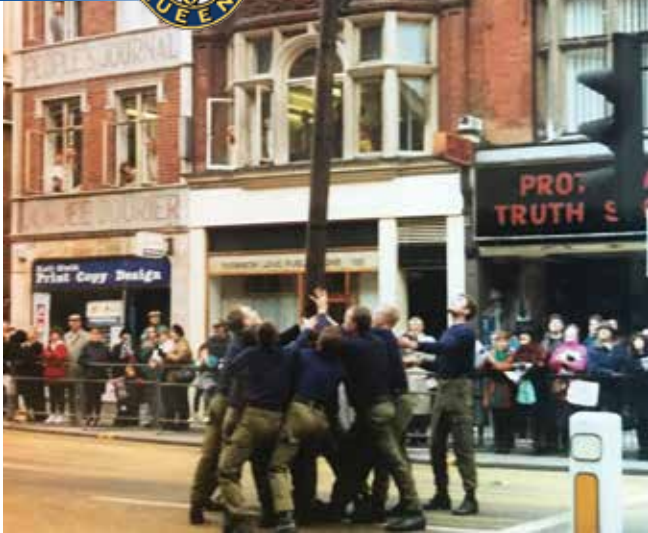
The new battalion was to be known as the 8th (Volunteer) Battalion, The Queen's Fusiliers (City of London). The battalion was to be effective from 1st April 1986 with the creation of a cadre that was established at St John's Hill with a small staff of both Regulars and Volunteers. Within the Army List it was listed as the 8th Battalion, The Queen's Regiment.

To fill the voids that would be left by the transfer of the two rifle companies to the new battalion scheduled for 1988, a new rifle company was formed by 6/7 QUEENS at Brighton, to be known as B (Somme) Company and a new company in 5 RRF by expanding the rifle platoon based at Sparkbrook, Birmingham. The transfer of the Camberwell-based platoon from D Company 6/7 QUEENS was made good by the creation of a new 12 Platoon at Sutton.

On 16th May 1988 - Albuhera Day (a common battle honour for both Regiments) 8 Queen's Fusiliers was officially formed with a parade at BHQ at Clapham. Symbolically, the three rifle companies marched on to the MT square from three different directions. The rifle companies were now to be known as A (High Wood) Company, B (Albuhera) Company and C (City of London Fusiliers) Company. The existing HQ Company was to be known as HQ (Gazala) Company as a nod to the former occupants of the TA Centre at St John's Hill, the 23rd London Regiment (42nd Royal Tank Regiment). The battalion's first Honorary Colonel was Sir Greville Spratt GBE TD DL and a former Mayor of London.

8QF was assigned a BAOR role as the Nuclear Artillery Security Battalion to provide escort and close defence of the MGM72 Lance Missile Batteries of 50 Missile Regiment, Royal Artillery which was based in Menden, West Germany. Each rifle section in 8QF was mounted in a 3/4 ton Landrover with trailer and assigned to protect the US-designed M752 tracked missile launcher. This autonomy placed extra pressure on the section commanders. The tactical nuclear warheads for the Lance missiles were held in custody by the US Army and in time of war would be collected and delivered to 50





Pte. Dylan Jones climbing the pole



The MGM72 Lance Missile



City of London  
Flag



Slip on shoulder slide



Formation Parade. The CO Lt Col Nick Brunt talking to a soldier of B (Albuhera Company) with Maj Derrick Harwood and WO1 (RSM) George France



The Log Display Team provided by B (Albuhera) Company 8th Queen's Fusiliers

Missile by 8th Transport Regiment (Weapons Support Group) Royal Corps of Transport based at Munster.

On the weekend of 24-26 June 1988, the battalion exercised with 151 Transport Regiment (V) which entailed a 100-mile convoy escort phase, one of the key elements of the battalion's war role. In July, the battalion attended its first annual camp at Sennybridge in Wales. The camp was primarily devoted to cadre training as the Battalion needed many specialists such as signallers and medics.

Camp was also an opportunity for the two cap badges to begin to gel. Although A and B Company were badged Queen's and C Company badged Fusiliers,

soldiers joining HQ Company could be badged to either regiment if they expressed a preference, if not, then roughly every third recruit through the door was badged a Fusilier. There was the usual inter-company rivalry with the added element of inter-regimental rivalry.

At this camp, both the Officers Mess and the WO's and Sgt's Mess were committed to making the dual identity work and as a result there were no real issues. The battalion identity was later promoted with an issue of slip-on cloth shoulder slides bearing 'QUEENS FUSILIERS' and soon after a unique regimental tie of dark blue and claret with thin stripes of gold and silver was procured. Plans were made to adopt a battalion stable belt in



Officers and SNCOs of B (Albuhera) Company 8th Queen's Fusiliers  
at Armoury House 21st May 1990.

Back row SSgt John Tilbury ACC; Sgt Andy Reid; WO2 Dave Saunders; WO2 (CSM) Les Vial; WO2 (SPSI) 'Fritz' Albrecht; CSgt Eggy Hunte; Sgt Ned Kelly; Sgt John Turness. Front Row; OCdt Mike Flynn; Lt Oliver King; Maj Kwame Carter; Capt Peter Sibbald and Lt Ian Nickels.

the colours of the regimental tie but sadly this did not materialise.

An application for the battalion to be issued with Colours in the near future was refused by the Ministry of Defence on the grounds that it was unacceptable to have the regimental badges of both The Queen's Regiment and The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers on a regimental colour. Strangely, this policy was reversed when the London Regiment was presented with Colours in 1997 and all four cap badges were represented.

Nevertheless, the battalion went from strength to strength and its next camp at Thetford in 1989 saw the battalion beginning to practise their new role including convoy drills, close defence, anti-ambush drills, vehicle cam and concealment and night navigation. A platoon of RA detachment commanders and soldiers from 50 Missile joined 8QF to exercise with the battalion.

In November 1989, 8QF attracted much media attention during the Lord Mayor's Show in London. 24 soldiers from B (Albuhera) Company formed a unique 'Log Display Team' carrying two ex-British Telecom telegraph poles the whole of the six-mile route, pausing every so often to raise the pole vertically to allow a soldier to shin up to the pole and spreadeagle himself on the top. This was loved by the outside broadcast director of the BBC who cut back to the lads doing their thing several times for the TV coverage. Nowadays 'Elf and Safety' would probably prevent such a display. This memorable demonstration

of teamwork, athleticism and strength made 10 PARA and the Royal Marine Reserves very envious, and they never quite lived this down.

On 21st May 1990, the battalion was honoured by the City of London with a freedom march from the Honourable Artillery Company HQ at Armoury House to the Guildhall. The parade gave the battalion the opportunity to exercise both The Queen's Regiment and The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers privileges to march through the City of London with drums beating and bayonets fixed; sadly for the reasons stated above no Colours were flying.

Two hundred and forty soldiers were on parade with the Corps of Drums of 1 QUEENS and the St George's Band of the RRF. The march culminated in a lavish luncheon at the Guildhall as guests of the Lord Mayor and his Aldermen. The luncheon was made memorable by a rendition of the National Anthem by the CQMS of C Company. The 'adoption' of the battalion by the Corporation of London saw the issue of a City of London flag worn on the upper left arm in Number Two Dress.

In 1990 Lt Col Nick Brunt handed over command to Lt Col Peter McLelland (2 QUEENS) and WO1 George France handed over to WO1 Dave Parr from 3 QUEENS. The same year, the battalion finally exercised with 50 Missile Regiment in Germany with the first week of annual camp – Exercise 'First Chance' was devoted to a 5-day exercise to practise the war role. B (Albuhera) Company under Maj Kwame Carter were detached to come under operational





command of the Gunners whilst A (High Wood) and 'C' (City of London Fusiliers) companies provided the enemy Fantasian special forces.

The enemy's task was made more difficult as 50 Missile were dispersed over a large area. As one of the Soviets key targets in 1 (BR) Corps, 50 Missile would change the location of its launchers every 12-24 hours to occupy new pre-prepared positions that included timber yards, farm outbuildings, retail parks and other places. The exercise was a great success, and the battalion received many plaudits from 50 Missile. The best received was that many of the junior ranks of 50 Missile thought that 8QF was another regular unit, although depending on who you spoke to they were either regular Queensmen or regular Fusiliers...

The second week of camp saw the battalion move to Vogelsang to conduct field firing on the extensive ranges there. However, the second week ran less smoothly as the sponsorship and administration of 1 Armoured Division was lost on their deployment to the Gulf on Operation DESERT SHIELD.

The following year, 1991, a composite company of 120 officers and soldiers, went to Bloodhound Camp, Cyprus for annual camp. Here the company undertook field firing, adventure training, amphibious landings and FIBUA exercises. Whilst here, Pte Adrian Mullen of B (Albuhera) Company was bitten by a venomous Montpellier snake and was casevaced to hospital. He was the first person the hospital had seen to have been bitten by one of these snakes in nearly 30 years.

This completed a hat-trick of injuries for Pte Mullen, all sustained on successive annual camps - a broken arm in 1988 and torn knee ligaments in 1989 and meant his nickname of 'Sicknote' was fully deserved! Whilst the composite company enjoyed the sun in Cyprus, the remainder of the battalion attended a cadre camp at Fremington in North Devon where a number of in-house courses were carried out including recruits, signals, HGV, medics and potential JNCO's cadres.

During this period, monumental events in Western Europe were unfolding, including the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the unification of West and East Germany and the policy of 'Glasnost' advocated by the Soviet president, Mikhail Gorbachov. All of this saw the beginning of the end of the Cold War. In 1992, the infamous defence review

'Options for Change' spoke of the 'Peace Dividend' and determined that there was no longer a requirement for a Nuclear Artillery deterrent and 50 Missile was to be placed in 'suspended animation' in 1993. As a result 8QF would revert to being a General Service TA Battalion.

'Options for Change' also led to all TA infantry battalions being reduced to three rifle companies. This meant that G (London Scottish) of 1/51 (Highland) Volunteers and D (London Irish Rifles) Company, 4th Battalion, The Royal Irish Rangers (North Irish Militia) were now surplus and were slated to be part of a new infantry battalion in London to be called The London Regiment.

The London Jocks and the Micks joined 8QF at its last annual camp at Wathgill in 1992 where, on a miserable wet morning on the 9th September, The Queen's Regiment badged soldiers of 8QF exchanged their blue berets for the khaki beret of the new Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, another outcome of 'Options for Change.'

On 1st April 1993, 8th Queen's Fusiliers ceased to be when the London Regiment was officially formed. BHQ and HQ (now renamed Anzio Company) remained at St John's Hill, Clapham and rifle companies as follows - A (London Scottish) Company at Westminster; B (The Queen's Regiment) Company at Edgware and Hornsey; C (City of London Fusiliers) Company at Balham and D (London Irish Rifles) Company at the Duke of York's HQ in Chelsea. Sadly, the former A (High Wood) Company of 8 QF at Flodden Road was disbanded, although many of its soldiers transferred to the other rifle companies or went to form the new Assault Pioneer platoon at HQ Company. The multiple cap badges of the London Regiment were unique in the British Army and the Londons were for many years the only infantry battalion in the Army with four rifle companies.

In the four short years of the battalion's existence, 8QF was a very creditable infantry battalion and paved the way for other multi-cap badged Territorial units.

As a footnote, WO1 (RSM) George France presented his pace stick to me on his commissioning and my promotion and appointment as WO2 (CSM) of B (Albuhera) Company in 1990. George, if you are reading this, let me first apologise that I had to paint your pace stick black on becoming PWRR in 1992 but when I left the TA it was restored back to its original state and is now hanging on the wall in my study so, thank you for that...you don't want it back, do you?





*About 15 years ago, I met HRH Princess Anne and Vice-Admiral Sir Tim Laurence at an RBL event in Gloucester Cathedral and reminded her that our paths had crossed previously in another life. We were yattering for about five minutes with everyone looking on and fidgeting. After she moved on, colleagues came up: "What the hell were you yattering about?"... "Oh, old times...". Admiral Laurence was really pleasant, very much at ease, and would not have any tea nor cake, in case he spilt it down his suit...*

Max White

## ALBUHERA

During my service with 1 Mx and 4 Queen's, I do not recall gunfire being served to soldiers on Albuhera Day as happened in later years. What did happen was that the Drums would sound Reveille around the officers' quarters and mess. It was not unknown for newly joined subalterns to be dunked in a cold bath by the drummers. The attached photo was taken on Albuhera Day 1967. I remember it well because I reckoned, I might be on the drummers' list for a bath. The night before, I took the precaution of taking the shot out of two



ALBUHERA DAY CELEBRATIONS

The Steel Band and Corp of Drums sound Reveille outside the CO's house

12 bore cartridges so that the following morning, as I heard the drummers charging down the upstairs corridor in the mess, I was ready to step out of my room and let them have both barrels from my shotgun! Reveille turned into disorderly Retreat.

I think gunfire may have been a 1 QUEENS tradition derived from the Glorious First of June. I recall serving it to the soldiers in their bunks on board HMS Maidstone during the 1974 emergency Belfast tour. The atmosphere in the bowels of that ship was how I imagined it must have been on Admiral Lord Howe's flagship in 1794!

Roger Gancz



# HM QUEEN MARGRETHE AND EXERCISE AMBER EXPRESS

By Richard Dixon

In September 1981, 5 (V) Queens was on Ex AMBER EXPRESS in Denmark as their annual camp. HM Queen Margrethe visited Battalion HQ during the exercise, located in a farmhouse near Hagedsted, Jyderup. The headquarters was in an old disused pig barn and consisted of several 'rooms' with low beams which were covered with distemper and cobwebs.

Having seen round the headquarters, it had been arranged that HM would meet various members of the Battalion, including many former Buffs that were still serving.



Credit: Major Roger Tutt TD.

L- R Sgt Rick Bamford, Sgt Bernie Easter, CSgt Keith Bell, CSgt Cliff Rawlings, CSM Geoff Fairfax, CSM Alan Kiff, CSM Geoff Anderson. (I am not sure about how correct the ranks are. But they are as I remember them).

We then gathered in the farmhouse to meet the farmer, Mr. Anders Hvass and his wife. I noticed that the top of HM's hat had received a liberal coating of distemper and cobwebs. As the next part of the programme was to have a photograph of HM with the officers, those that were available, I thought it a good idea to get her hat brushed. The farmer's wife spoke little English and so I asked one of the Danish officers if he could ask her for a clothes brush. His reply was *"I am a senior officer in the Danish Army; I am not her valet"*. After such a 'put down', I gave up as time was pressing. Luckily it did not show too badly in the photograph.

Several years later at the Regimental Dinner in 1998 I related the story to HM, which she found very amusing!





HM is talking to Cpl Terry Ryan who served in the Buffs as a National Serviceman, the Royal Sussex as an 'Ever Ready' in 1965 and a territorial in 4/5 QORWK. From the left of the photograph – Cpl Brian Hazzard, Cpl Pete Roast, Cpl Terry Ryan, Sgt Rick Bamford, Sgt Bernie Easter, CSgt Keith Bell.  
All made a significant contribution to the TA over many years.



Relating the story of the distemper to HM as Brigadiers Richard Dennis, Mike Constantine and Colonel Peter Cook look on





# THE ROCK (PART 1)

## COLD WAR AND TERRORISM

By Mike Scott

It was close to midnight of 14 April 1986. Eighteen F-111F strike aircraft of the USAF 48th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW), flying out of RAF Lakenheath, and four EF-111A Raven (electronic warfare) aircraft of the USAF 20th TFW from RAF Upper Heyford flew through the Straits of Gibraltar, heading east. Having passed through the Straits, they sped towards their target, Libya.

The 6,400 miles round-trip for the USAF fighter-bombers was made necessary by the refusal of France, Spain, and Italy to grant over-flight rights. The fighter-bombers were refuelled in flight by twenty-eight Boeing KC-135 Stratotankers and McDonnell Douglas KC-10 Extenders, flying out of RAF Fairford and RAF Mildenhall. This thirteen hour round-trip operation, dubbed Op ELDORADO CANYON, was one of the longest such strike missions at that time, only somewhat shy in range of the RAF Vulcan bombing raids in the Falklands War, just four years earlier.

Approaching Libya, the USAF aircraft were joined by some twenty-six USN and USMC strike aircraft from USN Sixth Fleet carriers in the Gulf of Sidra. By 0200 hours on 15 April, the aircraft were over their respective targets, and the strike on Libya commenced. The raid lasted just twelve minutes. With bombs away, the USN and USMC pilots returned to their respective USN carriers in the Gulf of Sidra. Meanwhile, the USAF pilots now set a course west for the Straits of Gibraltar and their long flight back to England.

Some of those in the Resident Infantry Battalion, 1 QUEENS, stationed in Gibraltar, heard the USAF aircraft come and go through the Straits. Others slept through the noise of the jet engines but were soon made aware of the raid when they awoke later that same morning.

Margaret Thatcher provided political and logistic support to Ronald Reagan's bombing raid, not least in the use of British airfields. Thus there was a clear imperative to guard against the possibility that Libya's leader, Muammar Gaddafi, might launch retaliatory air strikes against UK targets close by in the Mediterranean. These included the British Dependent Territories of Gibraltar, and the two Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia in Cyprus.

In late 1982, the Gibraltar Regiment's artillery battery had been upgraded with six 105mm L118 light guns. However, the eight Blowpipe surface-to-air missiles (SAM), which it had also received from Britain, were deemed inadequate to defend the Rock of Gibraltar, particularly in view of Blowpipe's parlous performance in the recent 1982 Falklands War.

F-111F fighter-bomber of USAF 48th TFW, at take-off from RAF Lakenheath, on Op EL DORADO CANYON, 1986





F-111F fighter-bomber of USAF 48th TFW, preparing for take-off from RAF Lakenheath, on Op EL DORADO CANYON, 1986



Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, in conversation, Camp David, 1986



F-111F fighter-bomber of USAF 48th TFW, training over desert, prior to Op EL DORADO CANYON, 1986

Therefore, regular RA Gunners, equipped with anti-aircraft Rapier SAM, were flown from UK to join the infantrymen, now in the second year of their tour spanning 1985/6. The Rapier SAM detachments were soon tactically deployed on the Rock. Moreover, additional RAF fighter planes flew in from the UK. Permission was granted for approaching Libyan aircraft to be engaged and shot down, despite concern that Spanish planes might be downed by mistake.

Meanwhile, one could be forgiven for thinking that those of the RAF Gibraltar station had conducted the raid. Such RAF 'airs' were fuelled further by the release, the following month, of the box-office movie hit, *Top Gun*, starring Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis.

Given the increased threat level, the CO, Lt Col Mike Ball, placed his battalion on heightened security alert, with QRFs at appropriate NTM. With our readiness thus enhanced, two of the company commanders, Anthony Beattie and Rocky Hitchcock, took to greeting each other, tongue firmly in cheek, with Sherman's dictum, "*War is Hell!*".

Reagan ordered the 1986 US raid, following the bombing of '*La Belle*' nightclub in West Berlin by Libyan agents on 5 April in which three people were killed, including a US serviceman. Moreover, a fortnight prior to that, on 24 March, while the



US Navy was asserting the twelve nautical mile limit to Libyan territorial waters, in line with international law, Libya had responded aggressively. This led to a naval engagement in the Gulf of Sidra.

Libya continued its support to international terrorism, including to the Red Army Faction, the Red Brigades, and PIRA. In the immediate aftermath of the raid, by way of revenge, two British hostages and an American were shot dead by the Libyan-supported Abu Nidal Organisation

in Lebanon. In Jerusalem, a further Briton was kidnapped, and another killed. Subsequently, Libya ordered the hijacking of Pan Am Flight 73 in Pakistan in September 1986. Then, in December 1988, Libya bombed Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie in Scotland.

Meanwhile, Libyan arms shipments to PIRA continued, partly in retaliation for Britain's support of the raid, the majority of which were successfully landed in the Republic of Ireland. This PIRA insurgent theme certainly resonated with the battalion, for the Gibraltar posting was essentially a sandwich-filler between two Northern Ireland tours, these being Omagh whence the battalion had arrived,



Air strike route map – 'Take a left at Portugal', 1986

and South Armagh for which it was next destined. Moreover, relatively shortly after the battalion departed Gibraltar, the Rock itself would become a direct focus for PIRA when three PIRA terrorists were shot dead in March 1988, while planning to detonate a car bomb at the forming-up point for the Changing of the Guard ceremony.

Thus, from Thatcher's perspective, the 1986 US raid was conducted against the backdrop of Libya's support to PIRA insurgents in Northern Ireland. Moreover, Thatcher's support for the US military action also served as a clear message to Spain; as with the Falkland Islands, the UK would not stand for any military opportunism regarding British sovereignty of the Rock.

Gibraltar had long held strategic significance for Britain, providing a Forward Mounting Base for military forces in the Mediterranean. With both a strategic harbour and an airfield, the RAF and Royal Navy were also well represented, with designated RN guard ships to address Spanish incursions into Gibraltar's territorial waters. Although in 1986, Libya had an air force capable of mounting a retaliatory air strike against Gibraltar, the threat of one soon receded.



Aircraft on USS America, during the strike on Libya, 1986

The Resident Infantry Battalion was the core of the small Army Garrison. Shortly after its arrival, the battalion conducted a 'Defence of the Rock' exercise and in Ex YOGI BEAR, in early 1985, it soon learnt that the Rock could swallow up its soldiers. The then OC B (Holland) Company, Peter McLelland, would for some time thereafter hold forth on his Company's extensive TAOR: some two miles long, 600 metres wide and 400 metres high!

Normality soon returned. With the end of the year approaching, we focused upon our impending hand-over to 1 R ANGLIAN. Thereafter, Mike Ball and his battalion had their sights set firmly upon countering terrorism in South Armagh, their primary operational focus for 1987.



# KEEPING THE TROOPS FED

## AND THE MILIARY BARTERING SYSTEM

By Neil Tunstall

There were very few places to live fire MILAN in the UK in the late 1980s. Being based in Tidworth, we had to travel to Otterburn, a small village and large training area in Northumberland, 31 miles northwest of Newcastle upon Tyne. From memory, I think we went once a year to fire our annual allocation of six missiles. Far from the Army just sending you up there to throw what was thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money down the range, a whole exercise was devised to test the skills and training of the platoon, and a very lucky six were allowed to live fire the weapon at the end of an intense exercise.

As one of the more senior Cpls in the Milan Platoon (there were a few of us), I was tasked to travel to Otterburn on the Thursday night, with a four-tonner and two landrovers all complete with trailers, arriving in the morning to ensure maximum training time wasn't wasted. We took over one of the camps, as these were civilian-controlled and they didn't work weekends, so that the troops could arrive on Sunday and be ready to go to work first thing Monday morning. One of my other tasks was to feed the troops during the week. The menu consisted of compo rations and a large box of eggs. I collected a quid each from the troops and brought fresh food from the wholesale market and an abattoir, both in Newcastle. A very accommodating ex-Fusilier ran the abattoir, the meat being so fresh it was still steaming on our return to camp. On a visit in December, I got a great discount for turkeys for the married pads! As I think enough time has passed that I won't get into too much trouble now, I confess that I also provided a local hotel with tins of catering beans and tomatoes, in exchange for sausages, some bacon and other goodies.

Trying to keep the menu varied was a chore; also providing meals (normally range stew) when the guys were on night training as this wasn't in the ration budget. On one such trip, my driver ran over a load of pheasants. Not missing an opportunity to get some fresh meat, a few more were quickly dispatched and thrown into the back of the landrover. The next day plucked and gutted, they went into the oven. While cooking, the Camp Commandant came in and called me over, "Were you up on the range last night?" "I was Sir!" "Did you see any blighters skulking around up there?" "No Sir!", "Buggers made off with a load of my bloody pheasants!" "I'll keep my eyes open Sir!" "Hmm something smells nice!" "Yes Sir. Cornish Chickens for dinner tonight!", praying to all the known gods he wouldn't invite himself for dinner. He simply said, "Good show" and marched out. Our platoon commander later asked where I got all the so called 'Cornish chickens'

from. I asked whether he really wanted to know as he'd just polished one off. I was told *"Just get rid of the bloody evidence pronto, Corporal!"*

The problem for the QM stores was when we returned and dumped unused rations from the week, including powdered milk and that horrible powdered coffee. There always seemed to be tons of the stuff. I'm pretty sure the RQMS was aware of my little trade-offs, but said nothing, except once: *"You've got a bright future ahead of you son, don't do anything silly and fuck it up!"* On one visit, the normal camp we took over was still being used by the Guards, so a somewhat smaller camp was allocated, but the kitchen had a steam machine with which you could make frothy coffees. This was an instant hit, and 'frothy coffees' were always on the go.

A few days later, after we'd returned, I was summoned to the QM's office, not something you'd expect to walk away from unscathed. When I marched in, I knew something was amiss, wondering if my deals had at last caught up with me, *"Right son, don't bullshit me, what you have done with all that fucking coffee and powdered milk?"* he asked, *"because if you've got an out for the shit, I want to know about it."* I explained about the machine and the frothy coffees, *"Fucking frothy coffees, I've got my eye on you son, never seen a platoon get through so many bloody tinned tomatoes."* I'm pretty sure he wasn't completely convinced. Every time I saw him afterwards, he gave me the evil eye and muttered *"Fucking frothy coffee!"*

I'll stop there before I commit myself even more. Later ventures on my posting to London as an instructor and acting RQMS to 5 CTT further educated me in the ways of military bartering. As a small unit of only five bods, we still had our own account number. I once accidentally ordered ten packs of the newly issued pink toilet paper. The lorry turned up and the RCT female driver asked for help unloading. I thought bloody cheek. It turned out that each pack consisted of 50 rolls so there wasn't a cadet or TA unit in SW London that was short. The story of over ordering Bardic lamp batteries and what was done with them is a tale I'll have to consult my lawyers about.

My last job was as a military advisor in the UAE Air Force Officer Training Wing, where my honed bartering skills were put to good use, which is another story for a later date, but did include obtaining a fairly new M113 for target practice from a somewhat confused US QM, who never bought fuel for his Jeep on his posting!



# STRETCHED LYCRA

By Ken Hames, Chef de Course

*Here's forty shillings on the drum  
For those who'll volunteer to come  
To 'list and fight the foe today  
Over the hills and far away  
O'er the hills and o'er the main  
Through Flanders, Portugal and Spain  
King George commands and we obey  
Over the hills and far away*

Five veterans from The Queen's Regiment, stretching themselves and their lycra to the limit, took fund-raising to new levels cycling the Tour of Andalucía, Spain in just five torturous days. This 500-mile route in temperatures of +30 degrees, with no less than 30,000 feet of ascent, certainly confirmed that, 'there is no flat ground in Andalucía'. However, while there is discomfort, there is also beauty and romanticism in the air, we 'volunteered to serve' and often pictured our forebears marching with drums beating and the Colours unfurled, across the plains of Salamanca to the North.

The cycle team was in fact a 'Dirty Dozen' with my old friend Mac McKay (APTC) in tow and a couple of tame SF veterans (incognito) and just about the whole of the Azzopardi family, a clan with which many of you will be familiar. With the old and bold (including me) re-enacting the 'Tour de France,' at least in our heads, it was good to have three cyclists along under 40 who rallied us daily on the numerous 'category one' climbs.

The aim was to raise money for homeless veterans as part of the veteran 'self-build' scheme, a charitable initiative some 10 years old now, providing care and support to those veterans disadvantaged and/or in housing need. The outcome of the 18-month programme is hopefully full-time employment and independent living. I hasten to add that the plight of some veterans is both disturbing and urgent and despite the rhetoric from government, we still have a long way to go in supporting those in transition to civilian life, who faithfully took their shilling from the drum!











Most of the cohort were new to long-range mountainous pedalling, and when we arrived in Gibraltar there was a degree of panic in the ranks. After a flurry of activity including press conferences and fiddling about with pedals and saddles and chamois cream (designed to oil those parts most precious to us) we tried to sleep, and some (guess?) even deployed to the marina for a dose of amber courage.

Under the tutelage of our guides, a couple of world champion skinnies (ugh!) from a cycle tour organisation called 'Skedaddle', we tentatively arrived at the line of departure on May 16th to depart Gibraltar, cross the border (always a risk!) and disappear into Spain and maybe Portugal and even Flanders should we get lost.

Day one and Steve Gaskell and his son Quinn showed early prominence, seemingly having done some secret training, while Lee Bradly, Richard Kendall-Tobias, Stitch Azzopardi, and yours truly quietly plodded behind wondering what gradients lay ahead. The SF boys were well camouflaged, and Mac appeared to be wearing Army trainers, always a firm traditionalist! It was a true peloton, mind you, with support vehicles and people cheering and even the population of Southern Spain rising to the occasion shouting from cars and windows. (I could translate it, but it may have been something to do with sovereignty rather than cycling!?) Stitch of course was surrounded by his sons Ashley and James who carried oxygen and other stimuli to help their dad, while I was ably supported by an old rugby chum, Dave Perkins who kept reminding me what a terrible passer of the rugby ball I was, and how did I change gear with such sausage-like fingers (thanks Dave).

Well, it all went swimmingly for the first 40k and morale was high as we looked forward to that evening's Silent Toast in a small village called Algar somewhere on the far horizon. When passing through Jimena, suddenly the mood changed as we encountered our first 15% gradient which even by *Tour de France* standards is very steep. This hill went on (average 8%) for some 35 km and as temperatures rose into the 30s, we all realised we had a mountain to climb or many mountains to climb to get back to the sanctuary of Gibraltar in one piece.

When you come back together to take on a challenge with other veterans, albeit in a benign environment, you suddenly realise how lucky we all were to have served in those battalions, rifle companies and teams and equally lucky to have those relationships constantly reinvigorated through association, reunions, and daily banter across the social media. The camaraderie and sense of *esprit de corps* remains as steadfast and vibrant as it always has, and it is that which got us through the hard times on this challenge, facing a degree of danger and uncertainty together, united in spirit.

Day One ended. We were a bit late - of course. And we drank the 'Silent Toast' together on a Spanish hillside and looked North to the Immortal Memory of the 57th of Foot.

I remember feeling remarkably chipper on Day 2 as we departed. There was a sense of purpose in the air, and it was relatively cool. However, no sooner had we left Algar on our way to Cortez that we met the mother of all hills climbing into the Sierra de Grazalema. This took us from 200 metres ASL to 1100 metres ASL over 18 kilometres, and those of you with a protractor can work out the gradient. Unfortunately, on a tricky descent Steve and his bike departed company and so did most of the skin on his knee, so sadly he had to take an early bath in Rugby parlance! He was obviously frustrated, and it was a shame to lose him on the road so early on. That said, like all these things, it could have been far worse, and he has now fully recovered. In Cortez, we found a fascinating mix of local flavours, having struggled in the cobbled back streets to find the hotel and the bar. And to our total surprise we found 'craft beers' of alarming variety, all horribly overstrength – lethal you might say for aspiring athletes - but thirst took, and while it invited a headache for Day 3, the temptation was too much!! All work and no play etc!

Day 3 with a minor headache was a roller-coaster of small hills and vales. The temperature quickly climbed as did we and we found ourselves at lunchtime going rapidly downhill into the very picturesque village of Zahara de la Sierra and the start of a famous climb (famous for pain) the Puerto de las Palomas, 18 kilometres of mountain road with S bends from hell for the final 5 kilometres. Cheering crowds sadly not – but campervans coming the other way, yes. It is undoubtedly one of the hardest ascents in cycling history and often included in elite races and well done to the team for taking it on, armed only with energy bars and about 5 litres of water handed out by our support group. When we arrived in Grazalema there was a degree of relief in the air, and we sat by the pool (yes really) and licked our emotional wounds. Some had an ice bath in celebration of passing the halfway mark and while the rest of us ate and drank everything in the hotel, the final prize beckoned.

Leading out on Day 4, I felt a slight sense of relief that we were now on our way to Ronda, the final overnight stop, but the hills kept coming and there were still some horrendous bumps to get over. The team kept together pretty well, and we sent some of the faster guys out on an additional loop to make sure they were getting equal benefit! After lunch we made our way up to Ronda, and it is at this time, in the hot late afternoon, that it is not the miles that you feel, but the sun bouncing off the tarmac and into your face. The climb into Ronda was hard, hot, and made even worse by traffic and fumes which don't, of course, encourage inhalation. Once in Ronda we settled quickly into the hotel and were greeted at that point by supporters' friends and family. That was a real bonus. Ronda is a beautiful town, perched on a cliff with the oldest bull ring in Spain. Worth a visit, but I would not cycle there if you can help it!!

The ride from Ronda to the finish line was epic and for those of you who think it is all downhill you are wrong. There is a good 3000 feet of ascent to escape and then a long period of steep bends before the famous 'Rock' comes into view, but even then it's 40 km away. The arrival into Gibraltar was incredible, and we were met by Dave Body and his regimental posse as we paraded through the dockyard gate, looking incredibly pleased with ourselves. Supporting Dave was a veritable football crowd of Queensmen and their wives and partners.

It was the perfect reception for us, with the added value of 250 Sapper Veterans (a reunion) who had already drunk their own bodyweight in beer by 1700 that day, but kindly added to our coffers by doing a very welcome whip round. I handed over a plaque (as you do) to the CO Gibraltar Regiment which had been carved by hand by Dennis, 86 years young, one of our self-builders who had previously lived in a lonely caravan on a Herefordshire farm. The money we raised (60k plus) will go to help veterans like Dennis have a more fulfilling life, and we thank everybody for their kind and generous donations.

Well, what next, they ask? It's hard to match what we have done, but we are back at HQ planning another demanding mission for the Dirty Dozen!

I must give special mention the Azzopardi clan who raised over 20k. A magnificent effort and a special ambassadorial family for The Queen's Regiment and PWRR.







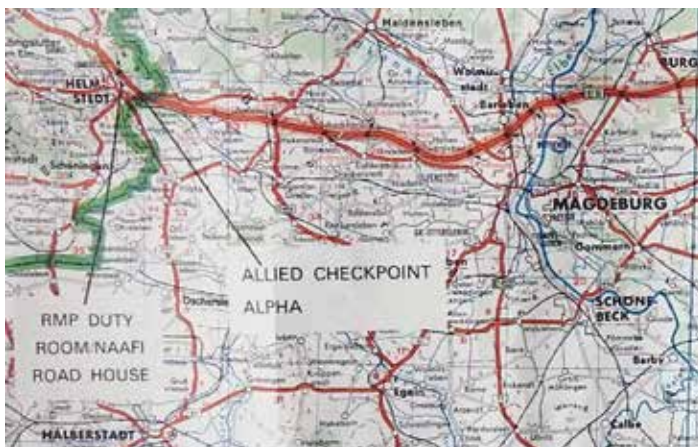
# BERLIN TO BLIGHTY

By Trevor Millett

Long ago when the 1st Battalion was departing Berlin, the norm as usual was for those with civilian vehicles to drive back home exiting West Berlin via Checkpoint Bravo, firmly clutching their much-stamped Berlin Travel Document, an impressive looking document, written in English and Russian, absolutely essential for exiting through Russian checkpoints. Now found framed in lots of downstairs WCs.

Setting off on the 110-mile drive down the decrepit A2 autobahn to Checkpoint Alpha at Helmstedt on the East-West German border, keeping the speed down and hoping the vehicle wouldn't break down, nor attract the attention of the Russian or the East German authorities; nor I might add, be accused of speeding by the RMP, who clocked you out and clocked you in again, at the end of the miserable, stressful journey.

The alternative transport home was by RAF, flying from RAF Gatow, just a couple of miles down the road from Montgomery Barracks, our home for two years.



A map of the first part of the journey along the corridor to West Berlin



The RMP Duty Room at Helmstedt



The BTD - The Berlin Travel Document



Bristol Britannia 312



Checkpoint Alpha



Finally, there was a third alternative, by British Military Train from Charlottenburg into West Germany and then North eventually up to Bremerhaven. Here, the Swedish flagged ferry, Prins Oberon, sailed regularly almost continually to Harwich and back; so much so, that it was known as the 'English Ship'. This was the chosen route for service wives who were pregnant and been warned not to fly! A devout and industrious member of the Mortar Platoon, by the name of Sxxxh '55' had a very exciting and stressful journey when his wife went into labour and actually gave birth to a healthy baby boy on board ship. True to '55s' style of life, the child was named after the ferry, Prins Oberon Sxxxh. It was



Prinz Oberon

rumoured that the child would be granted free travel for life onboard his namesake. The ferry changed hands in 1978 and was renamed Prinz Oberon and free travel ended.

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## Twice in one day!

*In about 1999, I was working for 2 Brigade at Shorncliffe as a driving examiner. I was able to finish early and managed to fit in the school run by the skin of my teeth. I was in uniform but short of time, went directly to the school. As I was waiting outside for my daughter, four cars came down the lane very quickly. The lane only led to the estate of Lord and Lady X so I assumed it was someone important. As the second car came level, it slowed and stopped. The occupant lowered the window. I saluted and then had a few words with Queen Margrethe! The Queen and her husband were great friends of the local Lord and Lady of the Manor and I subsequently found out they visited frequently.*

*After the excitement died down, I went home and changed. About an hour later we went to the local Sainsbury's and as we entered, we walked straight into Queen Margarethe and Lady X coming out! Again a few words and off we went!*

John Bennett



# A FUNNY YEAR PART THREE - THE END

By Frank Harrington aka Longmore

## (or From Peace to War)

Here we are in 1968. At Howe Barracks, Canterbury. We had a week's leave before heading for Northern Ireland. The week's leave was somewhat challenging. I had a girlfriend whom I had been seeing for over a year. I didn't know how to tell her I was going to a foreign country. Well, it was foreign to me. I never did tell her that I would not be seeing her anymore and left the following morning for the night ferry to Belfast.

I managed to get a cabin, which I shared with some other squaddies. Unfortunately, the air soon turned putrid with obnoxious gases coming from the bunk below. I did not sleep well as the boat was rocking in all directions and so was my stomach. We were met at the docks by a couple of three tonners that we all piled into. Palace Barracks, here we come! Sounded quite grand actually. Now, the one thing that puzzles me is this, did we travel in civvies? My memory evades me. I just know I was loaded with kit.

I remember going through the gates of Palace Barracks, with a guard at the entrance. There was a slight rise on the road, and we drove to a number of red brick buildings. It looked very dated, but I remember a very relaxed informal atmosphere. There were a few squaddies walking about and a NAAFI on the right of the road, bearing in mind this was late 1968, and my memory is a bit faded.

I was introduced to the Drums Platoon. The guys there looked a lot older than me. Most had just returned from a Hong Kong posting. Names are very vague now, but one guy befriended me, Dick Shepard. We became best friends, and I was his best man at his wedding. I was then introduced to Drum Major Lively. Got on with him very well. He was a very nice man. There were also lifelong friends, that I am in contact with even now.

Quite a few months went by, drum practices, exercises all over the place and a particular exercise, on a very, very, hot day carrying the 84mm Carl Gustav. God, that knackered me. Most of us got dehydrated having drank all our water and the person who organised this outing had arranged for a three-tonner loaded with Coca Cola at the end of the march. That was the best, very warm

Coke that I have ever had. Never touched the stuff after that. Normally, I would use it to clean my SLR.

However, best days were Fridays. We normally finished our duties at 2pm and free to do what we wanted for the weekend. Most of us headed to Belfast and the Starlight Rooms for the evening, attended by lots of Northern Irish ladies, looking for squaddies to hitch up with. Many a romance was started there. However, I met a very nice blonde girl who actually asked me for a slow dance. Well, more like a grinding slow dance, how close can you get to someone sort of thing. I reckon my blood pressure hit the roof at that time. By the end of the evening, we were exploring each other's tonsils and before I knew it, she took me to meet her mum and dad after just a couple of dates. That was to be my downfall.

Palace Barracks had a disco on Saturday nights. The local girls used to flock to the barracks. Lots of naughtiness took place over the months. Lots of soldiers got hitched up as well, many getting married to Irish girls, me included. We were pretty much laid back then, until the troubles erupted, which brought an end to our visitors.

During the start of the Troubles, I was actually on leave in the UK, watching TV with the news blaring about civil war in Ireland. Of course, we all got recalled back to duty. On arrival we were met at the docks by three-tonners, which transported us back to the barracks. Within a few short hours, we were briefed about what was going on and before we knew it, we were on the streets of Belfast and Londonderry. It looked like a scene straight out of a war movie. The smell of burning and devastation met our eyes, it was awful. A week later unshaven, smelly, sleeping where we could, all of us were exhausted. Those of us that were there, will remember only too well the way it was. Not very nice.

Our riot kit consisted of pickaxe handles and dustbin lids. Eventually, light aluminium shields were provided. Early gas masks were very antiquated. The eye pieces had to be spat on, to stop them steaming up. Later newer, more modern ones were issued, which to be fair were quite good. I have memories that on a Friday night, the locals

would get drunk and would come out lobbing petrol bombs at each other and us. Handmade bombs went off, making life very difficult for us squaddies.

Our tactics in the day were to form a square with banners displaying to the crowds, 'Disperse or CS gas will be used'. I forget the exact words and the other side, something like 'Disperse or we will open fire'. How antiquated was that? Then there was the fixed bayonets palaver. I think we did the first bayonet charge in the UK. Not only did it scare the locals, it also scared the crap out of most of us. As we started running down the road, I remember saying to someone, are we really going to bayonet someone? Luckily for us, the crowd ran faster than we could, and the bayonets were then taken away, after a major enquiry and lots of media attention. I mean, come on, that was part of a soldier's equipment... bloody politicians!

Looking back, we were very poorly equipped. But in the end, it did get better, with the arrival of flak jackets, rubber bullets, CS gas canisters and the armoured 1-Ton Humbers named Pigs for a good reason. I had the pleasure of driving one, with a full crew and equipment. Speeding down narrow roads two abreast, I remember a lot of civilian cars got wrecked. Petrol bombs were flying in all directions and the best part was trying to stop the things, before the snatch squad in the rear jumped out, to try and grab some unfortunate civvy who happened to have got caught lobbing God knows what at us.

Then of course there were those screaming Saracens; not forgetting all those landrover patrols and the setting up of VCPs everywhere.

Being in the Drums Platoon, we prided ourselves on being able to do two jobs, which the rifle platoons couldn't do: play drums and play at soldiers. On one particular operation, about which even today I still get flashbacks, a lot of shooting was taking place, I think it was Belfast, but not too sure. We were patrolling a particular street near a convent. I saw two flashes, realising it was incoming gunfire, I hit the deck. These 'flashes' hit the road, lumps of tarmac splattered into my face, I heard a groan behind me, my corporal had been hit.

The guy in front of me got hit but was not badly injured. I returned fire, then my SLR jammed on the third round. It had never, ever jammed before. As I looked, a 7.62 round was hanging out from the breach. I grabbed my

Corporal, dragged him around a corner, kicked a door in, saw a family under a table, screaming at me not to shoot them. I shouted: *"Don't be so stupid!"*. Everything from that moment on, slowed down. I removed the corporal's puttee and could see a hole. I carefully unwound it and saw a .45 slug on the other side of the putty fall out. Not a lot of blood but what looked like jelly around his ankle. He was in quite a bit of pain.

We carried morphine -a small toothpaste like container, with a needle on the end. I gave him the jab and wrote a great big 'M' on his forehead. I think it took him nearly 18mths to recover from that wound. When it all calmed down, an ammunition check was carried out to see how many rounds we had actually fired and that was the last time I ever fired my SLR in anger, I did however empty a 9mm Browning at a gunman at the Creggan and missed. I shall never live that down.

I have so many memories of those encounters, some good times and some bad times. Getting soaked in winter whilst on foot patrols, with the taste of beret running into your mouth and rainwater running down your neck. The KF shirt was not the nicest of shirt to wear when wet. But the friendship you got is like nothing else on Earth. We were brothers in arms and looked out for each other.

With the death of Paul Carter, it really hit home. He was the nicest of guys. He had a hobby of photography. He would build model tanks and photograph them in long grass, looking just like the real thing. May he rest in eternal peace.

I am often asked by friends and family, was I ever scared? I think we all were at some time. But of course, there's the adrenaline rush that you get in certain situations. So much of the stuff gets released into your body, you end up feeling quite sick.

Over 50 years have now gone by. Our youth has gone, we are all in our 70s, but our memories and our stories will continue. We ourselves will now pass into history and books will be written. I think we all feel that we were a forgotten Army and today, we are now being asked to account for our actions, in a long-lost forgotten war. Our memories are not so good anymore, our bodies are weak and tired. But the one thing that remains forever, is our friendship and trust in each other. Comrades we were and comrades we will remain.





# THE ZAÏRE RIVER EXPEDITION

By Bill Knight-Hughes



Bill Knight-Hughes

The Zaïre River Expedition took place from about September 1974 to January 1975. I had become aware of it by being the only Officer Cadet in a lecture at Sandhurst in 1972 who had not fallen asleep.

Originally named the Henry Morton Stanley Centenary Expedition, for I hope obvious reasons, it was renamed, the better to win the support of then President, Mobutu Seseseke, of Zaïre. It was the brainchild of Lt Col John Blashford-Snell, who had made his name on the White Nile Expedition and who went on to do the Darien Gap Expedition and for all I know other entirely purpose-free undertakings considered Adventurous Training.

At about 140 strong, men and women, about half the members of the expedition were servicemen. I was the only Queensman. The rest were scientists, friends of Blashford-Snell, hangers-on, two CIA spooks masquerading rather improbably as journalists, and some technical specialists.

Every member had to apply and offer something special as a qualification. A selection took place in a London theatre one afternoon. I had claimed to know Hot Air Ballooning (not true) and speak some French and Swahili (true).

After about two weeks forming up in offices in the cellars of Whitehall, we were flown first class by an Air Zaïre jet to Kolwezi in the south of the country, where the expedition was to begin. The plan was to descend the river to the sea: a sort of *Heart of Darkness* in reverse.

The expedition then just disintegrated into dozens of parts: Forward Support Teams (FSTs), boat party, scientific groups and logistic base, and we all went our separate ways. There was no obvious chain of command and no mission, nor any

formal warrant to explore anything. We just did something - anything really - which might generate interesting copy for *The Daily Telegraph*, one of our chief sponsors.

I found myself at various times with different parts of the expedition. Random events simply passed me around. First, I was driving a mining truck to supply an FST, then a radio operator with a group of entomologists, then a casualty moving down-river to recuperate in Kinshasa. Medical cover for the expedition was patchy. Malarial prophylaxis consisted of a course of a white, a pink and a blue pill; and then a weekly pill. Inevitably some



groups got only pink pills, or blue ones. And midway through, local doctors advised us to upgrade our prophylaxis, resulting in an interruption in supplies.

Along the way there were many incidents some of which might amuse:

Zaire was at that time a military dictatorship. The army ruled everything everywhere. Every part of the expedition had a soldier with it. So when I drove this mining supply truck for weeks across Shaba Province (formerly Katanga) we had a corporal from their parachute regiment in the back.; that was essential. Soldiers, who were everywhere, were seldom paid. So they had to dream up creative ideas to get money. One was roadblocks. All the villages had a roadblock and a shabbily uniformed, armed 'soldier' who would examine our papers with much sucking of teeth and shaking of his head, and who finally demanded a 'tax payment' before we could proceed. Hence our corporal. Whenever we were stopped like this, we would bang on the back of the cab, he would stick his head round the canopy and tell the '*soldateska*' to "eff off". One sight of his elite para beret was enough! Interestingly, he was quite in demand as a roving magistrate. At one village we were held up half a day while he sorted out a domestic problem for the village elders. A man had returned to the village after deserting his wife years earlier. She had remarried and now had a small farm. He demanded to be reinstated as her husband. Our corporal ruled against the man and he was banished from the village for life.

One day, I found myself waiting with about 30 other expedition members at the railway siding at a small place called Ubundu. Here, where the rain forest grew right down to the river's edge, was the railhead of a rotting, ancient, narrow-gauge line designed to ferry people and freight about 100 km or so around one of the great cataracts that divide the river into navigable sections. There wasn't much else to see at this railhead. The train, with a wheezing little steam locomotive from the 20s was in, and we were all just waiting for it to set off - in an hour maybe, or today sometime, or maybe tomorrow. This was Africa.

I spotted a drinking *shebeen* close by and, with two other thirsty expedition members, went over to investigate. It was a wriggly-tin shack with a small enclosure and some old camping chairs. There was a man jealously guarding a couple of crates of beer and an old standup fridge. I opened negotiations, and got a beer for myself and my companions. We sat down and two soldiers, also drinking, spoke to us. In a mixture of French and Swahili we began chatting. When the first round was drunk one of the soldiers told us that we had been charged the 'European' price for our beer, and that he could get the next round at the local price for us. This was considerably less than we had paid. So we bought another round, this time including our new friends. There ensued a very convivial couple of hours of intercultural relations and mutual understanding. Finally, we were all impossibly drunk, but great mates. Then, quite abruptly, our new friends had an idea! Seeing as they had saved us such-and-such many dollars in beer money (the local currency was called 'Zaiïre') they demanded that we pay them this difference. We thought this was very funny indeed, and had a great laugh. But they were not joking. Drunkenly refusing now, and stupidly stubborn, we stood our ground, inasmuch as we could still stand. Whereupon the soldiers, no less drunk than we, picked up their FNs, cocked them, and at point blank range threatened to shoot us.

Precisely at this tense psychological moment one of the female members of the expedition, a Belgian nurse with a perfectly normal name (Marie-Therese actually) but who we inevitably called 'Fifi', burst into the *shebeen* to tell us that the train was about to leave. Sizing up the strange scene in a flash, she beat the two soldiers back with a fusillade of French invective and, physically dragging us by our shirts, rushed us the two or three hundred metres back to the train, and pushed us into the nearest wagon at the rear.

Without warning the train began to move. Very slowly its speed rose to about a fast-walking pace. Even at this slow rate it rocked and jolted alarmingly. I had collapsed drunkenly on a wooden bench. I suppose some sort of ticket inspector came round, but I missed that. I was conscious though when some soldiers came down my carriage prodding the passengers with their FNs and demanding that they show their tickets. Those that could not were then invited at gunpoint to pay an impromptu fine.

I was in the last carriage. The decrepit rolling stock was easily 60 years old or more and designed for a different era. Each carriage had an open-air platform at each end, such as you often see in Westerns. One unfortunate and rather ragged man in the carriage failed to produce either a ticket or money and was summarily dragged out onto the rear platform of the train, thrown off with a rope tied around his neck and made to run along behind. Occasionally a few shots were fired



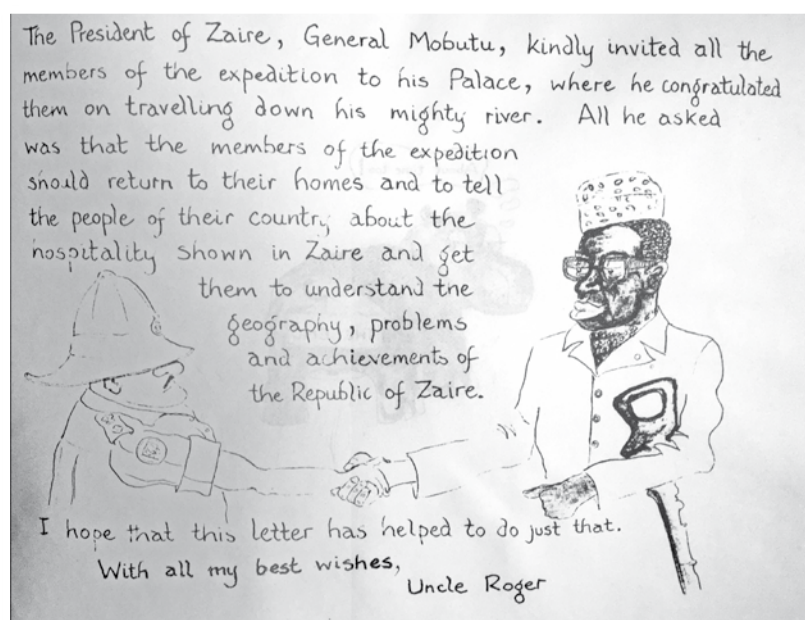
to encourage him, when he showed signs of flagging. The heat and the old train's clicking and creaking progress lulled me into sleep...

We passed the great cataract and moved on to Kisangani where a base camp had been established. From here, I sometimes spent time with scientist groups in the rain forest as a radio operator, or just living on the beach by the river in Kisangani. This was actually quite social. A continuous stream of mainly British tourists doing an 'Adventure Tour' of Africa passed through the town on their way down from the Sahara to East Africa. The local people liked to party, and every night there was an open-air dance at the beach with Zaïreois bands playing very funky Soukous music all night. We drank Argentinian red wine drawn from huge glass flagons bedded in straw baskets. Everywhere we went a small squad of 'Sisters of the Revolution', the women's movement of Mobutu's political party, turned up to support us. Their services were quite comprehensive. A further reason why the full story of the Zaire River Expedition might never be known perhaps...

Living in the rain forest wasn't so bad. We hung hammocks between trees and stretched a poncho as a roof over them. We built a large, open-sided shelter as a communal and working area. We were always wet, but never cold. The scientists had tree climbing experts who placed traps in the different levels of the forest canopy. My performance as a radio operator was on a par with my other achievements on the expedition in general. Our set was not one I was very familiar with. A long line antenna had to be strung up in the trees. There was a daily all-stations conference-call at dawn, when reception was best. But our group had been assigned such a low callsign, reflecting our low expedition status that, by the time it was my turn to speak, the atmospherics had usually kicked in and voice communication was impossible. As soon as the control station uttered the words "Switch to Charlie Whisky", that was it! I couldn't actually do Morse.

Having malingered at an earlier stage in the expedition to avoid a task I had not felt myself capable of carrying out, I finally fell seriously ill whilst delivering stores by boat to a group of scientists - entomologists and zoologists - based at a former Belgian colonial resort some 80 kilometres down river of Kisangani, called Yangambi. I had unadvisedly spent the whole day in an open boat, unprotected, under a searing equatorial sun. This brought on a serious fever.

I was very ill indeed and quite unable to help myself for several weeks. A Gurkha soldier and some 'Sisters of the Revolution' tended me until I was fit enough to travel. I was then taken back to Kisangani and put on a riverboat to Kinshasa, where I was to recuperate.



Cartoon of Blashford-Snell meeting the President



Climbing a rain-forest tree to place insect traps



The voyage down to Kinshasa took nearly a week and I remember that it was Christmas time, because I shared a tinned English Christmas pudding I had been issued with by a young American teacher I met on the ship. The riverboat itself did not disappoint. It was really quite large and had three decks and on top a raised cabin which was the Captain's bridge. The upper deck was the better of the three, and this is where I had a cabin. There were only three Europeans on the ship, myself, the American and a Belgian schoolmaster with his African wife. We had plenty of time to get to know each other. The American was a teacher at the American School in Kinshasa. As it was the school holidays, he had taken some time off to explore the country. He was now returning to the capital. The Belgian schoolmaster kept mostly to himself, but he told us a grim story one evening. He was escaping west from Rwanda. He had been working at a school there when, during one of the periodic bouts of violence that country is prone to, his school was visited by a gang of thugs from the Hutu tribe. They forced the school's teachers to line up and had murdered all the Tutsi men and women amongst them then and there with pangas. The Belgian was married to a Tutsi woman and knew his time was up. He had left everything and fled. Here he was now trying to get to Kinshasa and home to Belgium.

There were many stories like this one. On my trucking trips up-country we had hopped from one mission station to the next. We had quickly learned to avoid the Protestant stations, which only offered tea. But at a Catholic station, I had met a sad old missionary father who, in his sixties, was finally made to take leave after 30 years of service, and then came back after just two weeks in Brussels to find that everyone at his mission had been slaughtered - nuns, priests, gardeners, pupils...everyone.

The riverboat was much more than just a passenger ferry. Ahead of it was attached a whole raft of barges, full of African people of all ages and types. The ship pushed this broad flotilla slowly down the river by day and by night, its huge searchlight feeling out the way through the darkness. There were many traders on the ship, which served also as a trading post for all the villages we passed on the banks of the river. The people of these villages waited eagerly for the ship's arrival and swarmed out onto the river in canoes ahead of it as it approached. The ship would simply head straight into the fleet of canoes and, as we passed, the villagers would try and catch the side of the ship, attach themselves to it and spend a few hectic minutes selling their produce. On the ship, the traders were ready and would spot the best canoes and throw a wet, coloured rag into it to 'reserve' it for themselves. The most favoured were those with small, live crocodiles and those with macabre smoked, whole monkey carcasses. Obviously the Captain had no possibility to manoeuvre during these meetings. He didn't even slow down. And so it



Riverboat



Zaire



Zaire



Camp in the Rain-Forest



came that several times every day he would run down some canoes, whose occupants would disappear under the raft of barges and, as far as I could see, didn't re-emerge once we had passed. Life was cheap.

By the time we reached Kinshasa, the boat resembled a huge floating market. It was greeted at the dockside by a noisy crowd of agents and buyers ready to take the produce brought down from the river villages. It seemed chaotic, but there was obviously some system to it.

My own disembarkation was delayed as the expedition landrover, which had been sent down with me, wasn't released by the dockside officials until an 'import tax' had been paid. Some expedition grandees had come down to the dock to be the first to get their hands on the vehicle. They weren't very interested in me but at least they gave me a lift to my new billet.

Another sponsor of the expedition was Barclays Bank and they kindly put their unoccupied properties in the towns at our disposal. I was taken to an empty flat where I shared the floor of a room with a young cavalry officer who, judging from his surname, was a very close relation of the Royal Family, and who was also recovering from illness. We didn't have much more than that in common, but we got along pretty well.

After a few days, it must have been exactly the 31st of December, my American teacher friend found me. This wasn't too difficult as the expedition had been given access to the grounds of the American school and there was a sort of base camp there. He invited me to a 'New Years' party, but only if I brought more of the Christmas puddings with me. He had told his friends about them and they were curious. I scrounged a few from our stores and met him that evening in his small house in the American school grounds. He was there with two other US teachers, a boogie-box, barbecue and lots of beer. We had a good evening, but they were concerned that one of their group hadn't yet arrived. At last, at about 9 pm, their colleague, a young Californian, turned up with a 'Christmas Cake' which we all ate with alacrity. There followed a couple of days - I'm really not sure how many - when I participated in wild outings into the city at night, to discotheques, louche bars and even dreamed I had a meal at the Chinese Embassy. I also attempted to do chores for the expedition staff. I do remember at least trying to stick stamps onto a huge pile of envelopes, which were to

bear letters to our hundreds of minor sponsors in the UK. I was roundly scolded for my efforts and I was shown the envelopes later. The stamps were all over the place, higgledy-piggledy, upside down and often several on a sheet like the proverbial mad woman's s\*\*\*! (Ambushed by a cake? Nothing new in Africa!)

Somewhere the river party reached the sea at last, and the expedition wound down. The days in Kinshasa came to an end. At least the mystery of the Chinese Embassy was solved. Once a week, this Embassy turned itself into a restaurant and offered a Chinese food buffet for the diplomatic community, to which we temporarily belonged. The price was peanuts but apparently the Chinese staff needed the money.

The final act was a reception at the President's Palace. We all assembled in the gardens of this pile. It was an old-style ornamental garden with cages in which there were wild animals like leopards and apes. After some drinks, we formed a line and Mobutu Seseseké drifted past and gave each of us a limp hand, weakly murmuring "*Enchanté*" as he did so. (Our Kurtz perhaps ... the horror...)

Our flight out from the UK had been a champagne flight. We flew back with sandwiches in plastic foil.



A typical Daily Telegraph article covering the expedition



# MEMORIES OF 1 QUEENS MORTAR PLATOON 1980 - 82

By Gary Walker

When 1 QUEENS handed over Albuhera Barracks Werl, to the Black Watch in early 1980, most of the soldiers thought that they had got the short end of the stick, for the accommodation at Howe Barracks, Canterbury was not superior to what we had just left. In fact, it was classed as substandard and therefore no accommodation charges were paid. Several single soldiers opted to live out in Canterbury, though punctuality was a problem. The first job was to convert the 1-Tonne landrovers to the mortar role. This consisted of installing new kits under the supervision of Sergeant Glenn Perkins.

The platoon was slightly top heavy at the time with SNCOs, including Sergeants Lovell, Perkins, Preston, Holland and Hamilton and Mortar Officer, Captain Henry Eagan. The vehicle conversion took longer than expected due to the Kirke's Company Competition, which had started in Germany and was due for completion. I have no idea how Support Company won, but we did for the first time that I could remember. There was also the visit to the Battalion of our Allied Colonel-in-Chief, HM Queen Margarethe II of Denmark. A few weeks later, I went off to Netheravon in Wiltshire to start my junior mortar course and the Mortar Platoon their pre-Belize training.

I arrived in Rideau Camp in the South of Belize and took over the section from Sgt Glen Perkins. There was no handover, me off the Puma and Glen on. Tangier Company were the rifle company under the command of Major Gancz, Captain Beeston was 2IC and WO2 Steve Bream, the CSM. The section seemed to be in a good mood, though they were complaining about not having done Hunting Caye – a jolly to improve the guys' morale! I spoke with the Company Commander who put us on the next trip. This may have been a mistake, for when we arrived at the island, the Belizean lighthouse keeper came running over to us, as he had spotted Guatemalan fishermen just off the Caye.

They were illegally fishing, and he wanted them arrested. Those that have been to Hunting Caye know that you took a Belizean police officer attached to your section. Taking the Caye dory out, the fishermen were arrested, taken back to the Caye and I said to the police officer that they were to be guarded by my men. He was having none of it. He insisted that he would take personal responsibility for them. The following morning, they had escaped! I remember asking him what had happened. He went on:



Some of A Company meet with us on patrol in a river in the Rideau area



Mortar section in Rideau camp, after an exercise.  
L to R. Me, Ptes Byrne, Bettsworth, Pannel, Granger,  
Carroll, LCpls Templeton, Garner, Elphick and Stewart



Live firing exercise at Cattle landing





*"I had a plan, for if I slept with my head on the door and it should open, I would wake up. "I said: "Well, what happened." He said: "They escaped out of the window!" They had also stolen the new Dory! Hmmm! Not a good start!*

We did like the foot patrols and live firing exercise at Cattle Landing. The shoot didn't last long, as the ammunition was rotten and damp. One HE round fell short, landing around



LCpl Elphick with M16 over his head in Belize



Mortar section in Canada, awaiting transport with Tangier Company

200 metres away from the mortar line. I remember asking the OP whether the round had landed near them. I will not mention the reply. I have inserted a photo of the conditions at the time.

The Master Chef at the time was SQMS Anderson. He was standing behind the hotplate one day and a rhino beetle flew down the cookhouse and hit him in the forehead, knocking him clean out. Two days later when he was back behind the hotplate, he was wearing a tin helmet!

One day I needed to do a recce. I told Private Bettsworth or 'Betsy' to first parade service the half-ton landrover and we set off. Around halfway through the recce, I spotted the rear wheel speed past us. A few seconds later the rear end went down. Betsy insisted that he had done the first parade. I remember saying *"No Big Ting! Just get the breakdown kit out and I will try to find the wheel nuts."* I remember seeing his face, as he hadn't remembered the wheel brace or jack! You can get away without the jack, but not a brace. *"Get going and don't come back without one!"* He was back within 15 minutes, and it fitted. I took one nut off each wheel, job done. Extra guard duties for Betsy.

On our arrival back in Canterbury we started a mortar cadre. A number of cadres were running at the same time. Our live-firing exercises took place on Larkhill ranges, ground role of course. Around this time, it was the block leave period for the Parachute Regiment in Edinburgh. Holland (B) Company were tasked to relieve them, and they were short of men at the time, so I as a newly promoted Sergeant and some of the platoon were assigned. It was a great duty, the time being spent between preparing your kit, field firing (during which one of the toms managed to drop a live grenade in an attempt to throw it) and adventurous training. The city centre was great as well. One day during the guard duties, the Scottish Nationalists came marching over the draw bridge, shouting *"English oot!"* while waving banners. It didn't take long for the guard to escort them back to the square. It did make the local papers. This was probably in retaliation for us sending out a press release about 'England's Senior Infantry Regiment of the Line Guards Scotland's Senior Castle'!

# BERLIN 1970

By Bill Kempton

In March 1970, the 3rd Battalion's B Company was sent from Lemgo to Berlin for ten days, to relieve a company of 1 STAFFORDS from their duties there for some R & R. Berlin being in Communist-held East Germany at this time. We had to travel by train with an armed guard through what was called the 'Berlin Corridor' to reach West Berlin, that half of the city being managed by the British, Americans and French.

We were put up in Spandau Barracks, which was next to the prison of the same name of which the only occupant was Rudolf Hess, the WWII Nazi sentenced to life imprisonment. His guards at that moment within the prison were Russian – the only Russian troops permitted in West Berlin.

Our duties were fairly light. Besides guarding the main gate to the barracks, the platoons alternated a 24-hour standby duty, in case of trouble at the Berlin Wall. Indeed, on Day Two we put on our No 2 dress uniforms and were given a coach tour of the city, including the Berlin Wall and the famous Checkpoint Charlie. There, as promised, East German guards on the other side took photographs of us – obviously, by studying our badges, they updated their intelligence on which regiments were present on the western side.

We'd been given a lecture on security, the importance of not giving out any information about our unit and tasks here, and this came in useful a bit later when a group of us changed into civvies and walked out to check on the famed Berlin nightlife in the Kurfurstendamm, the great tourist strip and also their equivalent of London's Soho. We found a strip-club called Le Clou, graced not only by ladies but by a conjurer and a fire-eater. Then in another pub, a civilian claiming to be Scottish latched on to us, bought us beers, and kept trying to get us to go with him to a party. Plenty of birds and free booze, he promised. To us, even a few beers down, this seemed too good to be true, and we eventually laughed him off after telling him we were 'Tankies'. We then reported this incident the next day. Soon after, the SIB of the military police interviewed us and took a description of the dodgy Scot (I noted that he reminded me of the actor Peter Sellers), though we heard nothing more about it. So, we didn't quite make it into the next John Le Carré novel.



Checkpoint Charlie





To keep us busy while not on guard, we spent a couple of days doing basic infantry training – ambush drills and house-clearing – in the Grunewald Forest, and the Gatow training area, which contained a mock village. More interesting was another coach tour, hosted this time by an RAEC major, into East Berlin. I was surprised we'd be allowed in there at all, but it seemed not unusual, and we were easily passed beyond the Berlin Wall. The eastern side of the city was noticeably dull compared to the west, and we noted the feeling of oppression. The most impressive stop in there was at the Russian war memorial, where we all got out and walked around its huge monuments.

As our ten-day tour neared its end, the main problem was that we'd spent all our meagre wages on the Berlin nightlife. Four of us pooled all our remaining cash and came up with DM14.30, just enough for a couple of beers on our last evening there. And then it was back to Lemgo, where within a week we left Germany for good and began our posting in Ballykinler, Northern Ireland.



Brandenburg Gate

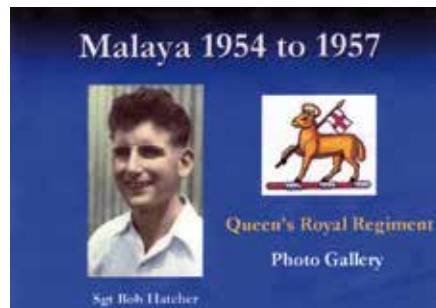


Russian War Cemetery in East Berlin

# FROM MALAYA TO MARRIAGE

By Bob Hatcher

*(Ed: This personal testimony from Sergeant Bob Hatcher covers his time in the Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) and his service in England, Malaya and Germany. It is a fascinating insight into soldiering in the 1950s and the conditions our veterans operated under in the Malayan Emergency.)*



I was 9 years old at the end of World War II and can remember watching the Spitfires flying over Guildford chasing the doodle bugs and turning them back out to sea by tipping their wings.

I joined the Queen's Army Cadet Force when I was old enough and got to the rank of CSM, which was a great help to me when I joined the Queen's Royal Regiment as a regular soldier at the age of seventeen and a half in 1954, signing on for 22 years. I did my first 8 weeks training at Stoughton Barracks, Guildford which was close to my home.



I was best all round recruit of my intake, helped by my army cadet career, was sent on an NCO's course and I got my first stripe. Being a Lance Corporal, I was put on the training staff at Stoughton Barracks and was training some of my school pals who came in on national service.

After nine months, I was made a full Corporal and then served in the Malayan Emergency from 1954 to 1957. We sailed from Southampton on the troop ship *Empire Fowey* which took 21 days to reach Singapore via the Suez Canal. We then went to Selarang Barracks in Singapore where we were kitted-out for jungle warfare.



Next was training in a training camp at Tampin, across the Causeway, in Malaya - tough training for jungle warfare. Our job was to clear the jungle of all the communist terrorists who were trying to take over Malaya and then Singapore. Jungle patrols could last from ten to twenty-one days, depending on whether you were following up a contact. The weather being quite humid and hot, you could go into the jungle with a new set of clothing, and after twenty-one days you'd come out and it's rotting off your body.

Apart from the energy-sapping humidity and the feeling of vulnerability, the incessant noise from all the insects is very wearing and takes a lot of getting used to.







When you've been in the jungle for two or three months, you get used to it. It goes into the background, and you don't start worrying about the creepy-crawlies and the different creatures that are in the jungle, such as snakes, tigers, wild boars, monkey, hornets, leeches and lots of others. At one time, I had twenty-six leeches over my body and as I did not smoke, I couldn't burn them off, so I use salt instead.

We carried five 24-hour ration packs and were well armed. When we were getting low on food and ammunition, there were air drops from Dakota aircraft.



When on a patrol in the jungle, we slept at night in a spaced-out circle with a vine attached to each soldier's arm. We had to be very quiet: only the vine would be pulled if any terrorists were heard. Two men were on sentry duty on a two-hour rota. Sometimes wild boar would run through, and we were woken up. As it was very cold at night in the jungle, we were all given a tot of free rum each night.



On patrol, no one like being 'tail end charlie' as you were very vulnerable to being popped off by the terrorists. You also found there was a lot of comradeship when you were on active service in the jungle. Colleagues all pulled their weight and supported each other. On one occasion, when we were on patrol in the jungle, we found some food and tin cans and following it up, we actually make contact. When you opened fire on the terrorists, they normally dispersed in all directions into the thick of the jungle, rather than return fire and give away their positions. Sometimes you were able to catch a couple from a group of six or seven, but the rest had gone. Another time, I remember getting caught in an ambush by



the terrorists. Naturally, this was a hair-raising situation, but your training takes over straight away and you sort of get control of it. You might try to bury yourself in the ground for the first few seconds but then your training takes over and you handle it quite well.



Another bad time was patrolling the mangrove swamps near Johor Bahru in Malaya. We had to sleep in homemade hammocks made out of ground sheets suspended in the trees putting on a dry set of clothes. Then, at daybreak, we put our old set of clothes back on and jumped down into the swamp. If you did not always keep a dry set of clothes, you would be put on a charge!

We used helicopters to get into the jungle clearings and Ferret armoured scout cars to follow logging tracks which led from the edge of the jungle. After that, you go on foot. We all carried machetes to cut our way through the thick jungle, especially the bamboo: it used to take a long time to go a few yards.



I volunteered to go in a helicopter over the jungle. It would hover while a group of us would go down knotted ropes to the jungle floor. There, our job was to clear an area to allow helicopters to bring in the patrols.

We also had to protect rubber plantations and pineapple estates, patrolling to check that their workers were not supplying the terrorists with food or money, which often happened. Sometimes, we would get a



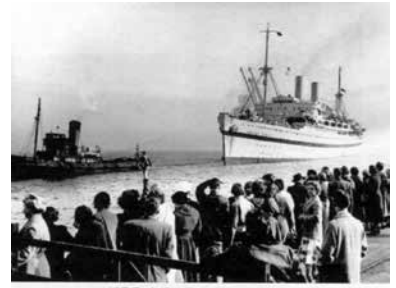
call that the terrorists were attacking the estate managers' living areas. They had their own guns but needed backup. So a patrol was sent out and we cleared the area of terrorists.



During the Malayan Emergency, a lot of fenced-in kampongs (villages) were set up on the edge of the jungle with lockable guarded gates and Sims lights on the posts. At night, a curfew was set up: anybody outside the village after 7pm was shot on sight. This was to prevent the villagers from supplying the terrorists with food and other goods.



We were recalled to Singapore during the riots. Patrolling the streets during curfews was very dangerous as the insurgents tried to cause chaos by rolling lighted oil drums down at us. We did our best to contain the situation and it soon came to an end. I was then promoted to Sergeant.



After a long patrol, when we did get back to our main camp, we were allowed four days rest time. I used to volunteer to guard the train to Singapore which gave me a free trip and I could spend my four days there with my pals. We had a good time: there was a cinema, night clubs and we stayed at the Union Jack club, which was very cheap.

We were attached to the 17th division of the Gurkha Regiment and, I took Gurkha patrols into the jungle. They were great soldiers and I felt safe with them they could also make a good curry out of the 24-hour rations pack.

We returned home from Singapore on the troop ship *Empire Orwell* but, due to the Suez crisis, we were diverted round the Cape of Good Hope, calling at Durban, Cape Town, Las Palmas in the Canary Island. We arrived at Southampton after thirty-four days at sea. When coming into Cape Town, there was a lady on the quay side with a megaphone singing 'Rule Britannia'. Apparently, she had done this during the Second World War, but we were the first troop ship to call at Cape Town since then.



Once home, we were given three weeks leave and I was able to see my girl friend again for the first time in three years. While I was in Malaya, we could only send love letters to each other. At the end of my leave, I was posted to Iserlohn Barracks near Dortmund in Germany. This was considered to be a 'home' posting, which meant a return to the parade ground with training and square bashing - not so good as being on active service.



I had been courting my girl friend for a total of five years and she was very upset that I was going abroad again. I asked if she would marry me, but she said she did not want to be an army wife. So, I eventually bought myself out of the army (as I was on a twenty-two-year contract) at a cost of £68 in 1958. In August 1959, I married her, and we settled down to civilian life and had two lovely daughters.







# THE ROCK (PART 2)

## CEREMONY AND TRAINING

By Mike Scott

Following the US air strike on Libya, Op ELDORADO CANYON, on 15 April 1986, the Resident Infantry Battalion in Gibraltar, 1 QUEENS, was placed on heightened security alert. [Ed: see *The Rock (Part 1): Cold War and Terrorism*] This was imposed by the CO of the Battalion, Mike Ball, because of possible retaliatory air strikes by Libya against British targets in the Mediterranean.

This briefly imposed 'war footing', following the US raid, included QRFs at appropriate NTM. This may have interrupted the rhythm of the Rock's otherwise hectic social life and mixed tennis doubles matches. However, our military ceremonial imperatives were left undiminished; not least the Changing of the Guard at The Convent. Normality soon returned for the soldiers, now in the second year of their tour on the Rock, spanning 1985 and '86.

The following Monday, the new Guard, preceded by the Corps of Drums, marched down the High Street to Convent Place, for the changing of the Governor's Guard. His Excellency Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Terry (successor to HE Admiral Sir David Williams), watched on from his balcony. The Corps of Drums, led by Drum Major Nigel de Warrene Waller, with his impressive, waxed moustache, and mace-throwing stunts, was always a fine sight; while throughout our first year on the Rock,

our Adjutant, Henry Eagan, had unquestionably set the gold standard for officers in both drill and turnout.

Three months after the US raid on Libya, 1 QUEENS closed its Four Corners Border Guard at the Frontier Gate, following a 250-year presence on the border with Spain. This was in the wake of Spain lifting its border blockade against Gibraltar in February the previous year, a condition placed upon Spain on joining the EEC. The Queen's Birthday Parade, at Victoria Stadium, proceeded as planned, as did the final Ceremony of The Keys, at Casemates Square, in which the Outpost Platoon was commanded by Lt Anthony 'Billy' Bolton.

Fundamental to such ceremonies was the Albuhera Band, led by Bandmaster WO1 Davis (successor to WO1 Hill), and band concerts in St Michael's Cave were always memorable. Another fine piece of pageantry had been the Gibraltar Military Tattoo, the previous year. Orchestrated by Rocky Hitchcock, and inevitably dubbed 'The Rocky Horror Show', it was a major spectacular.

Given the Rock's strategic importance, the Resident Battalion was required to maintain certain force levels. Thus, when individual companies departed the Rock to conduct overseas training exercises, they were replaced by a series of TA companies on Ex MARBLE TOR.

Company-level training proceeded, in 1986, as planned. A (Tangier) Company, under Maj John Harcus, and



Drum Major Nigel de Warrene Waller leads the Corps of Drums and the Albuhera Band at the Gibraltar Military Tattoo, 1985





Maj Philip Pearce, Bn 2IC, and the Governor of Gibraltar, HE Admiral Sir David Williams, view a Convent Guard Mount from the Residence balcony, 1985



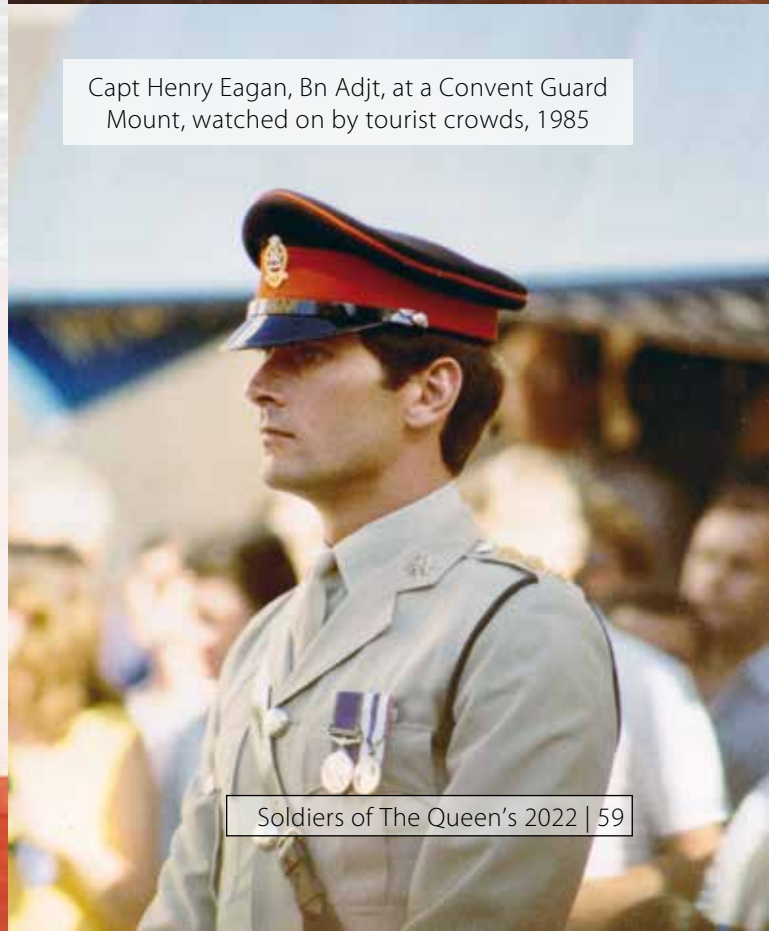
Lt Mike Scott (Captain of Athletics) wins the 1500 meters, with Sgt Sharatt as runner-up, at the Combined Services Athletics Meeting, 1986



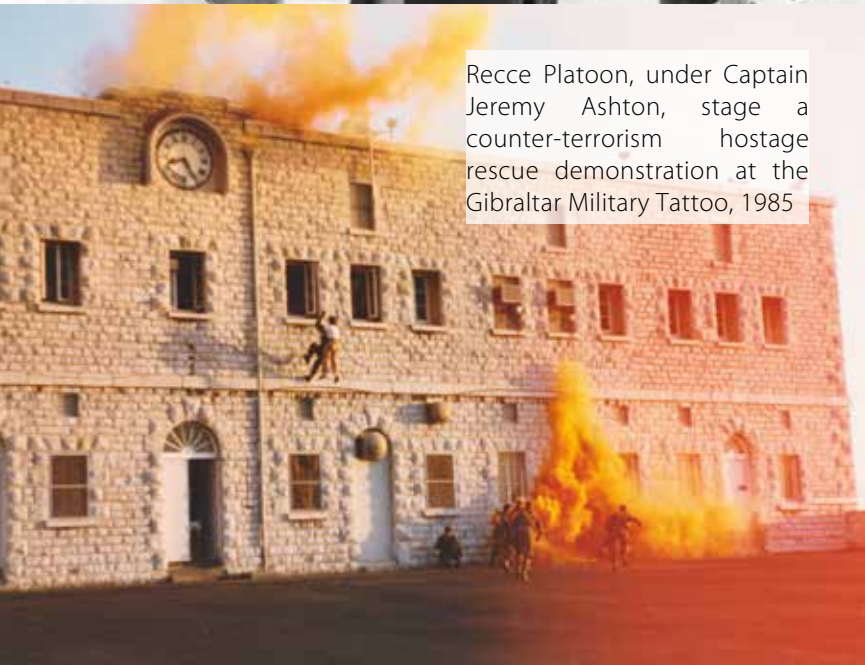
Sgt Bob Allen, of B (Holland) Company, at a Convent Guard Mount, 1985



Battalion Athletics Officials, (L to R), Capt Matthew Brown, Lt John Powell, Maj Rocky Hitchcock, Lt Col Mike Ball, 1986



Capt Henry Eagan, Bn Adjt, at a Convent Guard Mount, watched on by tourist crowds, 1985



Recce Platoon, under Captain Jeremy Ashton, stage a counter-terrorism hostage rescue demonstration at the Gibraltar Military Tattoo, 1985





B (Holland) Company, under Maj Anthony Beattie, deployed to Portugal in April and May respectively [Ed: see 'Sojourn in Portugal', *SOTQ Journal 2020*], while C (Sobraon) Company, under Maj Malcolm Lawson, and Support (Quebec) Company, under Rocky Hitchcock, deployed to Sennybridge and Otterburn.

That autumn, 1 QUEENS deployed for a month to Sennybridge on Ex HIGH TIDE, by which stage 'Kiwi' Carter had assumed command of A (Tangier) Company. Military force level criteria meant that the battalion had to be replaced on the Rock. The stand-in battalion was 2 R IRISH, ordinarily garrisoned in Dover. This presented our Quartermasters, Capts Vic Ebbens and Mick Wischhusen, with some interesting logistic challenges. All vehicles and equipment on loan from 2 R IRISH for the duration of the exercise were moved from Dover to Sennybridge, and then driven all the way back again at the end of the exercise. Meanwhile, in Gibraltar, our entire inventory was signed over to 2 R IRISH for the same month - not a challenge for the faint-hearted.

Thus, although some bemoaned Gibraltar's lack of real estate available for military training, there were opportunities, nonetheless. Successive Mortar Officers, Capts Patrick Crowley and John Powell, and the MILAN officer, Paul Corden, all adapted readily to the environment. They took to firing at towed floating targets out at sea, all the while encouraged in this by

the CO, Mike Ball, who, during the Dhofar War, had fired mortars out to sea at enemy dhows.

Given that Gibraltar was a 'sunshine posting', pre-eminent battalion sports were athletics and cricket. The most enjoyable cricket matches were the annual Glorious 1st of June matches between 1 QUEENS and the Royal Navy. In 1985, HMS Rooke enjoyed the narrowest of victories. However in 1986, 1 QUEENS won resoundingly, following a partnership between Mike Ball and Rocky Hitchcock, which placed the Battalion in an unassailable position.

Building on the success of its first year on the Rock, the Battalion Athletics Team also enjoyed notable success in 1986. Providing the entire Army Team at the Combined Services Athletics Meeting, it won decisively against the Royal Navy and RAF, winning several first places in track and field including, Lt Mike Scott (Captain of Athletics) in the 1500 metres and the 1500 metres steeplechase; LCpl Fitzandrews, 200 metres; Pte Boothe, 400 metres; Pte Christopher, High Jump; as well as Army team wins in all the track relay events.

The Gibraltar Regiment always fielded a particularly strong hockey team. As a result, our Battalion hockey stars, including Malcolm Lawson, Lts Jon Wright, James Bulpitt, Richard Owen, Bandmaster (WO1) Davis, and Sgt Jackson, were always ensured excellent competition.

As always, boxing enjoyed immense popularity. Under successive Boxing Officers, Bill Marshall and Vic Ebbens, assisted by SSgt Gildert (our APTC Instructor) and LCpl Phillips, it too enjoyed success, as did that mainstay of



Lt Col Mike Ball, CO, leads his Battalion during the QBP full dress rehearsal. Brig RTP 'Dick' Hume, Deputy Fortress Commander, Gibraltar takes the salute, Victoria Stadium, 1985





Lt Col Mike Ball, CO (right), presents a silver cup to Lt Mike Scott, 6 Platoon, winners of the Battalion Falling Plate Shooting Competition, on Ex HIGH TIDE, Sennybridge, 1986



Quarter Masters, Capt Vic Ebbens (left) and Capt Mick Wischhusen, at the Glorious 1st of June Officers' Mess Ball, 1986



'Death in the Afternoon': a Spanish Bullfight at La Linea, Spain, with the 'Rock' of Gibraltar providing the backdrop, 1986

battalion sport, football, in which LCpl Fitzandrews and Pte Salako featured prominently, and both made it into the Army football squad.

Our Adventure Training Centre, led by Capt Ken Hames and WO2 Paddy Ryan, offered sailing and windsurfing, while rock-climbing and caving were also popular. In early 1986, companies also had the opportunity to ski in Sierra Nevada, Spain. This was initially met with a degree of scepticism by many soldiers. However, once the delights of downhill 'banzai' speed was discovered, they could not get enough of the ski slopes.

Expeditions off the Rock also featured routinely, an undoubted favourite being Ex SPRING RUN to Morocco. A dozen soldiers, led by a platoon commander, with a canvas bag stuffed full of CILOR (cash in lieu of rations),

would set off to Morocco for a fortnight. The opportunity to lead such an expedition, with the ever-dependable Sgt Bob Allen as my wingman, occurred during our first year on the Rock. Travelling in landrovers, with trailers and roof-racks loaded with canoes and windsurfers, our route took in the coastal settlements of Tangier, Rabat, Casablanca, and Agadir. Driving inland, via Marrakesh, through precipitous mountain passes, we headed to the end-road village of Imlil, in the High Atlas Mountains. From here we climbed Jebel Toubkal, at 4,167 metres the highest peak in North Africa.

Morocco certainly offered an insight into a way of life that intrigued a soldier's curiosity and sparked his humour, such as shopping in Berber souks and haggling over the price in dirhams of live chickens for dinner. Taking it in turn to demonstrate culinary expertise, our



various attempts to replicate Coq-au-vin fell a long way short of Michelin star rating. Nonetheless, when washed down with a bottle of beer, all seemed right in the world.

While in Morocco, a tragic Adventure Training accident occurred elsewhere in the world. This precipitated an avalanche of MOD signals to all units, stipulating the requisite ratios of qualified instructors for any such ventures. It may well have been that we were sailing somewhat close to the wind in this respect, for when we arrived back in Gibraltar, aboard the MV Mons Calpe ferry, we were surprised to be met in person at the docks by a somewhat anxious Company Commander, Peter McLelland. "Are you all present and correct?", he asked. "Yes", was our response. "Thank God for that", he exclaimed, with more than evident relief.

It is always wise to take a competent REME mechanic and enough spares on such expeditions, for landrover reliability leaves a great deal to be desired. In May of 1986, our RSM, WO1 'Prof' Boden, set off to visit the Albuhera battlefield in Spain with two landrovers and a dozen soldiers. Both Landrovers broke down on the way, and the party was forced to return to Gibraltar, somewhat sheepishly, and to no end of ribbing.

The pace of social life on the Rock could on occasion challenge one's liver. Highlights were invariably the Glorious 1st of June Mess Balls. Towards the end of the tour, HMS Ark Royal hosted 'The Rock Show', a live concert, featuring Bob Geldof, Alison Moyet, The Pretenders, Paul Young, and Cyndi Lauper. Some of the Battalion managed to secure tickets. Filmed on the aircraft carrier's flight deck in October, it was later aired on British TV on Christmas Day 1986. However, by that stage, the Battalion was very much focused on its next operational posting, South Armagh.



*When I left the Regiment, I joined the RAF Auxiliary Air Force at RAF Station Benson. On 12 June 1989, Her Majesty presented a new Sovereign's Colour. After the event there were many demonstrations of different military skills which her Majesty visited. I was responsible for a demo of a NI type VCP. On arrival at my demo and at the completion, we were lined up. HM spoke to all*



*of us in turn. When she got to me, she asked me if I had any previous service. I replied: "Yes your Majesty in the army in the 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment, England's Senior Infantry Regiment of the Line!" Just in case she didn't know! She then said: "Well done Flight Sgt you have served your country well". I saluted and she left for the next stand.*

Bluey Hedges



# A REGIMENTAL AFV 432

By Simon Penny

Do you ever wonder where your old AFV 432 is? As a former 432 and Scimitar driver with the 3rd Battalion, in my spare time I help to restore, and bring up to a roadworthy condition, old military vehicles: a sort of labour of love.

During the Jubilee Weekend, I attended the Military Show at Chiddingfold in Surrey. I drove an old 432 with the VRN 04EA83, which I had been working on for over a year. I knew it was a vehicle with a 1st Battalion connection but little else. I was approached during the show by a former 1st Battalion officer who was interested in the vehicle. A couple of days later, I received a phone call asking about the same vehicle. It was our very own Association Secretary Alasdair Goulden who had commanded Tangier (A) Company, 1 QUEENS whilst posted to Clifton Barracks, Minden, West Germany.

It turned out that this vehicle with Callsign 11 within a triangle, denoting, 1 Platoon A Company was one of

Alasdair's vehicles. With a little more research, I found that the 1st Battalion had taken over at Clifton Barracks from the 2nd Battalion and a previous A Company Commander during that time was Tim Hurley. Callsign 11 would have been 1 Platoon and previous platoon commanders would have been Lt Matthew Smith with the 1st Bn and Lt Paul Tyson with the 2nd. Tracking down who the drivers were could perhaps come from those reading this article.

The Merlin database of military vehicles shows that this Mk 1 AFV432 came into service on 01/09/1964. It confirms that it was in service with the 2nd Bn, and then the 1st and eventually sold in February 1993. Speed forward to 2022 and the vehicle is still on the road and not melted down and recycled. *(Ed: It's also a lot cleaner than when I had it under command but still has that distinctive AFV 432 smell!)*

We invited Alasdair along for a visit and, needless to say, he couldn't resist a chance to have a cabby!



Vehicle at Chiddingfold.



Back in Command



Vehicle reunited with Alasdair Goulden. Shane Potts, AG, Mick and Simon Penny



Couldn't resist a Cabby



# BELIZE RIOTS 1981

## BELIZE QUIET AFTER RIOTING OVER INDEPENDENCE PACT

By David 'Kiwi' Carter

In early 1981, the warriors of the 1st Battalion had a ringside seat at this last gasp of colonial transition, which played out in a scenario not vastly different from a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, but without the catchy tunes.

So, what was it all about?

The Government of Belize [formerly British Honduras] had for many years largely left matters up to the British, who remained constitutionally responsible for their foreign affairs and defence after Belize had achieved self-governing status in 1964.

It was not until Premier George Price [Peoples United Party] started a campaign for independence, believing that if Belize could rally sufficient international support, independence would soon come. The opposition United Democratic Party argued that the Country's 140,00 inhabitants were not ready to stand on their own.

There followed six years of intensive diplomatic activity on the part of the Belize Government in an exercise that became known as *'the internationalisation effort'*. From 1975 to 1979, the US abstained on all the United Nations resolutions concerning Belize's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The major issue that had to be settled prior to independence was the continuing threat of invasion from Guatemala over a claim to the southernmost part of Belizean territory. In November 1980, the UN passed a resolution that called for the secure independence of Belize before the next session of the UN in 1981. It further called upon Britain to continue to defend Belize. The UN vote was overwhelmingly in favour, with the US voting in favour for the first time.

Britain refused to provide a defence guarantee and Nicholas Ridley [the British Foreign Minister] insisted on further efforts being made to reach a settlement of the Guatemalan claim. In early 1981, this resulted in a document popularly called *'the Heads of Agreement'* and was signed by Britain, Belize and Guatemala.

The United Democratic Party [the Belizean opposition] waged a fierce campaign, insisting on a referendum as to terms proposed in the Heads of Agreement which they

felt gave away too much to Guatemala. This campaign led to protests, riots and strikes which shut down most of the businesses and government service for three days and culminated in the looting, and burning of several homes and government offices in Belize City. Clashes between supporters of the various factions in the northern town of Corozal led to the deaths of five people.

The result of this continuing disorder was the declaration of a state of emergency on 2 April 1981 by the British Governor James Hennessy. The declaration included the imposition of a 9pm - 5am curfew and the 1600 British troops stationed in the colony were placed on alert. In the main, however, the local Belize Police and the Belize Defence Force provided patrols in Belize City armed with rifles and clubs.

1 QUEENS was within the last few weeks of its 6-month tour of Belize and were in the process of preparing to hand over to 1 GORDONS. I was the Staff Captain Q in HQ BF Belize on an 18-month tour and lived in Belize City, so I had a first-hand view of events.

A few of my tongue-in-cheek observations may give some flavour of the time:

Just a day or so prior to the state of emergency declaration, I was in the centre of Belize City in civilian clothes when I saw a crowd of about 40 local people gathered on a small piece of waste ground, which might once have been a park. They were being harangued by a very excited local who I presumed was a member or supporter of the opposition UDP.

Suddenly, a white Range Rover with a 1-star plate on the front and flying a red British Forces Belize pennant on the bonnet stopped on the street on the far side of the park. Immediately behind it was a ¾ ton Army landrover with half a dozen Royal Pioneers sitting in the back clutching pick helves. The Brigadier exited his Rover, raised his arms and began to address the crowd to encourage them to disperse.

Unfortunately, the speaker whose harangue had not, up to that stage, raised any great passion in the crowd, now had a focus for his speech and the crowd became more



restive and a number of missiles were thrown; not with any great intent or accuracy, it must be said. The Brigadier decided that he was not having any useful effect and remounted his white charger, and much to the relief of the Royal Pioneer escort, departed. The crowd melted away as well; many of whom, in that delightful childlike manner of Belizeans, were giggling and chuckling, their major entertainment of the afternoon concluded.

It is worthy of note that the makers of the film *Dogs of War* had only recently completed their filming in Belize, having selected it as a location which provided the needed air of dilapidation required for the movie.



Belize City Central Police Station

On the declaration of the state of emergency, it was decided that there should be a liaison officer from British Forces Belize in the Central Police Station in Belize City throughout the curfew. Since I lived in the City, I was duly appointed as this liaison officer. As I was to be the only British Forces Belize person likely to be on duty in the city after curfew, I enquired about the possibility of a weapon for personal protection should the rioters attempt to storm the gates of the police station in the night. This was refused, with murmurs of 'sacrifice for the greater good' should the worst happen. The HQ British Forces Belize staff, quartered at Airport Camp some 10 miles from the city, scuttled off to the safety of their homes behind the wire; and I set off from my home in the city prior to assuming my vital role at the Central Police Station.

There was a large room on the upper floor of the police station, which from memory, had a chair and little else apart from a very large radio set which, throughout my watch from 9 pm to midnight on the first night of the curfew, neither received nor sent a message. Although the lights on the set all worked, I am not convinced that the ops room at Airport Camp was even on the same frequency!! Certainly, the radio checks at the beginning and end of my shift went unanswered. There was no

signaller, no signal instructions and, from memory again, no ops log.

There was a young Belizean police officer guarding the front door of the police station clutching his lovely old Lee Enfield .303 rifle. Given what happened a couple of nights later I had the foresight to make sure that he knew I was coming whenever I had occasion to go down the stairs.

So, in the best traditions of these things, I was replaced at midnight by our very own gallant Captain Alasdair Goulden [who had been flown especially from Battlegroup South] to continue, unarmed, to liaise with the non-existent senior Belizean police officer. If truth be told he volunteered for the night stag so that he would be on UK time by the time he got back to Blighty, spending the last fortnight of his time in Belize topping up his sun tan!



Headquarters British Forces Belize

A couple of nights into the curfew, there was a tragic incident whereby the Bandmaster of the Belize Police Band was approaching the Central Police Station in the early hours of the morning, having apparently passed a convivial evening somewhere. He was challenged by an armed on-duty policeman and failed to respond correctly. The police officer 'discharged his firearm' as the saying goes, and sadly killed the Bandmaster. This was unfortunate for the Bandmaster, and more so as he was also the only Belize City undertaker.

Arrangements were made for the Bandmaster's funeral. As there was a fear of disorder resulting from the incident, C Coy 1 QUEENS [as the Airport Camp element of Battle Group North] was to provide public order backup for the police should it be required. The order of dress included 'battle bowlers', which caused a sharp intake of breath for those less astute warriors who had neglected to include the helmets interior spider in their kit on leaving Canterbury, thinking there would be no need for tin hats in the jungle. I have it on good authority that it took a significant quantity of socks and underwear to prevent



the spike in the helmet settling uncomfortably into the top of the skull!

On 6 July 1981 at the ongoing negotiations, the



This aircraft was one of the four that frequented the Belize airspace during the 1977 troubles and was presented to the Belizeans on Independence. John Boston and the late Robert 'Jonah' Jones.

British at last became convinced that no agreement was possible, and a Joint Communique made it clear that Belize would nonetheless proceed to independence and that Guatemala would not seek to prevent Belize's independence by force or the threat thereof.

And so it was that on 21 September 1981, Belize with all its territory became an independent State, with full sovereignty, with British troops stationed there to defend Belize against any possible attack from Guatemala.

*No big ting man*



*My wife and I were invited to a reception in the basement of the Tower of London by a nameless Regiment whose Colonel in Chief happened to be Her Majesty. We were standing in a corner of the basement holding our drinks and looking along the northern passageway as HM approached, talking to various guests. Unknown to us, and certainly to HM, approaching along the eastern corridor was a waitress carrying a very large tray of drinks. Unfortunately, HM and the waitress reached the corner simultaneously. The waitress dropped the tray, there was a terrible crashing sound, and the floor was covered in glass and alcohol. The waitress fled and Her Majesty, possibly a little damp around the ankles, proceeded on as though nothing at all had happened.*

Major Mike Adler

*(whose wife will verify the truth of this anecdote)*



# PRESERVING 6 UDR'S HELICOPTER HOURS (NOT)

By John Powell

There was a desperate tone to the Association Secretary's email stating that he was lacking stories for this year's magazine, 'which would be rather thin' if none of us came forward with contributions (*Ed: Only by me nagging do you get a Journal!*). I thought I'd exhausted my stock of stories (at least the ones that can be published), and, if I'm honest, they did seem to focus on my cock-ups rather than successes (and I'll beat both our President and Secretary to the draw by stating that there are probably more of the former than the latter); but I suddenly recalled a set of events from 1984.

Across the Regiment in 1984 there were several of us involved in skydiving, (the December 1983 Regimental Magazine had a front cover of Captain Nick Sharples from 3 QUEENS in freefall over Florida). In 1 QUEENS, I had tried to encourage members of my platoon to take up sky-diving by organising a course in Kent (we were in Northern Ireland at the time, so of course there were quite a few volunteers). Captain Henry Eagan was an accomplished sky-diver, Private Bill Byrne was the most highly qualified sky-diver in the battalion with civilian qualifications, and we had recently had a SNCO posted back into the battalion, Colour Sergeant Iain Townsley, who had more experience than the rest of us put together.

During a leave period in 1984, Bill Byrne and two members of my platoon, Privates Andy Gardiner and 'Bill' Haley, and me went on an expedition led by Major (later Brigadier) Dick Trigger PARA with others serving in Northern Ireland, to North Carolina in the United States where we spent three weeks drinking beer, listening to heavy rock music whilst watching girls Jello wrestling and sky-diving (I looked up Jello wrestling on the Web to get the spelling right – there seems to be a whole industry based around it!) The day would start with a 'hangover' jump (often at 12,000 -15,000 ft – which bent the rules regarding oxygen provision) with three or four jumps made in a day before making off to the 'Flaming Jug' beer barn in the evening in nearby Fayetteville where our British accents attracted our personal waitress for the duration - one 'Tattoo Sue' who would keep our beer topped up throughout the night. It was tremendous fun and we all progressed up the British Parachute Association ranking to become quite expert sky-divers.

On return to Omagh, where the Battalion was based, I had with me an Army Parachute Association issued parachute which I was due to return in a few weeks. It was something called a Unit 200, quite an old design which had a nasty



Lt John Powell and Pte Bill Bryne prepare to fly the Regimental Flag over Raeford North Carolina



tendency to swivel during opening (essentially a long delay) which was fine if you anticipated this and opened a bit higher than 2,500 ft.

For those who have not served in Omagh, the Garrison used to consist of a resident infantry battalion and 6th Battalion The Ulster Defence Regiment. The two units were separated by the River Strule and extensive sports pitches. Chatting with Henry Eagan, we decided that the sports pitches were an ideal Drop Zone and we hit on the idea of 'hijacking' a Lynx helicopter and jumping out over Omagh. 1 QUEENS used to provide the 8th Infantry Brigade Airborne Reaction Force, consisting of 8 pax commanded by an officer with a dedicated Lynx Helicopter parked at Omagh which would changeover every day at 1200 hrs. One of the senior pilots was also an enthusiastic sky-diver and didn't take much persuasion to help us out by diverting the outgoing helicopter – what could possibly go wrong?

According to my logbook, four jumps, involving four of us, took place between the 15th and 20th September 1984, mostly from 10,000 ft to 11,500 ft, (and I remember seeing, on an unusually sunny day, the whole Province stretched out in front of me, from Belfast through Co Tyrone to the Atlantic Coast and thinking how small the place is). One jump was from 3,000 ft, which was a tad risky given my earlier comments about the Unit 200.

Things worked quite well; though once we did accidentally miss the barracks and landed behind the local Catholic housing estate, but the Lynx came and got us out! On one occasion I had a malfunction and ended up landing on 6 UDR's piece of turf – this attracted unwelcome attention from someone who threatened me with disciplinary action (which never materialised). More amusingly, I was told by our IO (now the Association Secretary) that the sight of our



Pte Bill Hayley making a textbook stable exit on a progression jump



Lt John Powell making an exit over Raeford Forest



parachutes in the sky had caught the attention of his children and some friends at home who ran across the room to watch, spilling food and drink all over the carpet in the process (we were due to hand over within a few months, so no doubt march-out prep had begun).

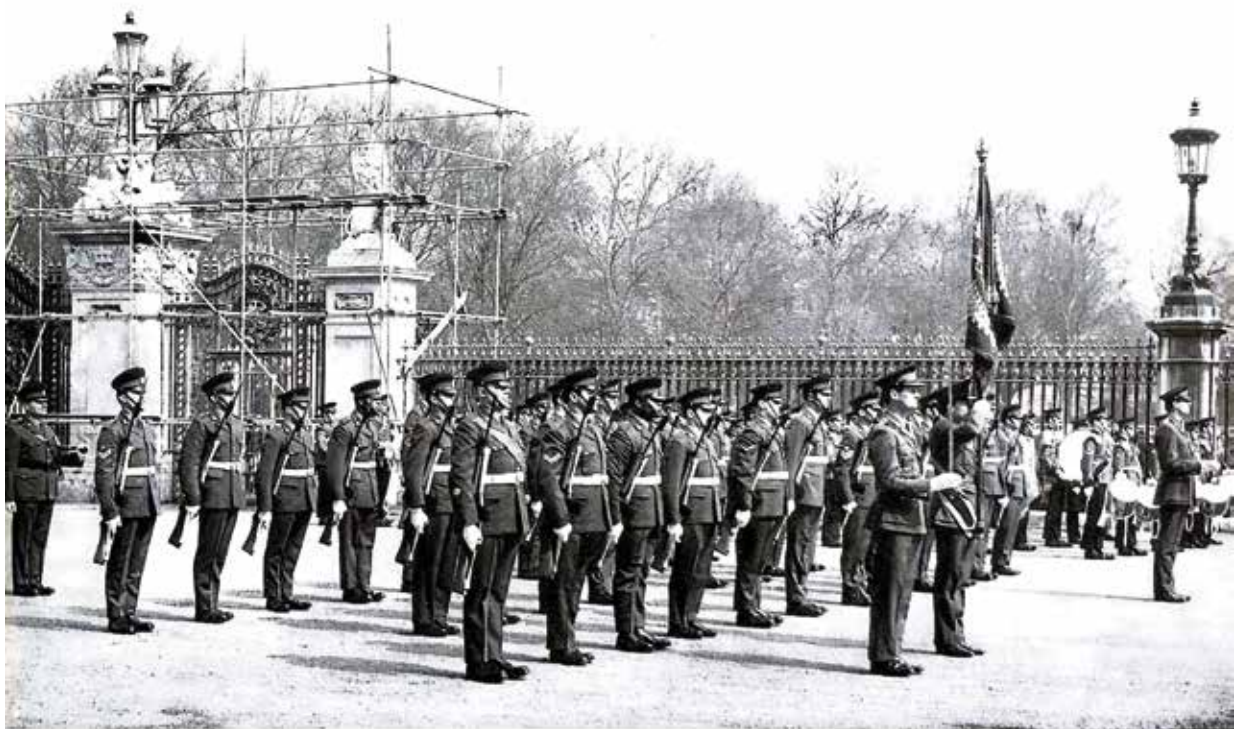
However, our activities had to come to an end after BHQ received a rather irate call from the 6 UDR Ops Officer. For some reason the helicopter hours allocation for the Brigade ARF was allocated to 6 UDR and not 1 QUEENS – our sky-diving had pushed the helicopter usage beyond the allocated limits (it takes quite a long time to get to altitude in a Lynx), and we were told to stop – the parachutes had to go back to Netheravon shortly afterwards anyway, but it was fun whilst it lasted.

A postscript to all this sky-diving was the decision to form a Regimental Freefall team in 1985 - the Flying Dragons. They were sponsored at one point by Danepak Bacon (with appropriate logos on their canopies) and became known as 'Pigs in Space' after the Muppet Show feature of the time (and after performing in front of Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II and 1 QUEENS in Tidworth in 1988 (by the latter not the former I hasten to add)). I occasionally jumped at displays with them when I could be spared, breaking a leg on one occasion, and having a malfunction over New Addington near Croydon (try landing a canopy on a housing estate); but those are stories (or cock-ups) for another time.

## Public Duties

*While doing Public Duties in London, Maj Mike Hare decided that it was unnecessary to use the words of command in the Drill Manual and instead substituted the phrase 'New Guard - ARMCHAIR!' which was quite sufficient to get the guard to do the right movements.!*

Rocky Hitchcock



**The New Guard on Buckingham Palace forecourt under the command of Major H. M. Hare. The Ensign is 2nd Lieutenant P. M. H. McGill.**

*Photo: P.R.O.*



# INVICTUS GAMES IG22 - THE HAGUE

By Gary Bye

## *Invictus*

*By William Ernest Henley*

*Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be,*

*For my unconquerable soul.  
In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance*

*My head is bloody, but unbowed.  
Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade  
And yet the menace of the years*

*Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.  
It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll.*

*I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.*



Prince Harry presenting Medals for Wheelchair Basketball





GB v France



GB v USA Wheelchair Rugby



HM King Willem-Alexander presents the Gold medal for Wheelchair Basketball





Prince Harry Closing Ceremony

Invictus means 'Unconquered'. For so many veterans the end of service means losing a sense of belonging and purpose that becomes a way of life, a void that is difficult to fill. This can be polarised when ended abruptly by the trauma of conflict causing life-changing injuries that are so physically obvious for some and mentally not so obvious for others.

Launched by the Duke of Sussex, Prince Harry in 2014 in London, The Invictus Games 2022 (IG22) brought together veterans who have been injured whilst serving their countries, and their families, from all over the world. They allowed them to embark or continue on a road of recovery by embracing the inner warrior spirit and competing in adapted games.

So, off I went to play my part in this special event by joining an army of volunteers working across the games in areas such as logistics, ticketing, hospitality and ceremonies, affectionately known as 'the minions' because of the distinctive yellow uniform; people from all over the globe, old, young, veterans, civvies, able-bodied and disabled together with one aim of delivering a memorable games.

Covid 19 decimated international sporting events but this year the rearranged Invictus Games were wonderfully hosted by the Dutch Military at Zuiderpark in the Hague.

The opening ceremony started with the pomp of mass bands, competitors entering the arena, a special standing ovation for Team Ukraine and an emotional Last Post! The Duke of Sussex opened the games, and the scene was set for an incredible week with over 100,000 people attending to watch the excitement of wheelchair basketball, volleyball, cycling and swimming, determined endurance in athletics; the sublime skill of amputees firing arrows with their teeth in archery, the power and grit in weight lifting, indoor rowing and the crash and bash of ruthless wheelchair rugby...

In the fanszone, various military units and companies gave interactive demonstrations on modern warfare equipment, assault courses, physical training and fitness to schoolchildren visiting IG22. Disabled children and injured veterans exchanged stories of dealing with the challenges of their condition. Veterans' associations and other organisations offered advice on post-service



support for employment, hobbies and mental wellbeing - complete strangers, but something for everyone.

After a long day on site, the homeward trams were filled with athletes and their families from across the nations sharing the disappointments and triumphs from a day of competition - an international military community able to empathise together on the journey of healing by embracing the spirit of the games. Each journey is different, some IG athletes will surely go on to compete in the International Paralympics for their countries, for others it is competing with their inner self and taking the first steps to a new life.

The wheelchair basketball final closed the competition with the USA taking gold, the Netherlands taking silver and GB taking bronze with the medals being presented by His Majesty King Willem-Alexander.

Prince Harry stayed for the duration of the games. We witnessed the warmth and care for every disabled veteran he spoke to, the handshakes and hugs for families supporting their athletes and a genuine commitment to championing the future of Invictus for his fellow veterans to continue the healing process and overcome the challenges of being injured in combat.

And so, the closing ceremony, followed by beer and more beer, brought the end to a week of hard work, the usual mickey-taking banter and a sense of pride that the traditional values that we all learnt from our time in the Queen's Regiment or wherever one served, are still as relevant today as they were the day one left, if we ever truly leave that is?

For more information about the Invictus Games go to <https://invictusgamesfoundation.org> - Dusseldorf in 2023 promises to be as spectacular as IG22.

*In August 1969, 1 QUEENS took Derry from 1 PWO whose tour had expired and soldiers slept on the pavements and everything had been scrubbed ready for handover. But we were to be prepared for the long haul and had to be ready for at least four months in situ! C Company was assigned the interface of the Orange Hall (Protestant) and surrounding Catholic areas, where there was a ready-made Catholic primary school - perfect, but for the fact that its ablutions had had been designed with 11-year children in mind, whilst they were about to have to copewith backsides of adult, often overweight solders, like, for example, the 1969 version of Corporal XXX! This was no place to argue about vital statistics! After some hectic haggling I agreed with the Catholic headmaster that the Army would replace the existing kid size pottery with adult sized items as long as they were "returned to normal by the start of the autumn term" Both I and the headmaster reckoned we had a safe bet! How wrong we were! This was in 1969; in August 1986 - I as ACOS G2 HQNI and John Taylor - he as RSM of 2 QUEENS visited the "shit house" hoping to get a glimpse of Martin McGuinness outside Crazy Prices on the 'green hill far away". We were disappointed, but I was able to renew a very old acquaintance – the headmaster not the loo seat!*

Tim Trotman



# COMBINED IRISH REGIMENTS 100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION AT THE CENOTAPH



Members of The Queen's Regimental Association were invited to take part in the Combined Irish Regiments Association (CIRA) Cenotaph March on 12 June for the second year. This was a singular honour afforded to us as it was the 100th Anniversary of HM King George V instructing in 1922 that it should take place annually, and was in recognition of the contribution that the Regiment made over the many tours undertaken during Op BANNER.

Some 30 veterans from the Association and 50 cadets from the Frimley and Camberley Cadet Corps joined over 300 serving and retired soldiers from the various current and veteran Irish Regiments and Associations. We marched on a sunny day from King Charles Street up Whitehall past the Cenotaph before returning to King

Charles Street for the inspection. Each participant was presented with a commemorative medal before all were invited to the Civil Service Club for a reception.

This was a great event. We have already been invited for next year which will take place on 11 June 2023.











# A WEEKEND IN GUILDFORD

By Phil Dobson



Jeff Budgen



At Guildford Cathedral



Three years ago, when I first came on Facebook, my old mate Den Gallacher contacted me and discussed the possibility of a trip to Guildford to try and locate the final resting place of our old comrade Jeff Budgen. Having been a coffin bearer at his funeral, I knew Jeff's remains were in a Guildford cemetery but wasn't sure where, but after mentioning it on Facebook, I received help in tracking it down to Guildford Crematorium. After a phone call to the crem, a very helpful gentleman was able to give me the exact location. Meeting up with Den on a Saturday morning, we headed for the crematorium and found Jeff's marker. It was also nice to see other markers next to his of other family members. After paying our respects, we headed to Guildford Cathedral to see our old Regimental Colours which had been laid up there many moons ago. Again, many thanks to those of you who pointed me in the right direction which enabled me to find our Colours quickly. A great weekend.



Den Gallacher and Phil Dobson at Jeff's grave



# 3<sup>RD</sup> BATTALION OFFICERS' REUNION LUNCH 2022

By Mike Hurman

After the cancellation last year, due to the Covid-19 national lockdown, Guy Wood, undeterred, successfully reorganised a thoroughly enjoyable lunch at The Army and Navy Club on 5 May 2022. The Wellington Room and bar provided a fine venue. A seating plan arranged by Guy with some judicious use of memory and the help of the odd staff list ensured that everyone had the chance to catch up with someone from their time. We had all served together at one time or another, thirty to forty years ago, in Fallingbostel, Canterbury, Belize and Aldergrove.

Mark Rayner gave an eloquent speech, and this was followed by a rendition of a sea shanty by John Collingridge (JC), who had flown over from Western Australia specifically for the reunion. John is a member of a local sea shanty group called "The Anchormen", as mentioned in the last edition of *'Soldiers of the Queen's Journal'*. JC won the longest distance travelled; others had travelled in from near Brecon, Worcester, Gloucester, Sherborne, and Loughborough, to name just a few places. The bonhomie continued in the bar downstairs and out on the sunny western terrace until the day's light faded.

The reunion was a wonderful occasion, full of good humour and cheer, but we also poignantly remembered those who could not be with us. At its heart were comradeship and pride in a battalion that is no more.



Attendees as in the photograph, were:

Left side (front to rear):

Mark Hutchinson  
Keith Gubbin  
John Etherington RAMC  
Steve Taylor  
Jeremy O'Connor  
Bob Wilby  
Mark Rayner  
Ian Raynes  
Jerry Maltman  
David Greenfield  
Stephen Cooper  
Mark Dunham

Mike Williams( far end)

Right side (front to rear):

Clive Meek  
Richard Graham  
Simon Wilson  
Mark Smallwood  
Mike Hurman  
Robert Knight  
Nick Sharples  
John Collingridge  
Guy Wood  
Alan Weston  
Mark Ingledow

**Unconquered, we served!**



# REUNIONS

## QUEEN'S REGIMENT REUNION AND MEMORIAL SERVICE AT THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

By Phil Dobson



Our planned event went ahead on Saturday 17 September as scheduled and once again we enjoyed a gloriously sunny day. There was quite a good turnout with some regulars and a couple of new faces this year. A few of us made a weekend of it and booked into the hotel for the Friday and Saturday nights and of course out came the expected war stories and normal friendly banter.

After breakfast on Saturday morning, we made our way to the National Memorial Arboretum for our 1100hrs meet-up with those that were coming for the day's event. After meeting and greeting, we made our way to our memorial for our Service of Remembrance. This followed our usual formula and special thanks must be given to Den Gallacher for all his work in putting this all together. During the service Den did a dedication to Pte Neil Clark of A Company, 2 QUEENS who was shot and killed on the 23rd of April 1984 in Londonderry and also paid tribute to other members of the patrol who were injured .

Eddie Dale read out the Soldier's Prayer and this was followed by a roll call of our comrades who had moved to the FRV in the past 12 months, sadly a total of 67 names. I had the honour





reading out the names of those from the 1st Battalion, with Mark Trickett, 2nd Battalion, Tony Farrow for the 3rd and Del Langston for the 4th and TA battalions.

The Act of Remembrance was read out and was followed by the Last Post, a minute's silence, and the Rouse. Eddie Dale then read out the Regimental Collect and Den Gallacher did the closing address.

After the usual photo calls, those who wished to explore the Arboretum did so, and we then returned to our hotel for drinks and those who were staying carried on the movement in the evening.

Sadly, after breakfast on Sunday morning, the weekend was over all too soon and it was time for farewells but hopefully only until next year. Once the regimental calendar has been consulted for 2023, we will publish details of next year's event, but a provisional date has been earmarked for Saturday 23rd September 2023 and we hope to see you there. Again, our thanks to those who attended and made the event possible, and we hope you enjoyed it.

Until we meet again.

## B COMPANY AND RECCE PLATOON, 3 QUEENS, FALLINGBOSTEL REUNION 2022

By Mike Hurman

During HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend on Saturday 4 June, members of B Company (mainly 5 Platoon) and Recce Platoon with wives met up for a BBQ. It has been held annually and been generously hosted by Adam (Dickie) Pinder and his wife Cathy at their house in Bexhill for the last seven years. This is another great example of the regimental spirit that lives on. As ex OC 5 Pl and Recce, I had been tracked down and invited a couple of years ago, but with the Covid-19 pandemic interruptions, this was my first attendance. I felt quite humbled to be invited and welcomed so warmly by all. It became very clear that my memory of names was lacking to a terrible level. David Barnes (Barnsie) had to remind me that



Rear: Paul Oliver, Eric Sigsworth (Sigi), Martin Searle (Kipper), Sean Mason, David Barnes, Marc Williams,  
Alan Powell (Teabag),  
Centre: Ray Hoddinott, Andy Hunter, Jack Russell, Tony Westmoreland, John Edwards (Eddie), Chris Paul,  
Guest, Guest, Adam Pinder (Dickie)  
Front: Jim West, Mark Cook, Simon Penny, (Si) Steve Battell, Gary Pearce, Tony Belas, Mike Hurman,  
Steve Hinton, Darren Fassett (Jimmy), Terry Matlock





he was my first APC driver 40 years ago when I arrived in Fallingbostel.

The arrival of Steve Hinton was warmly received particularly by the Recce members. Steve H asked us all to form a circle and hold a minute's silence in remembrance of those caught up in the current terrible Ukraine conflict, and then to drink a toast to our regimental colleagues no longer here. Steve Hinton was a great user of acronyms, remembered by many, such as YOPA (your own personal admin) and TATOD (talk about the old days).

Tony Westmoreland was the main chef of the day, working away at the BBQ producing copious quantities of burgers, kebabs, steaks, sausages, bratwurst and freshly fried chips to order. I was particularly taken by his personal efforts and own expense to help regimental colleagues in need. He expressed a wish to form a nationwide network of regimental contacts in support of the Benevolent Fund and the regimental assistance provision: points of contact that can act swiftly to verify, assess and deliver needs. We have so much talent among our former soldiers that can offer help. *(Ed: there is of course a comprehensive welfare network tapped into by RHQ PWRR but they would always welcome assistance from any of our members. To assist, contact the Association Secretary or Diana White at RHQ PWRR.)*

Great banter, stories, catching up, accompanied by great food and drink was had by all. Some had travelled from as far afield as Manchester and Devon, and no doubt other far-flung parts of the UK as well as more locally from "Good ol' Sussex by the Sea". Some stayed overnight at hotels, campsites or Dickie's house. A great day was had by all and with good weather. I have added names to the group photo to assist those with foggy memories.



Gary, Eddie, Jim and Tony



Me with Steve H



Group with wives



# THE QUEENS REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION AGM AND REUNION



Absent Friends are remembered



The President addresses the AGM



Up to no good!



WO2 RQMS Charlie Cogan presented with a tankard with thanks at the QRA reunion



# A TRIBUTE TO A TRUE QUEENSMAN

By John Taylor

As Queensmen, we have proved our brotherhood many times over the years, with the British Army's first black officer Capt Tull remembered on the War Graves Memorial in Arras, and George Arthur Roberts who served with distinction in WW1 and volunteered for WW2 but was told he was too old. He went on to become the first black man to volunteer for the London Auxiliary Fire Service and was awarded the BEM. He now has a visual biography in the Imperial War Museum. It just felt right to give my old mate Barry Camille a mention for his service and love of our regiment.

I was an only child and always wanted a brother. I met Barry in Berlin in 1971. I grew to respect him for the great individual he was on the streets of Belfast in 1972. I was a 25-year-old sergeant, and he was a corporal of a similar age. I was 5 ft 8 and a white Englishman; he was 6 ft 4 and a black Kenyan from the Seychelles. From then on it was like little and large, as those of you who knew Barry Camille will appreciate.

We stuck to each other, as only soldiers can, from then on. So much so that when my wife died, I went to his home in the Seychelles and drank all his whisky with a little help from him. When I met a new love, I took her to meet him and his wife Letty in the Seychelles.



Barry Camille, Bob Owen and John Taylor

When I received the sad news that he was dying, I downed tools, left my work mates and told them I was going to see my mate in the Seychelles (if a mate in the Seychelles says he needs to see you, you drop everything and go out there). My workmates said: *"You are going all that way because an old mate wants to see you?"* I smiled and said: *"Yes, but you will never understand."*

When I arrived, I was asked not to tell him he was dying, but later Letty asked me to be there when she told him. I was with Letty and his sisters when she told him that he did not have long to live, and a tear ran down my cheek. He gave me a steady look and did not bat an eyelid except to say to me: *"Is that a*

*tear, mate?"* I replied: *"Yes Barry, just one"* and went for a swim. All I could do from then on was drink more of his whisky and help him and Letty the best I could. He needed help to walk and encouragement to talk and reminisce about our past as old mates.

When I left him, I kissed him on the forehead as he was too ill to get out of bed. He said: *"That's the first time you've ever kissed me"* and I replied: *"That's because you are such an ugly bugger"*.

I left the Seychelles on the Wednesday. When I arrived home, I had a phone call from the Seychelles ex-servicemen's club. They had asked Barry what they could do for him, and he replied: *"Get my mate back out here to help me die."* So, I flew back out on the Sunday. When I walked into his bedroom, he gave me a big smile and said: *"Here is my mate back to help me die"*. It was stiff upper lip time for me as I laughed and said: *"Bollocks!"*

He died a couple of days later and I made sure he looked how he, our mates and our regiment would have wished.



# THE NEW WORSHIPFUL MASTER

By Worshipful Brother Ged Vernon Deutrom

On Saturday 11 June 2022 at Freemason's Hall, Great Queen Street, London, at 14:00hrs, I had the honour of finally being installed into the Worshipful Masters chair of Queensman Lodge 2694. After a long wait of two years due to COVID 19, at long last my installation could go ahead.

I recall being initiated into Freemasonry nine years ago by my good friend Worshipful Brother Steve Simmons and being told that one day I'd be sitting in the Worshipful Master's chair, expected to rule and direct the Lodge for one year. At that time, I was a little uncertain, but as I attained the various offices and learnt from those that went before me, I soon settled into learning the required ritual to enable me to be successful.

I'd like to thank my proposer and seconder Worshipful Brother Steven I Simmons, and Worshipful Brother Captain John A R Edwards, and Worshipful Brother Kevin Pearson for all the time and effort they allowed

me via Zoom calls to learn the ritual involved, Worshipful Brother Ronald F Baker for all his advice, friendship and knowledge, Worshipful Brother Michael J Egan for help and support during times of Covid 19 hardship; and lastly but by no means least, Worshipful Brother James SG Burgoyne for his kind and gentlemanly manner when installing me into the Worshipful Master's chair.

Throughout my journey from being the Lodge Inner Guard to reaching the Worshipful Master's chair, I have had tremendous help and encouragement from all the brethren of the lodge.

I look forward to a great year with a fine set of upstanding officers and brothers to support me along the way and look forward to raising plenty of funds for suitable charities.

"To the Queen and The Craft"  
Countless blessings to you all.



The New Worshipful Master Bro Ged Deutrom



# MEDAL RETURN

By Jack Goodwin

In June, James McKeown, ex-3rd Battalion, put a post on a regimental FB page with pictures of a Northern Ireland GSM that he and Errol Malcolm had seen for sale on eBay. They recognised the name inscribed on it as 24187103 Pte G Hall QUEENS. Errol had joined the Army with a Greg Hall and served with him in the same platoon in BAOR.

James subsequently purchased the medal from eBay and then asked for any help or information in identifying exactly to whom it belonged in order to get it returned to its rightful owner or their family, or have it donated to the Queen's Regimental Museum.



Errol seemed to remember that at some point, Greg had transferred to the Army Physical Training Corps. Lt Col (Retd) Steve Wall, ex 1st Battalion, saw the post and suggested contacting me as I was ex-1 QUEENS myself before transferring to the APTC in 1982. He thought that I may know Greg! I had not met Greg during my service but knew that there had been a WO2 (QMSI) Greg Hall in the APTC who was sadly killed in a climbing accident in Scotland in 1993.

I investigated through the RAPTC and Queen's Regimental Associations as to whether this was the same G Hall to whom the medal belonged. Neither were able to confirm this, but fortunately a former friend and APTC colleague of mine, Maj (Retd) Stewart McNeish, had been a good friend of Greg's, was his OC at the time of his accident, and was also a good friend of his widow Sandie. Sandie subsequently confirmed Greg's regimental number and that the medal did actually belong to him and that she would love to receive the medal back in the family home.

James very kindly got the medal cleaned up, restored and court-mounted so that it could be presented back to Sandie and Greg's two sons, Kevin and Martin. The medal was presented back to Sandie and the family and Stewart was honoured and privileged to be able to make the very emotional presentation on behalf of all involved. Also invited and present was ex WO2 (QMSI) Tony Burley who was with Greg at the time of the accident.

Sandie and their sons were delighted to receive the medal back where it belongs and on behalf of the family, a big thank you was sent to everyone involved in this feat of detection.



# MEDAL PRESENTED

By Alasdair Goulden

I had the great pleasure of presenting Pte Bill Childe, ex-Queen's Royal Regiment with his *Pingat Jasa Malaysia*. Bill was a National Serviceman who went out in 1953. His family discovered that he was entitled to the medal (only a few were issued) and arranged to get it through the good offices of Matt O'Rourke, his next-door neighbour and a veteran of the PWRR. I was led to believe that this was to be a fairly small affair, but when I got there, I was met by his entire family. The first photo is of Bill proudly wearing his new medal. The next is of Bill's family at the presentation with Matt by his side. The last is of Bill (LHS) in a photo that appeared in the South London News reporting how he and his platoon had had the Regiment's first kill, which rather surprised his family at the time as Bill had written home with reassuring words about how he wasn't in any danger! They are holding one of the CT's hats who no longer had need of it!



Bill Childe with his family

## WEDDING OF THE YEAR



Marc and Hilary Harrold who donated half their wedding present gifts to the Benevolent Fund.

## The Heavenly Twins!

*When 1 QUEENS was deployed to Londonderry in August 1969, they had two Chaplains attached. One was tall and thin (Anglican) and the other was short and stout (Catholic). One was called David Girling – the other was called David Gibson – but who was who was unknown. Naturally, Officers with a pretension to a classical education called them ‘Castor’ and ‘Pollux’ – the Heavenly Twins. Soldiers, with no pretension, simply called them ‘Castrate’ and ‘Bollocks’!*

Rocky Hitchcock



*On 22 April 1960, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh presented Colours to The First Battalion, The Queens Royal Surrey Regiment. I was senior ensign of the Old Colours (of 1 QUEEN'S and 1 EAST SURREYS) to be marched off parade to Auld Lang Syne. After the parade, the Regiment gave a lunch to HRH and most of the people on parade. The four ensigns of the Old Colours were presented to HRH. He told us that some weeks earlier he had attended a parade of the Royal Marines, of which he was Captain General. Before the parade started, the Parade was ‘Standing Easy’; the bass drummer, had taken the drum off his chest, and had put it on the ground beside him. A sudden gust of wind caught the drum, which rolled across the parade ground, to be retrieved by the highly embarrassed Bass Drummer. A few days later The Royal Navy sent a very large safety pin to the Director of Music of the Royal Marines-- “For use in high wind”.*

Paul Gray





# BRANCH REPORTS

## 1 QUEENS BRANCH

By Steve Parsons

The 2022 Reunion held at Herne Bay in Kent was slightly lower in numbers this year as things were still getting back to normal after COVID. Normally it is held during the May Bank Holiday weekend, but we were unable to book the venue for this date which may have accounted for the numbers as many book the date a year in advance.

Hopefully we will see more of you there for the 2023 Reunion, (including more officers in attendance please!) Once again organised by Joe Dormer, it will take place on the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, Saturday 27th May at Herne Bay Angling Club, 59 Central Parade, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 5JG.

As usual, there will be a Golf Tournament on the Saturday at Westgate and Birchington Golf Club. See the 1 QUEENS website for further details at [www.1queens.co.uk](http://www.1queens.co.uk).

Be good to see you all there.







## ALBUHERA BRANCH (IBERIAN PENINSULA)

By Steve Wall

The Branch continues to grow in membership with three living in Portugal, 12 living in Gibraltar and 15 on mainland Spain. There may be many more living out here in the sun that we have yet to identify. The Branch covers a vast geographical area, so it is not easy to meet up in large numbers. That said, smaller (regional) sociable 'get togethers' have been enjoyed by many members in Gibraltar and on the North Costa Blanca, which we hope to spread across the Peninsula next year. Three members of the Branch travelled to La Albuera for the incredible commemorations on 16 May. As ever, ex-WO2 Stew Streeting, ex-1 QUEENS, was Master of Ceremonies, and organised the very successful annual service at Elvas in Portugal. It was attended by Mayors, Ambassadors, Defence Attachés, Portuguese and Spanish Generals, dignitaries and representatives from Portugal, Spain, Ireland, UK, Germany and the US, and for the very first time the Band of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment played at both Elvas and La Albuera. A separate PWRR Journal article has been submitted for Albuhera Day. It is hoped that as many as 10 from the Branch will attend Elvas and Albuera in May 2023. Stew Streeting also organises the annual 11 November Remembrance Day Service in Elvas each year, which again was very well attended.





Early in the year we lost two of our members, Lenny Coombs and Major Mike Humme MBE. The members of the Branch supplied a Guard of Honour at their funerals. In July, the Branch members scattered Bill Dixon's ashes at a special ceremony.

On 23 April, we celebrated St George's Day and commemorated 100 years since the Chapel was dedicated to the Royal Sussex Regiment. The Branch had a quiz night vs the Royal Navy and we hope to hold a few more quiz nights in future.

On 15 August the Branch Members were on parade and Graham Booker laid a wreath to commemorate VJ Day, before retiring to the City Club for refreshments.

On 22 August, we held a branch lunch for 48 members and guests in the City Club. We were privileged to have Major Nigel Russell and the Mayor of Chichester, Councillor Julian amongst our guests. The food was great, the company was excellent and to finish off, everyone joined in the singing of 'Soldiers of the Queen' and 'Sussex by the Sea'.

In September, we joined with members of the Royal Sussex Association for the 6th Goodwood Race Day and their Annual Dinner in Lewes Town Hall. In November, we had the usual Remembrance Services and parades, and we ended the year off with our annual Christmas Dinner at the City Club. So all in all, a pretty busy year.

Next year's plan is already advanced with the following dates on the horizon:

Albuhera Dinner - 20 May - Gibraltar Trip - July (TBC) - Goodwood Race Day - 5 September.

Royal Sussex Regiment Annual Dinner - 9 September - Christmas Dinner - December (TBC)

The Chairman and Members of the Chichester Branch wish all Queensmen and families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year 2023.



Branch Members with The Mayor of Chichester at the VJ Wreath laying Ceremony in Litten Gardens, Chichester



Scattering of Bill Dixon's ashes



Michael Bright and Fred Hill taking it easy after Christmas Dinner at the City Club



The Chairman with guests, Mayor and Mayoress of Bognor Regis at the Albuhera Dinner



## EAST SURREY BRANCH

By Ken Bowden

EAST SURREYS are still going strong although sadly we lost a few of the lads and a few have ended up in hospital this year. We held our 46th reunion on the 17th September at Whiteley village which turned out to be a cracking event. There are still nearly 100 of us which isn't bad for an old regiment!



## HORSHAM BRANCH

By Colin Hurd

The Horsham Branch remains active with fifty-three paid-up members. We continue to meet at the Horsham Sports Club, but remain hopeful that the Royal British Legion's plans to take over the Drill Hall will enable us to relocate to this former headquarters of the 6th/7th.

The Drill Hall was put to good use in September 2021 (see picture in 2021 edition) when forty-six members and family gathered from as far afield as Devon and the far reaches of Kent and north London to enjoy some much-missed face-to-face comradeship. There was plenty of catching-up over drinks and food, which took the form of a Pig Roast. *"Sussex by the Sea"* and *"Soldiers of the Queen"* were sung with enthusiasm as all reflected on key moments in our shared history, such as the formation of the 7th Battalion and the change of cap badge and beret in September 1992. We looked forward then to our postponed Chichester Cathedral event.

And so it came to pass, after much delay and disappointment, that sixty-seven of us managed finally to commemorate and celebrate three significant anniversaries; the formation of the 7th Battalion in April 1971; the formation of the 6th/7th in April 1975 and the presentation of new Colours in July 1981, which were laid-up in 2000 in the Chapel of St George at Chichester Cathedral. Regretfully, but thankfully, our only Covid casualty was our guest Colonel Anthony Beattie who was isolating. Alasdair Goulden, also our guest, filled the gap in the line although he admitted to being led astray afterwards!



Veterans 1981 Colours Parade



Colonels Richard Putnam Mike Dudding and Piers Storie-Pugh



We were delighted that our principal guest Colonel Mike Dudding, our CO and Parade Commander in 1981, fought through his worsening mobility issues to join us. In addition to Colonel Mike, another twenty-three 'veterans' of the Colours parade were present including Richard Putnam, principal parade organiser and next CO, and the four guard commanders, namely Piers Storie-Pugh (also a former CO), Colin Hurd, Tony Prior and Phil Roberts who had travelled from the USA with his wife Lydia. Major Derrick Harwood, Officer for the old Queen's Colour on the day and Steve Dunkley from the Colour Party were also present, as was Colonel Tony Guthrie Officer for new Regimental Colour and former CO 3 PWRR along with Dave Saunders from the Colour Party. Regretfully, others from the Colour Parties that day - Peter Chapman, Dave Bowen, Len Cowlard, David Wray and Dennis Cadywould -are amongst our many fallen over the last forty-one years. They were included with affection in our reminiscences.

Our day started with a photo call. There followed a short service in Chichester Cathedral led by the Dean, the Very Reverend Stephen Waine, in sight of our beloved Colours, which seemed to have aged better than most of us! Thence to the Vicar's Hall, where on arrival snippets of the video of the Colours parade were playing. A fine lunch and plenty of social interaction followed. After the Loyal Toast, regimental toasts and some short speeches, the compulsory 'Sussex by the Sea' and 'Soldiers of the Queen' (complete with opening verses led by Alasdair and yours truly) rang to the ancient rafters. A prestigious event that will be long remembered.

After note: the 1981 Colours parade was filmed by the RMP with two views, top and side. By today's standards their kit was primitive but after forty-one years, the two VHS tapes each of one-and-a-half hours have been improved as far as the technology allows and edited into one continuous version of just over an hour. This was premiered at our 5 September Branch reunion. Proud memories of a fine parade.

Majors John Ross and Adrian Smith led our first in-house battlefield tour for some time to Normandy based in a hotel outside Bayeux. The long weekend started on Friday 9 September embarking from Newhaven to Dieppe. The group of twenty-five's first stand was the new British Veterans Memorial at Vers sur Mer above Gold Beach on Day Two. This was followed by Juno Beach Museum and bunkers, Courcelles sur Mer landings, Bernieres sur Mer landings, Benys sur Mer Canadian cemetery and Le Hamel landings, an action where the Hampshires took over 200 casualties in the first hours of D Day. As always, military history comes alive when studied over the ground on which it took place and in the various museums, which reinforced the bravery and suffering of those who have gone before us. Of course, the traditions and esprit de corps of our regiment were also reinforced whilst enjoying French hospitality.

I am pleased to say that Rosie Potts has joined the Horsham Branch Committee. Rosie was one of our enthusiastic WRAC attached. Although role-restricted as clerks, drivers and cooks, our WRAC were always keen to get as near infantry training as possible (with much success!) and thrived in field conditions. Rosie's first job was in the intelligence cell, which led to a radio user cadre. Subsequently she undertook a clerk's course and administered the MT section. Her military training was put to good use in her former civilian role in motorway control. Rosie met her husband Shane at Knook Camp whilst making regular use of the photocopier at his location. Enough said!

#### Unconquered we serve



Group photo of our BFT at Vers Sue Mer and a chance encounter with Piers Storie-Pugh (pink trousers)!



Britons always loyalty declaim - Colin Hurd and Alasdair Gouden sing the introduction with Ginger Sayers in close support



## ISLE OF THANET BRANCH

By Kev Minnis

Since our last report was penned for the journal, we have sadly had five of our members pass away. Vic McCoy was 103, a Buff and Burma veteran and Norman Bath was 93 and an East Surrey veteran. Also, Harry King, Cheshire Regiment, Les Wakefield, RAF as well as a Buff and Graham Thomas, Buffs. They all will be sadly missed.

The big change for the Branch was that we voted to change the Branch name. To better reflect our membership, it was decided to change from the Ramsgate Branch to the Isle of Thanet Branch. November 2021 was a busy month for members of the Branch. We supported the Armistice Day Parade in Ramsgate and Remembrance Day across Thanet with many members parading at St Georges Church, Ramsgate. The Ramsgate Parade was supported by the Queen's Regimental Association (QRA) Corps of Drums, who did the Association proud by their professionalism. We held our Annual Branch Dinner at the Yarrow Hotel in Broadstairs, having missed two years due to Covid 19, with 56 attending including some of the ladies from the Ladies Guild of the Buffs. Chris Dutton (RAMC) who was Mr Vice who as he put it, 'nailed it'. At the dinner, we raffled off a Queen's Regiment Car Badge for the Benevolent Fund. We managed to raise £162.00 for the fund. In December, we had our Christmas Drink at our branch meeting and on the same day some members attended the Friends of the Buffs Annual Christmas Lunch in Canterbury. 2021 ended with members meeting on the 31 Dec 21 to mark the forming of the Regiment by raising a glass to the Regiment and absent friends.



Albuhera Dinner 2022



Vic McCoy, on his 100th Birthday



Albuhera Dinner Pegwell Bay Hotel



Post Remembrance

This year has seen the Branch hold several Branch RVs, an AGM and regular meetings. Members attended the QRA AGM in London. In April, we held our own AGM to elect the branch committee. At this, our long-standing Welfare Officer Bryan Hazard stood down after many years. Not only was he our Welfare Officer as part of the QRA but was also for our forebear branch, the Ramsgate Branch, Queen's Own Buffs Association. We held our Albuhera Dinner which is always held on the 16th May, with 20 attending including a serving member of 1 PWRR who was on leave. Unfortunately, Bryan Hazard was in hospital for Albuhera again but this did not stop him from making an appearance by WhatsApp video call from hospital with his son Billy. Paul Evans was Mr Vice and did a cracking job. Members attended the Armed Forces Day Parade in Ramsgate, supported by QRA Corps of Drums who did the QRA proud once again. We were hoping to organise a battlefield tour for this year but had to cancel due to lack of numbers. Hopefully, we will be more successful next year. We were using Zoom on our meetings for those members who could not attend but still wanted to take part, but we have changed to Teams as this doesn't have a time limit of 40 minutes. Members also joined the Weald Branch on their Kohima Lunch in Maidstone. We will be working closely with the Weald for future events and inter-branch cooperation.



The Branch would like to thank Henry Thomas, who many know for organizing the Canterbury Reunion at Leros Barracks. It was a great day even though there was a train strike. This was followed by the 3 PWRR Reunion all on the same day at Leros. We hope these both become permanent events but on different days in the future.

The remainder of the year will see us hold our Annual Dinner in November. We have the QRA Corps of Drums booked for a Drums display and again we will be raising funds for the Benevolent Fund, by raffling off a "Lest We Forget" Garden Chair, as well as parading for Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday. We look forward to more social events, fund raising and our Albuhera Dinner which is open to anyone in the Regimental family and is always held on 16 May. We are also planning to celebrate Battalion Regimental Days by holding RVs on each day. We will publish these and other events on our Facebook page.

We look forward to 2023, with us focusing again on recruiting, social events and parades and our Albuhera Dinner. If you live in or around Thanet, then please contact us if you would like to join the Branch. Former members of the Queen's, PWRR, forebear regiments and serving personnel are welcome to join. We hope to hold and take part in other events and parades throughout 2023 and 2024. You can contact the Branch by:

Facebook: QRA Ramsgate - E-mail: QRARamsgate@outlook.com

## LONDON BRANCH

By Dennis Sharrocks

We are out, the pandemic restrictions are now past us. Although, the pandemic is still about, in true Queensman spirit we have surged and tried to get activities going again. Many veterans have been out and about. We have met both formally and informally over the year, some of which have been firmly organised by the London Branch.

### Gatherings & Ambushes

The London Branch has now re-introduced the monthly Ambush in Southwark. However, it has not been well attended and we are now looking at ways to improve that; but there have been those who have turned up and swung that lantern and enjoyed the evening, and as you can see Lt Col (Retd) Chris Parker was again being held up by two LE Captains, Dennis Sharrocks and Taddy McAuley at the bar. Some things do not change. A good sandbags session was had by all.



### Army & Navy Rugby Match

2022 saw the return to the annual pilgrimage to Twickenham where the London Branch coordinated the Association's allocation of tickets and RV point for the Army vs Navy annual Rugby Match, which was for the first time (in my memory) two games. First Male then Female, were played, and the Army was again victorious on both counts. This was made possible by the big effort of Maj Giles Walsh, who coordinated the tickets from the Army Rep, managed to secure those tickets for those who purchased them from previous years, ensured those who wanted tickets for the 2022 game got them, and then provide the drinks on the day. An outstanding effort from him.

### Albuhera Lunch 14th May 2022

After the pandemic, the London branch again put together the Albuhera Lunch at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo. The committee, assisted by Adrian De Villiers' hard work, put together the meal, dealing with the many questions and requests from veterans. Sadly,



L to R Dennis Sharrocks, Christopher Parker and Taddy McAuley we



we just fell short of the meal's capacity; however, we all had a great event. Future Albuhera events will be looked at as a more regimental event and not a Middlesex event because of the sadly dwindling numbers who can make the journey and attend.

### Future Events

The Branch will continue to gather the Ambush of Tigers together by continuing to coordinate events in the capital and allowing Tiger and Queen's veterans to mix and enjoy camaraderie like we did when we served. The London Branch is always open to ideas and if anyone wants to suggest something, we will see what we can do.

## MIDDLESEX BRANCH

By Les Vial

It's been another busy year for us North London types as we finally get back to some normality after COVID-19. Restrictions on numbers at our local church saw us attend an open-air service at the site of the 7th Middlesex's original Remembrance Day service at St Mary's at Hornsey.

As regards functions, we are finding we are a victim of our own success with a well-supported New Year's luncheon in January as well as the Albuhera Dinner in May. Both functions were held in the Officers Mess, B Company 4 PWRR at Edgware. The Mess can hold about fifty diners top whack, so it's literally first come first served. A few misdemeanours were committed at the dinner table (touching the silver and bringing a can of lager to the table)resulting in customary fines of a bottle of port.

In May, we attended the internment of the ashes of Lt Gen Sir Brian Horrocks at Mill Hill. Special mention must be made of Andy Charalambous who was our Standard Bearer and stood resolutely at attention throughout the long memorial service.

A number of our members attended Trooping the Colour on Horse Guards on 2 June. On Saturday, a few former members of 6 Platoon, B (Middlesex) Company 6/7 QUEENS met at Billy Brett's place in Clacton for a Platinum Jubilee lunch - the last time we were all together was about 40 years ago! Several members of the branch also took part in the Combined Irish Regiments March past

the Cenotaph on 12 June in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of King George V decreeing that the Irish regiments should parade at the Cenotaph to remember their Fallen. On 25 June, we had a small representation at the RAF Museum Hendon for Armed Forces Day, marching with the large group of Gurkha veterans who reside around that area.

In July, the first Branch battlefield tour since 2019 was held. A five-day tour - 'Blitzkrieg in France' with Leger Tours. Unfortunately, two of the party had to pull out at the last minute but the fourteen that attended had an enjoyable and interesting tour. Also, in July, a healthy number attended the reunion and commemoration service for 6/7 QUEENS at Chichester Cathedral organised by our sister branch at Horsham. Because of the heavy program in the summer, we had regretfully to cancel our planned barbecue luncheon.

Sadly, we lost two members earlier this year - Maj David Margand TD and Sgt Jeff Haward MM. Jeff was the Branch's eldest member at 102. That mantle is now with Ron Burnham, ex-1/7th Middlesex who celebrated his centenary in April and received his message of congratulations from HM The Queen.

Overall, the branch is in fine fettle with around 100 paid-up members and still finding former mates coming out of the woodwork.



6 Platoon reunion



Branch Standard at Lt Gen. Horrocks interment service



As we progress in the 2022 season, the Regimental Golf Society is going strong. We have enjoyed many competitions over the past 12 months, and I would say a great year for golf with the wonderful weather we are having.

As always, we have our First Knock, and this year we changed our venue to Cottesmore Golf Course by Gatwick. This reduced the travel time for members as it is quite central for us. The winner this year was John Edney, our Golfing Guru.

We have played at Top Meadow against Barkway Golf Club from Royston; we have a reciprocal match where we play at Barkway. Unfortunately, we lost both matches, but had a wonderful time with great company.

On 16 April, we played our second year for the Inter Battalion Golf Day for bragging rights. It is with great sadness that I announce that the winners again were the 3rd Battalion, runners up the 1st Battalion, then the PWRR and 2nd Battalion in fourth. It just goes to show that the rest of the Regiment were working hard when the 3rd Battalion was playing golf in Cyprus.

On 28 April, the Captain and members attended and played in the PWRR Forces day. This was an invitation day for the Society to play with other Regimental teams in support of the Benevolent fund which turned out to be a great day of golf played at Clandon Regis Golf Club.

On 6 May we held a match at Canterbury Golf Club, when Dave Ellams was victorious and claimed the day.

The Chuck Cullinane Trophy 2022 was played on 1 July at Seaford Golf Club. This competition remembers Chuck, who was a character within the Society and who is sorely missed.

A new fixture this year was to play Sussex Police, arranged by Ron Stevens. This will now be a permanent fixture played around the local courses in Sussex. So, if you are around in Sussex, come and join us.

Sadly, a couple of members passed away during the COVID period - Dave Nichol (previous Captain), and Bob Fisher (previous Secretary). It was decided by the members to raise and commission a new trophy, hence the "Lest We Forget Trophy" was commissioned. It was played for the first time at the Marriott Hotel in Maidstone on 6 November 2021 and will be played for around the same time each year. We just managed to get the Society through before light stopped play. Our first winner of the trophy was John Edney. The trophy has the names of those members who have passed, and the winner has his name engraved on the top tier, a fitting memory to our members.

On the 6 November 2022 we will be holding our first Lest We Forget Dinner Dance at the East Sussex National Golf resort.



International Battalion Golf Day



Barkway



Lest we Forget Winner

We will play for the Lest We Forget Trophy and during the evening we will hold a charity raffle for our chosen charities this year; wives, and partners as well as guests and sponsors all join us in celebrating and remembering our Fallen brothers.

I would encourage any person, if you play golf and are interested in joining the Society or would like further information, to please get in touch with me or the Secretary Tony Harwood – details at the back of the Journal.



## THE QRA CORPS OF DRUMS

By Amy Holden

The Drums have spent the last year as many others have, rebuilding and trying to get back to their best performing and reminding everyone we are still here!! We have welcomed some new faces to the team with two new drummers and a flute player.

We have been lucky enough to find a new home to practice in at the Manston History Museum and would like to express our thanks to Kevin Minnis and Pete Steel of the QRA Thanet Branch for making this possible for us. We have been supporting the museum as a way of thanks during their family open cockpit weekends and other various events they hold throughout the year.

We have also enjoyed some time at the Ashford & Folkestone Military Show, leading the parade for Ramsgate Armed Forces Day, a fantastic evening at the QRRRA One Aim Rally 7th Shot and a very special performance at the stunning Folkington Manor for the major PWRR fundraising event.

Looking forward to later in the year, we will be performing at the Grand Shaft in Dover this October for the Dover Western heights preservation society. November will be a busy month for the Drums, performances will include a boxing event held by Hornets boxing club, leading the Remembrance Day parade in Ramsgate and an appearance at the QRA Thanet branch annual dinner.

Our diary is steadily filling up for the New Year and we are looking forward to return to Folkington Manor and the next QRRRA rally where we may have a little something special planned!

We would also like to especially thank the President and Secretary for their continued support of our small team in what has been difficult circumstances over the last few years, but we are coming back stronger than ever and hoping for a very busy new year.

If you would like to join the Drums or book a performance, please contact Amy Holden [qracorpsofdrums@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:qracorpsofdrums@yahoo.co.uk) or Alasdair Goulden.





The primary aims of the Queen's Regiment Riders Association are to ride motorbikes with fellow Queensmen and to raise money for the Benevolent Fund. It is open to those who serve or have served in any branch of the Regiment be it forebear, actual or successor or who were attached and who have a motorbike – we even allow people with scooters!

This year has been a busy one for the QRRA. Not only were we continuing with the build of the new clubhouse for the Regiment's Veterans' Horticultural, Rehabilitation, Social and Community Project but after Covid we were in a position to hold our major fundraiser for the Benevolent Fund.

Last year's One Aim Rally (OAR) had to be cancelled at the last moment because of a resurgence of Covid with the restrictions being placed on us too complicated to organise at short notice. So, this year, we were determined to make sure that it went ahead. Although this was to be our 7th OAR, personalities had changed, and we were in a totally different location dealing with a completely different group of officials in a different borough council and new relationships had to be formed. The land is much bigger than we had had in Wingham and that led to new challenges as well. On top of that we had an official visit the week before from the President, Col Beattie, to inspect progress on the build!

Inspection over, the final preparations for the weekend started in earnest and the rally went ahead the following weekend thanks to the mammoth amount of work carried out by the officers, members and supporters during the week. Over the 3-day weekend, we had over 1,000 people attend from across the biking, veteran and local communities with many staying overnight. We had a succession of bands playing and a number of stalls, but the most important thing was to raise money for the Benevolent Fund. So apart from having a great weekend catching up with old friends and making new we also raised over £6,500 – not quite as much as we were hoping to raise because of price increases across the board. However, we learned a great deal and we have no doubt that next year's rally will be bigger and better and will raise more money. Next year's



Presentation of Cheque by Mr George Cook, CEO Computers4Charity



Looking after the bees



The breakfast club



OAR will take place 30 June - 2 July. Do put it in your diary and join us.

The build continues relentlessly. What has been achieved to date is remarkable considering that the fundraising for the build and the actual build have been done entirely by member volunteers from within the QRRRA. To date over £186,000 has been raised which has allowed us to make the building weathertight and we started the preparation for the inside. Sadly, Covid has had its effect with the cost of building materials going through the roof, so what would have been sufficient funds to complete are some way now short. However, being used to living in a trench means that using a half-finished building is no hardship and at last we are able to get together, hold events and run breakfast clubs, fulfilling the social and community side of the project. At time of writing, we are digging an 1100m ditch so that electric cable can be laid to give us mains electricity – you could say keeping our skills up! The horticultural side of the project is going great guns with over 1700 trees and shrubs planted and we have nine beehives busy producing top quality honey. So that's the horticultural, social and community side of the project sorted – not sure whether we have been rehabilitated yet though!

The QRRRA Committee would like to thank all volunteers for their support and hard work in helping us achieve what so far has been a remarkable one for a bunch of unqualified ex-squaddies. They would also like to thank the Regimental Trustees for their interest and support in the work of the QRRRA

We hope to see you next year at the next One Aim Rally. Do please come!



Presented to us by the RBLI in recognition of our partnership



Putting up the cladding



The Association President visits the Rally

## QUEENSMAN LODGE 2694 - Life after Covid

By John Edwards

Well, coming out of Covid has been a slow process and we are now at long last seeing members slowly returning and attending our meetings. Our new Worshipful Master Ged Deutrom has taken over from James Burgoyne and will have had his first meeting in charge by the time this goes to press.

The Lodge numbers are in the low 90s which is a healthy situation to be in and we still have a few more candidates on the books.

At the end of 2020, it was decided that the Lodge procure a Lodge Banner which would enable us to participate more fully in the activities of the Circuit of Service Lodges, specifically when banners are paraded. The procedure for obtaining



a Lodge Banner can be a long-drawn-out affair as the United Grand Lodge of England has the final say regarding the design.

Having now had the design approved, we are planning on having the new banner dedicated in a special ceremony on 3 December 2022 at Great Queen Street. Funds for the new banner were made available via the generous donations of the membership. We are hoping to have support for the banner dedication from the Circuit of Service Lodges with at least 10 other banners being paraded.

We normally dine after the meetings at the Union Jack Club, but for the banner dedication ceremony, due to the anticipated numbers, we are dining in the Grand Connaught Rooms. It is likely that there will be over a hundred attending.

In October, a small group will be travelling to Guernsey to visit a couple of lodges which we have not done for the last few years. It will be good to return and renew some friendships.

The membership demographic is slowly evening itself out and we now have a good few 1st Battalion in the lodge, mainly due to the efforts of Chelsea Hall who is currently the Junior Warden and in time will be the first 1st Battalion Worshipful Master, which means that all three of the Regiment's battalions will have had a Worshipful Master representing them.

Last December witnessed the first White Table event (frequented by non-Masons' wives, partners, and guests) when a successful Christmas dinner took place at the Union Jack Club.

Steve Simmons, along with a few other of our members, are raising a new lodge in the Province of East Kent to be known as the East Kent Combined Services Lodge. Our lodge will be the sponsoring lodge.

As we head toward 2023, despite all the uncertainty in the world, in true Masonic spirit, we strive to maintain the ethos of being a caring organisation and where possible able to give help where it is needed the most.

If anyone is interested in the hobby of Freemasonry, please don't hesitate in contacting me; at [johndwards518@sky.com](mailto:johndwards518@sky.com).



Approved Design 8.7.22



Approved Banner Back





## SCOTLAND BRANCH

This year saw the Scotland Branch formally close, given that the Chairman, Steve Wall, moved overseas forming the Albuhera Branch and the Secretary, Dave Lee resigned, and there were no volunteers to keep it going. We sincerely thank Steve and Dave for all their hard work and dedication over the past six years in keeping our Scottish members in touch.

## WEALD BRANCH

By John Grinham



This year has been challenging for the Branch trying to encourage the older members back to meetings after the Covid pandemic. Barry Crocker and I have kept the Branch updated with the aid of emails, post and our Facebook pages.

Both of our Branch Standards were on parade for Remembrance Sunday in Edenbridge and Tonbridge with several members attending. We are looking forward to receiving our new QRA Branch Standard. Our thanks go to Peter Birket for the artwork and his patience and to the Association for their support for this project which will be proudly paraded at all our events.



The Branch held its second Kohima lunch at the Grangemoor Hotel in Maidstone to honour the men of the Royal West Kents who made the ultimate sacrifice; thanks to Capt Micky Gwilliam for reciting the Kohima epitaph and the history lesson. This was well attended by members and their good ladies; we also had contingents from the Maidstone and Hastings Branches. We had some decent raffle prizes donated by local businesses after a little bit of arm-twisting again by Barry and me and I am always amazed at their generosity.



The Branch BBQ: this was our first attempt at organising an outdoor event. Again, this was well attended by members, Queen's veterans and their families. It was a great success and will be held again next year at the same venue with the agreement of Queensman Martin Wilson and his wife Jenny. We can't thank them enough! A few of the old and bold pitched up a tent for the weekend, pulled up a log and reminisced with some war stories.

The Weald Branch Standard was paraded at the funeral of Drummer Daren Shade at the request of his family. It was an honour to attend.

Recruiting younger members will be a priority for us this year and to this end we are looking to hold evening meetings at the New Telegraph Club in Priory Road



Tonbridge Kent, TN9 2AS, just a short walk from Tonbridge Rail Station. Details will be announced through the normal Facebook sites, local press and QRA Monthly updates.



## WESSEX BRANCH

By Billy Bolton



Blondie Barton's funeral

The Branch has had a somewhat subdued year since last reporting in. Contact has been maintained mostly by largely abusive texts and Whatsapp comms – the fine level of personal abuse and insult indicating that all is well! There have been a few low-level get-togethers; we were delighted to be joined by Henry Eagan and Barry 'Stitch' Azzopardi in Salisbury for the Ypres Day drinks. Stitch and his crew were in Salisbury raising money for the Ride to the Sun expedition to Gib the following month. Sadly, it often seemed to be funerals that drew us together again this year: there was a particularly good turnout of the Old & Bold to say farewell to Blondie Barton in Warminster on Sobraon Day.

In early April, the Branch's battlefield tourists took off again after a pandemic-induced pause in proceedings. The target this time was the Battle of Mons and a visit to the St Symphorien cemetery nearby and, in particular, to the final resting place of Pte John Parr of the Middlesex Regiment, the first soldier to be killed in action on the Western Front. They then headed to Bastogne for a trip down memory lane - many will remember visiting this site with Maj Gen Mike Reynolds, our last Colonel.



Philip Pearce's memorial service



Ypres Day Drinks in Salisbury

Back to funerals – Messrs Eagan, Bolton and Wright attended Lt Col Philip Pearce's memorial service held in Silchester in July. Philip, originally an Int Corps man, transferred to our 2nd Bn, was 2IC of the 1st Bn in Gibraltar and later commanded the 5th Bn. He died on Albuhera Day 2020, but again, due to the pandemic, it wasn't possible properly to bid him farewell for over two years.

As usual the Branch was well represented at the Regimental Association's AGM in March and the 1st Battalion's Herne Bay reunion in May.



## WEST SURREY BRANCH

By Dick Scales

2022 has been another successful year for the branch, with a (small) increase in membership and included two notable events. In

March, the first QRA AGM since Covid lockdown and in May, the Dedication of our new Branch Standard. There were of course other regular events that the Branch have supported as follows:

On Remembrance Sunday, it was noticeable how many more local people than in previous years came out to support those marching and the War Memorial Service. On Wednesday 22 June members were present at the Farnham Town Council Armed Forces Week flag raising, which was followed by a short reception at the Town Hall.

Our first Christmas party for two years, held at the Holiday Inn Farnborough on 21 December, was well supported and enjoyed by all, with a sense of 'at last we are back to normal'. Not so many took to the dance floor though, probably due to advancing years and an overdose by the DJ of current hits!

On 18th May, the Dedication of our Standard took place at A Coy 4 PWRR ARC. After a two year wait it was with some relief. This was also the evening of the Albuhera Ceremony to which branch members had been invited. In the presence of branch members. Lt Col Jim Bird CO 4 PWRR, WO1 (RSM) Harrison. Farnham Town Council Mayor, Councillor Alan Earwaker and the assembled company, the Dedication Service was led by Padre the Reverend Nick Sharp. Maj SF Plowman TD our President and Nick Bryan our Standard Bearer marched on the Standard.

Our annual Picnic in the Park in August fell victim to the heatwave. In view of the lack of shade where we had planned to hold the event, it was felt some of our members would struggle and the sensible decision would be to cancel. Thanks to our Chairman Bob Hill having sought permission from (The Boss) Jenny Hill, the picnic was held in their garden where

plenty of shade was provided, and we spent a chilled out and relaxing Sunday afternoon. The photo of Bob without his shirt on has been censored.

At time of writing, we are looking forward to September when we are joining the Horsham Branch colleagues on their Normandy Battlefield Tour. A weekend full of promise! And one which will be reported on next year.





This has been a busy year for the Association, having been in enforced hibernation for over 18 months. However, it was nice to be back with our first event of 2021 which was the officers' lunch which, thanks to the hospitality of Jim and Angela Sellick, was held at Pashley Manor Gardens. It was a lovely lunch in a pleasant and convivial setting. This was followed by The Royal Sussex Stakes at Goodwood racecourse, which was once again open for public events and our annual Regimental reunion at Lewes Town Hall. 2022 will be the 90th anniversary of this reunion and we are all looking forward to celebrating this milestone.



Von Arnim's Car

The restructuring continues to gather pace: we have now been incorporated as a Limited Company and are in the throes of merging our two charities. We are also working on a project with West Sussex Record Office (WSRO) and other partners to ensure the safety of our regimental collection for future generations. Hopefully, the outcome of this will result with us retaining ownership, WSRO managing and Army Museums Ogilvy Trust (AMOT) safeguarding the collection in a new build extension to the WSRO.

An artefact of historical interest was General Von Arnim's Steyr 4 x 4 staff car, which many of you will have seen at the Redoubt Fortress in

Eastbourne. This has now been restored to 95% of its original condition and is in full running order (one of only three examples left in the world). We took back possession of the car last December and have managed to display it at two shows this year. *(Ed: Gen von Arnim took over the Afrika Corps from Field Marshal Rommel and drove in to surrender the Corps to Field Marshal Montgomery on 12 May 1943.)*

On St George's Day ex-servicemen from the Royal Sussex Regiment paraded through the streets of Chichester to remember their fallen colleagues.

It is 100 years since St George's Chapel at Chichester Cathedral was dedicated to the memory of the fallen soldiers from the Sussex Regiment

The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment Band played a military march - following behind in the parade were around 50 veterans - some had travelled from as far as South Wales to attend - all here to pay tribute and remember colleagues that had lost their lives in past conflicts. Almost 7000 soldiers from the Royal Sussex Regiment were killed in the Great War and this day was about remembering them and their



Mr & Mrs Ian Smith and guest at the 100th Anniversary Reception



sacrifice. Marching alongside the veterans in the parade were young cadets from Sussex, ensuring that the tradition continues.

At the Cathedral, a special memorial service was held for the fallen soldiers - their names inscribed on the walls. It is 100 years since St Georges' Chapel was dedicated to the memory of soldiers killed in the First and Second World War. The service was attended by over 400 invited guests, which included the Lords Lieutenant for both East and West Sussex as well as both High Sheriffs, five Mayors, The Queen's Regimental Association President and Secretary as well as relatives of the fallen. The service was followed by a reception in a marquee within the Cathedral precincts. It was a glorious day and was enjoyed by all guests and members.



PWRR BAND, © Peter Davies

## From 'An Officer's Manual of the Western Front 1914-1918':

### *Standing Order no 34. ISSUE OF RUM*

*The issue of rum in the trenches is as a rule undesirable. It is difficult to supervise, and leads to drunkenness. If issued just before the men go on duty, it makes them drowsy and unfit for the alert duties of a sentry. If it considered necessary, it is best issued in the morning, just after the men have been dismissed from standing to arms.*



# CHANGE OF DRUM MAJORS

## 6/7 QUEENS

By Bluey Hedges

This is the story of the change of Drum Majors of the 6/7th (Volunteer Bn) on 18 July 1981 during the presentation of new Colours to the Battalion at Crowborough Sports Ground in East Sussex.

After the parade in the evening, in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, RSM WO1 Bernard Lively, a man with a developed sense of humour, paraded all the members together and said "I am very sad to have to tell you all that the Drum Major WO2 Colin Smith was not up to the task today. Therefore, he has been replaced by a new Drum Major. March in, Drum Major!" And with that I marched in, in full kit!



Drum Major Colin Smith with the Corps of Drums



'Drum Major' Bluey Hedges without the Corps of Drums!

### Mobile Bath Unit

*Commanding his company in Londonderry in 1969, Major Mike Hare lived for some time in the converted bus station on The Strand. This was a thoroughly unpleasant and crowded place with A Company and B Company 1 QUEENS and a company of the Grenadier Guards sharing the very limited washing facilities. When the RAOC Mobile Bath Unit arrived, there was a scramble to be the first soldiers through it. Apparently, the Company Commander of the Grenadiers had been Mike's 'fag' at Eton and therefore Mike pulled rank and A Company had the showers first!*

Rocky Hitchcock



# THE REGIMENTAL MUSEUMS

By Assistant Curator Cory Clover



It's been a busy year for us at the PWRR and Queen's Regiment Museum and the Surrey Infantry Collection.

We have received a Places of Science grant from the Royal Society. Our Project, 'Treating the Troops', is about advances in medicine through warfare from the Napoleonic Wars all the way to the end of The Great War. We'll be developing a brand-new set of learning resources on military medicine for GCSE History students across East Kent, including working with English Heritage to co-produce a learning workshop. This project will also give us a chance to do an in-depth study of Matthew Latham of the Buffs, who was one of the first soldiers to receive facial reconstruction surgery in 1815 – a hundred years before the pioneering work of Howard Gillies during The Great War.



We've also been busy in our galleries. Our portrait of Queen Catherine of Braganza by Jacob Huysmans is now back on display in the museum. In 2020, we removed the portrait from the galleries for conservation purposes. The portrait had become very dirty, and was positioned very close to a lightbulb so her face could be seen through a small window, which may have caused further damage if not moved. After eighteen months in the darkness of our store (something which is often required for paintings) and a proper clean, we have now rehung Queen Catherine's portrait in a new position in the gallery. She is now in plain view, with a new label to tell visitors more about her.

This year we've also launched our new website at [pwrrqueensmuseum.co.uk](http://pwrrqueensmuseum.co.uk). Over the next few months, it'll be updated with more information about the collections and our regimental history. Watch this space!



At the Surrey Infantry Collection, we said farewell to Catherine Fabian as she moved onto pastures new and greeted Anna Jackson as our new Collection Officer in September. The Collections Review continues apace, and we have also received funding to work with a conservator to look at how the remaining fire-damaged objects in the collection can be cared for in future.





One of our main achievements this year has been renewing our relationship with Guildford's Heritage. In November 2021, we held a small exhibition in Guildford House Gallery to talk about how our volunteers and the Army remember the soldiers who served (and still serve) in the PWRR and The Queen's Regiment and their forebears.

We have also revamped our display in Guildford Museum. "Soldiers of Surrey" tells the story of the infantry in Surrey from 1661 to 1966, when the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment amalgamated to become part of The Queen's Regiment. Part of the display changes every few months to highlight a new soldier from the wider Surrey area. Our first story featured Jesse Peters, who served in the Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment during The Great War, and who later became the Town Crier of Guildford.

## Trip to Romania/Ukraine March 2022

*Malcolm Maynard and Brian Terry, both members of the Weald Branch QRA, felt so helpless watching the situation in Ukraine, they decided to travel to Romania, raise money and buy goods for refugees. They arrived Sunday evening and stayed 46km from the Ukrainian border.*



*Monday: they travelled to the border and started to help a local charity. Every day they purchased supplies and managed to get lifts.*

*Tuesday: they crossed into Ukraine and went to the processing centre where they gave children chocolates, distributed baby food, sandwiches, sweets, fruit and water which were in bags so each child could eat that night. It was extremely moving – the mothers were so strong.*

*Wednesday: found them packing food parcels to give to refugees at the border.*

*Thursday: they went with a group of lads to look for the best deals and foods that were high in protein at the shop. Malcolm and Brian helped to load trucks to take humanitarian aid into Ukraine.*

*Friday: the final day and food and drink was delivered to an orphanage ,approx 45 miles inside Ukraine. The orphanage was in great need of non-perishable food. They still manage to grow vegetables. It was very well run. The children were excited when they saw what had been brought which included chocolates and pop! The staff gave a tour of their church – truly beautiful.*

*A very emotional experience but Malcolm and Brian believe they made a difference. A very big thank you to all who supported them.*

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE LONGEST STAG

*'The Longest Stag'*, encompassing the official history and the personal stories of many in The Queen's Regiment who took part in OP BANNER and beyond, was published on 15 August, the fifty-third anniversary of the start of the campaign and what, for the Regiment, became - 'The Longest Stag'.

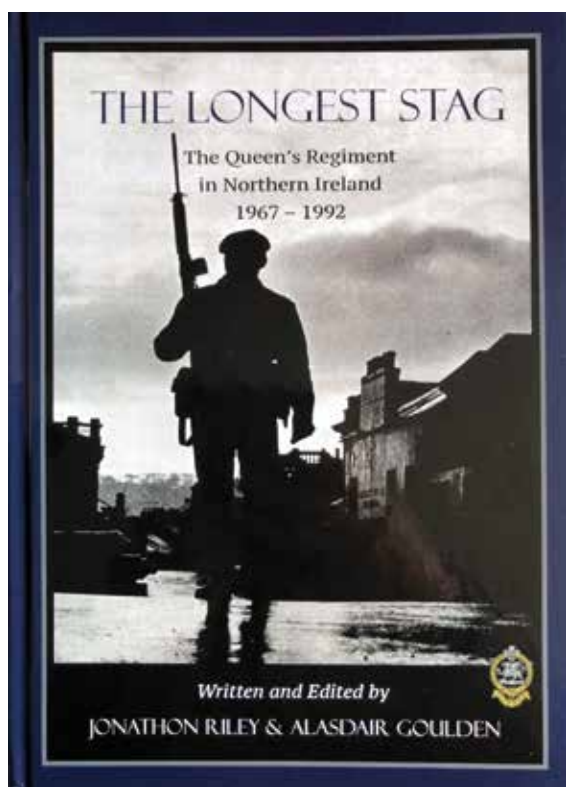
This meticulously researched and edited book covers the story of the Regiment's 29 tours – more than any other regiment in the British Army. It takes the story from the start of OP BANNER to the end, when the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment closed the last operational base. It thus sets the Regiment's story into the context of the politics, background and major operations in what was a turbulent time in the United Kingdom's history.

Packed with previously unpublished stories, photographs, maps and cartoons, this book will give any reader a thorough grasp of the campaign in which for 17 years and 10 months of its 26-year existence, one or more battalions of the Regiment were on operations.

All proceeds from the sale of the book after costs will be donated to The Queen's Regiment Benevolent Fund.

*'This book is a very detailed account of the operations of The Queen's Regiment deployed to Northern Ireland over more than 30 years. It is a great tribute to the courage, perseverance, resilience and professionalism of those who served in the Regiment throughout that period and 'The Longest Stag' records how well the battalions of The Queen's Regiment did.'*

**General Sir Roger Wheeler, late GOC Northern Ireland and Chief of the General Staff**



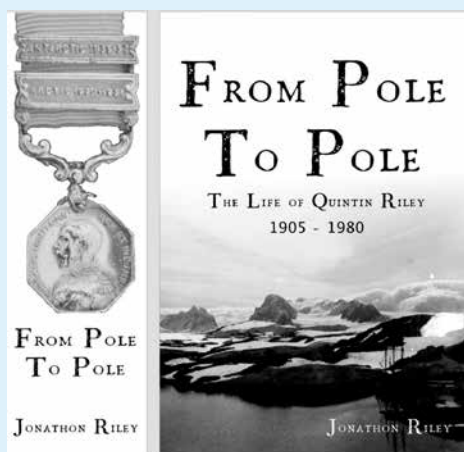
*Jonathon Riley's and Alasdair Goulden's book, 'The Longest Stag', was launched at RHQ on 17 October 2022. I wrote to the authors when my own copy arrived to congratulate them on the creation of a literary canvas upon which are painted the definitive brushstrokes of the Queen's Regiment's existence through the perspective of the Regiment's 'war', Operation BANNER, from start to finish. There can no member of the Regiment - nor his dependants - who was not affected either directly or indirectly by our unbroken involvement in the campaign.*

*I commend this magnificent history to you all. It complements 'Soldiers of the Queen' superbly and deserves a place on all our bookshelves. Importantly, the profits will go the Regimental benevolent fund. Please order a copy as soon as you can!*

**Colonel AAA Beattie, President, The Queen's Regimental Association**

To order your copy, please complete the order form included with the Journal





Quintin Riley, a close friend of the Explorer Gino Watkins, took part in three polar expeditions during the 1930s at the very end of the heroic age of discovery, when sailing ships and dog sledges were being superseded by aircraft and motors. He thus became one of only five men to have been awarded the Polar Medal with both Arctic and Antarctic clasps. He was with Watkins at the time of his death in Greenland in 1932 and then spent three years in the Antarctic.



During the Second World War he was one of the founders of Special Operations, serving in Norway in 1940 and then with No 14 Commando and the training organisation in Scotland and Iceland, before commanding No 30 Commando – the Intelligence Assault Unit – in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and the Balkans.

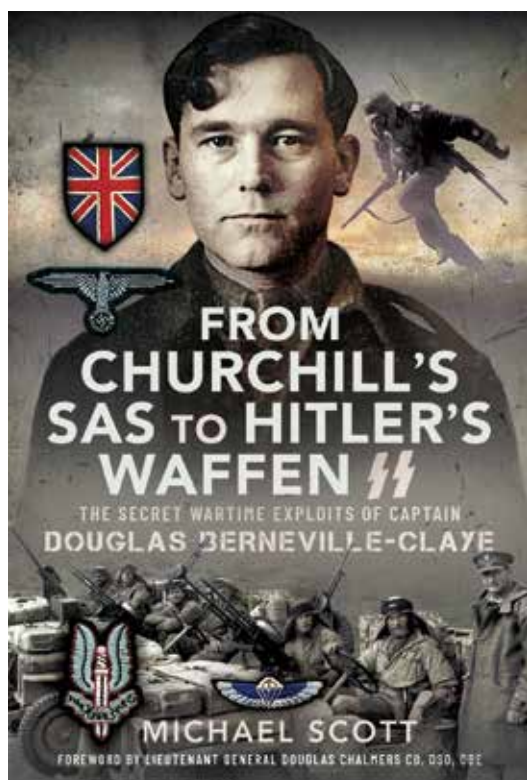
After the war he helped rescue polar archives in Central Europe, advised on film making and searched for the Loch Ness Monster.

This is the third edition of Quintin's life by Lieutenant-General Jonathon Riley – the first was in 1985 and the second in 1998 – and it contains a wealth of new material released into the public domain, along with

many more photographs and illustrations. It is published by Golden Duck.

TO ORDER, PLEASE CONTACT [jr@generalship.org](mailto:jr@generalship.org)

*'There is plenty of polar adventure in this book, and also the ingredients of a war-time thriller... it reflects the spirit, wit and motivation of its subject'* Bishop Lancelot Fleming



### FROM CHURCHILL'S SAS TO HITLER'S WAFFEN-SS THE SECRET WARTIME EXPLOITS OF CAPTAIN DOUGLAS BERNEVILLE-CLAYE

Captain Douglas Berneville-Claye was serving in the SAS with fellow officers such as David Stirling and Blair 'Paddy' Mayne when he was captured in the Western Desert. He was 'turned' and became a member of the Nazi Waffen-SS. Collaboration with the enemy was confirmed when dressed as an SS captain he approached the British Free Corps, the Waffen-SS unit of renegade British nationals. He exhorted them to serve under his command against Russian forces on the Eastern Front.

Post-war Berneville-Claye was investigated by MI5 for treachery. Following an Army court martial he was dishonourably dismissed and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Upon release, his escapades and private life were no less contentious. A philanderer and bigamist, he married four times, sired ten children, and rubbed shoulders with the criminal underworld. Eventually he emigrated to Australia.

This is a compelling albeit shocking biography of one of the most intriguing, colourful, disreputable, yet enigmatic characters of his era.

#### About the Author

MIKE SCOTT served in the British Army infantry for some 35 years, initially in the Queen's Regiment, and latterly as a colonel in the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. Overseas tours of duty included Gibraltar, Zimbabwe, and Ethiopia. He also saw active service in other theatres including Northern Ireland, Congo, Iraq, Sudan, Djibouti, and Somaliland. His final assignment was Defence Attaché in the Horn of Africa. His books include *Tigers at War*, *Special Forces Commander*, and *The Royal Rifle Volunteers*.



## The first call for help takes courage

**Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service**

Specialist care and support for Service leavers, reservists, veterans and their families

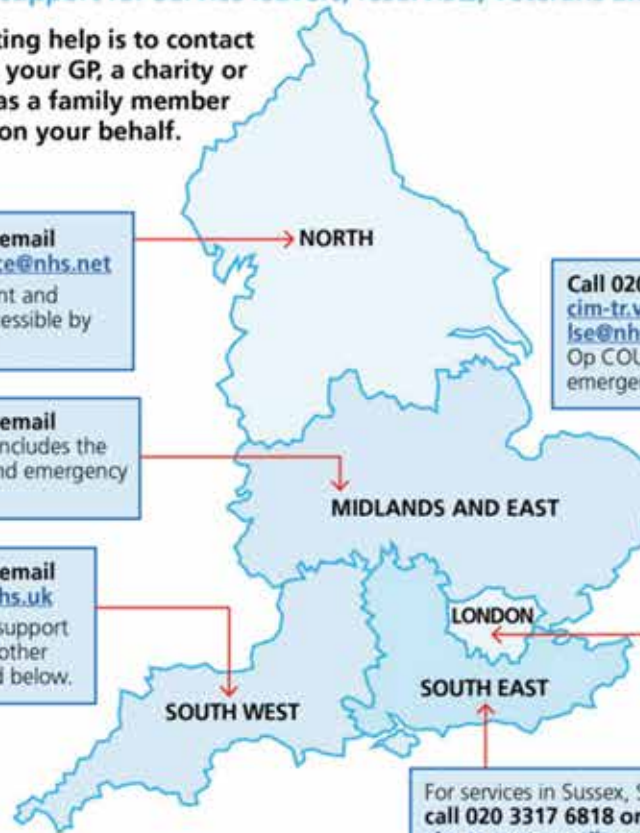
The first step to getting help is to contact Op COURAGE or ask your GP, a charity or someone else, such as a family member or friend, to do this on your behalf.

### Contact details:

Call 0303 123 1145 or email [ntawnt.veteransservice@nhs.net](mailto:ntawnt.veteransservice@nhs.net)  
The Op COURAGE urgent and emergency service is accessible by healthcare referral only.

Call 0300 323 0137 or email [mevs.mhm@nhs.net](mailto:mevs.mhm@nhs.net) (includes the Op COURAGE urgent and emergency service).

Call 0300 365 2000 or email [gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk)  
Urgent and emergency support is currently provided by other NHS services, as detailed below.



Call 020 3317 6818 or email [cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net](mailto:cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net) (includes the Op COURAGE urgent and emergency service).

For services in Sussex, Surrey or Kent, call 020 3317 6818 or email [cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net](mailto:cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net)

For services in Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Berkshire, Oxfordshire or Buckinghamshire, call 0300 365 2000 or email [gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk)

For the Op COURAGE urgent and emergency service, call 023 9438 7924 or email [snhs.veteranshis.se@nhs.net](mailto:snhs.veteranshis.se@nhs.net)

### Urgent and emergency support from other NHS services

If you experience a mental health crisis you can also get help by dialling **111**, booking an emergency GP appointment, visiting A&E or calling **999**. If you are still serving, you can also call the Military Mental Health Helpline on **0800 323 4444**.

### Register with a GP

If you've left the military, it is important to register with an NHS GP and tell them that you've served in the Armed Forces so you can access dedicated services for veterans. To find your nearest GP visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

For further information on Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service, visit: [www.nhs.net/opcourage](http://www.nhs.net/opcourage)





# WELFARE

By Di White, Welfare RHQ PWRR

The Queen's Regiment Charity is here to help you and your families, to ensure we can relieve hardship and distress and provide support when the unfortunate or unexpected happens. It helps us to help you.

Over the last year we have helped 37 individuals with grants totalling just over £16,000, covering a wide array of assistance. Help has been provided with essential household items, funeral costs, general needs and priority debts. Electrically powered vehicles (EPVs), rent arrears and advanced rent have also been provided. There have also been more unique, specialised requests such as a weighted blanket, hearing aids and house adaptations for disabled facilities.

This is by no means a comprehensive list but what is clear is that support is available and if you are in need, we may be able to help.

## CASE STUDIES

Background: This veteran is living in sheltered accommodation. He lives frugally within his means and has little family around for support. His health has been better, and he also has mobility issues. It was recommended he would obtain an orthopaedic mattress and reclining sofa beneficial for his day-to-day life.

Grant: £500

Almonised: £600 from the ABF, £467.45 from TRBL

Background: This veteran was running his own successful business before unfortunately falling ill. His health has had a big impact on his day-to-day life and has resulted in poor mobility. An occupational therapist recommended some alterations to the home to make life more comfortable.

Grant: £500

Almonised: No funding was received from other military charities, however the local council contributed with a disabled facilities grant.

Background: This lady's father passed away suddenly, and as the nominated next of kin, she had the responsibility of the funeral fall to her, including financing it. As a single parent, living just within her means, she had no savings to fund this. The DWP also refused a grant.

Grant: £500

Almonised: £1800 from the ABF, £700 from TRBL

Background: This veteran was initially referred to SSAFA by Combat Stress. Suffering from complex PTSD and anxiety, his daily life was being hugely impacted. This also led to difficulty sleeping and an occupational therapist recommended a weighted blanket to assist with sleep, to then ease other conditions.

Grant: £183

Almonised: No need as we met the total required need

Background: This veteran had a very content life until his marriage broke down and he had to leave the marital home. Life was suddenly tough, with no regular income, no savings, nowhere to live and some growing health concerns. Eventually he was allocated housing from the local authority but needed help with essential household items.

Grant: £500

Almonised: £775 from the ABF

This is by no means an exhaustive list of the financial assistance that the Queen's Regiment Charity has provided over the last 12 months but gives you an idea of the support that is available. Do not be afraid to ask for help and reach out to SSAFA, The Royal British Legion or the Association. If all else fails, get in touch with PWRR RHQ at [diana.white993@mod.gov.uk](mailto:diana.white993@mod.gov.uk). There is a system to follow but this ultimately opens up a huge network of support whether for financial reasons or other. The Queen's Regiment Charity is here to help you, our Queensmen.



## MANAGEMENT OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S ROYAL REGIMENT (QUEEN'S & ROYAL HAMPSHIRES) BENEVOLENT FUND

### Transparency

The Charity Commission requires all charities to be as open to its donors and beneficiaries as possible. The Benevolent Fund continues to publish accounts on the Charity Commission website and in the PWRR weekly sitrep (which is also shared by the QRA to its members)– if you have not seen them, accounts can be accessed here: <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/1024418>.

The Trustees' Report is very detailed. Although the audit for 2021 is not yet published, it has developed themes from previous years to provide a far more detailed and comprehensive overview of events, decisions and future projects than in previous years. The detail of where money came from and where it went is broken down for all to see (this will be particularly pertinent to ex-Queensmen since it can be seen how monies raised for the QRA sit in a Designated Fund and are used only for the purpose of supporting the QRA).

Activity Highlights for 2021 were:

- 162 welfare cases assessed for financial, moral or practical support.
- The continued success of the Veterans' Horticultural Project with 54 veterans involved in building, forestry work and the production of honey.
- Communication with the wider Regimental Family (c.7,500) through magazines and publications.
- Laying up of two sets of old Battalion Colours in Southwark and Winchester Cathedrals, adding to the Nation's history and heritage.
- Adding to and preserving the Regimental Heritage (and therefore National Heritage) through the acquisition of paintings and preservation of paintings and chattels (including a portrait of Catherine of Braganza dating from 1665).
- Negotiated Corporate Membership of the Institute of Directors to enable all ranks of the Regimental Family (including veterans) to use their facilities.
- The recommencement of direct liaison with our Colonel in Chief (HM Queen Margrethe II of Denmark), an activity that directly reinforces the Nation's aspirations for friendly relations between nations.

### Trustees

The trustees are required by law to:

- Ensure that activities are for the public benefit. This means that the Benevolent Fund is only operating for the purpose for which it was set up. In this case:
  - Relief of hardship or distress of former and serving members of the Regiment or former members of the former Regiments and their dependants.
  - To promote the efficiency of the Regiment in such ways as the Managing Trustees from time to time see fit.
- Comply with the Governing Document and the Law.
- Act in the Charity's best interests.
- Manage resources responsibly.
- Act with reasonable care and skill.
- Ensure the Charity is accountable.

Whilst the interests of individuals are, of course, considered, the overriding legal requirements have to be met.

This year the trustees have agreed to an amendment to the Charity's Trust Deed to allow greater diversity amongst trustees. This is work in progress, but the current trustees are:



- The senior element of the Regimental Council (Colonel of the Regiment and Deputy Colonels -five in total)
- A Late Entry Commission Officer (currently a Lieutenant Colonel)
- Chairman of the PWRRRA
- President of the QRA
- Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment rep (and experienced trustee for other charities).
- Ex-CO of a TA Battalion (who worked in the investment world)
- A civilian businessman

In addition, the Investment and Finance committees have the benefit of business advice from a Museum Trustee (the PWRR & QUEENS Museum investment policy is to mirror that of the Benevolent Fund) and a former Royal Hampshire Regiment officer both of whom are experienced investors. The Honorary Colonel of 3 PWRR, Sir Lloyd Dorfman CVO CBE, acts as a business advisor and the Honorary Regimental Solicitor, Alastair Moss (who previously served in 6/7 PWRR and is a Reservist in the ALS) attends all meetings.

In 2021, the trustees decided to review the investment policy for the Charity and concluded that investments should be moved from Barclays Bank to Sarasin & Partners – this exercise was completed in early 2022.



*I have been fortunate to have met Prince Philip a few times whilst sailing during Cowes Week. However, there was one occasion in London where I had the benefit of his sharp tongue. My father served in the 4th Queen's Own Hussars, Churchill's first regiment on commissioning. It was amalgamated with the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars in 1958 to form The Queen's Royal Irish Hussars (QRIH). Prince Philip was the Colonel-in-Chief. The Queen's Own Hussars (QOH) was formed also in 1958 from the amalgamation of the 3rd The King's Own Hussars and the 7th Queen's Own Hussars. Their Colonel-in-Chief was Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. The QRIH and QOH were then amalgamated again on 1 Sep 1993 to form the Queen's Royal Hussars (The Queen's Own and Royal Irish) (QRH). A cocktail party was jointly hosted at St James's Palace by Prince Philip and the Queen Mother to welcome the amalgamation. I was my dad's guest and then serving in the King's Regiment, wearing my regimental tie. The Duke strode up to me and asked: "What tie?" I replied: "Sir, one of your Mother-in-Law's other regiments..." Before I could finish, he interjected with an audible grunt and quickly moved off. Being Colonel-in-Chief of the senior regiment in the amalgamation, the Queen Mother became Colonel-in-Chief of the QRH until her death in 2002, Prince Philip then moving up from her Deputy to be the Colonel-in-Chief.*

John White

# Benevolent Fund Donations December to September

Anonymous X 15	SR Scott	RE Lohans
Gavin Jones	BD Terry	KM Waldren
John Rew	Gerald Bartlett	AD Hart
John Moran	R Holden	JA Frost
Mike Cattell	Phil Dobson	Jeffrey Manuel
Alastair Cooper	J McKeown	Barry Azzopardi
Martin Robertson-Bond	ME Gauntlett	Michael Prime
Ian Legrove	Charles Miller	Bob Lauman
Pete Rowlet	C Robinson	Steve Richards
Graham Morrisson	John Rogerson	Paul Weddell
MP Beaney	PAW Edwards	William Opie
Max White	PM Kirkham	Peter Morgan
Steve Howard	GF Perryman	Terry Webb
Derek Lambert	George Hail	Rodger Bourne
Alasdair Goulden	MF Smith	Ricky Mattioli
Andrew Barratt	Malcolm Lawson	Tony Prior
Isle of Thanet Branch	A Birtles	Timothy Day
DH Difford	Barry Lane	Adrian Smith
AC Mieville	DJ Langworthy	Christopher Jarvis
SR Potts	JF Burke	Rosemary Webb
CR Anstee-Property	PL Lanham	John Collingridge
RTP Williams	SP Martins	George Cook
DJC Dickins	J Hamill	Mike Dudding
PH Hayes	R Vaghela	Marc and Hilary Harrold
TJ Webb	AM Blowers	Mike Woodward
Robert Maxlow	David Wolfe	JD Wilcock
George Cartright	Brian Woodbridge	Stuart Anderson
George Amos	Kenneth Wakely	Peter Archer
RW Bird	Roger Lowans	Bill Childe
Tim Trotman	Richard Taylor	Anthony Bolton
CF Brown	Andrew Byford	The Queen's Regiment Riders Association
Ken Bowden	Mike Woodward	All those who bought 'The Longest Stag'

If anyone has been left off, please accept my abject and sincere apologies







# OBITUARIES

## COLONEL JOHN FRANCIS - EULOGY

By Brig Trevor Minter OBE DL



John Francis, the Archbishop and I all used the same barber shop in Canterbury. When I told the barbers recently of the sad death of John Francis, they looked at me blankly until it registered and they said: *"Oh Colonel*

*Francis - what a wonderful man he was"*.

John was a colonel to the core, the Army had been his career, his life and a vital part of his persona. If it was old-fashioned to use the title, then so be it, because it reflected what John was - in his leadership, principles, standards and moral courage to stand up for what was right. As one person wrote *"He was the epitome of an officer and a gentleman"*.

To go back to the beginning, John was born in Khartoum in Sudan – imagine how complicated that makes your passport! John was sent to boarding school in Kenya for long periods without seeing his parents. I feel that was the beginning of his stoicism and independence of spirit.

At the end of the war, he went to Dover College with which he formed a lifelong association including a long period later as a governor. He was a keen rugby player and developed his character, skills and toughness in these formative years. This was to serve him well later on a two-year attachment as an instructor with the Royal Marine Commandos where he more than held his own.

On joining the Army, he saw early service in Egypt and then his Battalion was posted to Shorncliffe where he and Penny met and married. It was the beginning of an enduring partnership and as perfect a marriage as most of us have witnessed.

He was always of course immaculately turned out and presented both in uniform and in civilian clothes right up to the end. One letter described an officer first joining the battalion in Bury St Edmunds and enjoying

being saluted by the soldiers but failed to salute Captain John Francis who pointed out that it was a Regimental custom for subalterns to salute captains on first meeting in the morning. At lunch John then bought the new subaltern a beer, I quote *"High standards but friendly and great empathy for others"*.

In his Army career, John served in four Regiments including the East Surreys, the Queens Royal Surreys, the Queen's and the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. He commanded 3 QUEENS which included two tours in Belfast, one as a Company Commander and one as Commanding Officer. As many people here know, the word 'command' carries enormous meaning and you are responsible for absolutely everything in your unit. I quote from a witness that *"the Battalion gained a reputation for being extremely professional, hard-working and contributing significantly to the difficult task of keeping the peace"*. It was said that he was a firm but fair CO - but not I imagine a man to be taken advantage of – he was too canny.

His serving career concluded after a tour as British Defence Attaché in Indonesia and after that he retired to take up the post of Regimental Secretary in Canterbury. Penny and he have enjoyed their beautiful home in Blackfriars ever since.

As Regimental Secretary, he was a stalwart in turbulent times of amalgamation and reductions. It left its scars and those close to the Regimental system will understand this. However, he always acted with integrity and good sense and was an example and strength to others. He did not seek the limelight but provided unerring support and advice to his Regimental Council. Another letter described him as *"having a gentle but firm hand on the Regimental tiller."*

His time as Regimental Secretary saw the links to the Danish Royal Family cemented and he strengthened the Regiment's London links including the Haberdashers Company and was made a Freeman of the City of London in thanks. He worked tirelessly on Regimental benevolence to look after those in need and he was



also Chairman of the Army Benevolent Fund in Kent for many years.

It was in 1988 that the Fusiliers arrived in Canterbury and John and Penny generously entertained all their field officers. For Liz and me it was the start of a wonderful 35-year friendship. I also know that he helped in my career, and it was typical that he was always looking after the interests of others.

He also entertained newly commissioned officers at home and established wonderful personal links, in the process, I am sure, of sizing them up.

To be entertained at Blackfriars was to enjoy the best of food, wine, company and warm hospitality. We used to joke that it was the best restaurant in Canterbury. The warmth of John and Penny enveloped us all...except one night when a local youth banged on his windows and three brigadiers followed John out to the street and an altercation ensued until the police arrived. Typically, the next day the Police asked how John would like to proceed with the offender and John only asked for a personal apology. A shame-faced young man, now sober, apologised unreservedly. John shook his hand – case dismissed.

It was the only time Liz heard him swear. However, I am sure that when he was a steward at the Cathedral next day the Lord will have forgiven him. Especially as the Receiver General was complicit.

Penny asked me to express her thanks to all those who wrote and passed on such kind letters and messages. I

have had the privilege of reading them for this address and some key themes emerge.

- John was an eminently kind and considerate man, and many acts of kindness were mentioned.
- He always put the interests of others first and was uncomplaining.
- Generations of officers were nurtured and supported by him.
- He was a wise, caring and thoroughly nice man.
- He had a great sense of humour
- Diligence, integrity and wise counsel are mentioned repeatedly
- *"The very best type of Regimental Officer"*
- *"His contribution to the Regiment was immense."*
- Unfailingly courteous
- He was a true gentle – man

He was also a man of faith and courage both personally and in his convictions.

John and Penny made life such an adventure together. With postings in Hong Kong, Australia, Aden, Bahrain, Zambia and Indonesia and exotic holidays worldwide, they enjoyed it all together, wherever.

I challenge you to think of John without immediately thinking of his smile.

I am sure John felt that he had lived life to the full and with the love of his life Penny.

It was indeed a life well led.



The Last Post at Col John's funeral





*"Next time you invade Italy, don't start at the bottom,"* Field Marshal von Senger und Etterlin, defender of Monte Cassino, liked to joke with British officers after the war.

Geoffrey Curtis, who in 1943 was a 21-year-old platoon commander, would have agreed. He spent 20 months battling up a peninsula that could have been designed for defence.

The Allies invaded Sicily in July 1943. To speed the advance, the US Fifth Army under General Mark Clark, with the British 10 Corps under command, made a bold landing in the Bay of Salerno south of Naples on September 9.

It was Curtis's first sight of Italy, and the troops were optimistic. The Italians were in the process of changing sides and German opposition was expected to be light. *"I never again expect to witness such scenes of sheer joy,"* wrote one of Clark's aides-de-camp. *"Speculation was rampant, and it was all good . . . We would dock in Naples harbour unopposed, with an olive branch in one hand and an opera ticket in the other."* The jazz musician Humphrey Lyttelton, then a subaltern in the Grenadier Guards, even went ashore with trumpet in hand.

Curtis, who was with the 2/6th [Second Line Territorial] Battalion, the Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey), landed easily enough after a four-day sailing from Libya, but the hoped-for walkover to Naples was not to be. The only certainty in the Second World War were the German counterattacks. These began at once. 2/6 Queen's were ordered to dig in on high ground south-east of Salerno. At dusk on 13 September, they came under sustained attack.

Curtis's platoon, holding the foremost spur of "Point 210", bore the brunt of it and his advanced posts were overrun. *'Undaunted however by this temporary setback he soon reorganised his depleted platoon and formed a firm flank to the remainder of the position,'* wrote his commanding officer in the commendation for an award. *'This he did under heavy LMG (light machine-gun) and mortar fire, moving about in the open and without any regard to his personal safety. Throughout the succeeding action he displayed the greatest coolness and courage and by his skilful leadership and exceptional devotion to duty was instrumental in the position on Pt 210, which dominated a considerable area of the divisional front, being held.'*

Like all Military Cross awards, his could easily have been posthumous. As Curtis was making his way to company headquarters at first light, several Germans suddenly appeared across his track. He drew his pistol and fired two shots but missed with both. They ran. A platoon commander carried a pistol for self-protection, rather than a rifle, his hands free to command. Curtis, who was in action continually for almost two years, said it was the only time he fired his Webley in the entire war.

Geoffrey Basil Curtis was born in London in 1922, the only child of Wilfred Curtis, a civil servant who had held a wartime commission in the Dorsetshire Regiment and had married Gladys (née Masters), the nurse who tended his wounds. He was educated at St Paul's School, London, before he went up to Merton College, Oxford, to read history, but left after five terms to enlist. After the short wartime course at Sandhurst, he was commissioned in 1942 into the Queen's and posted to the 2/6th (Bermondsey) Battalion, who had been sent to Iraq to forestall a German advance through the Caucasus.

After the second battle of El Alamein, in November 1942, the battalion moved 3,000 miles by road, and a little by rail, to join Montgomery's Eighth Army battling against the remnants of Rommel's forces in Tunisia. Curtis joined them during *'the longest approach march in history'* and recalled the shock of their first battle: *'For most of the last month I had been sharing a three-tonner with 36 men under my command, being jolted and bumped over terrible roads, with cramped leg room and little opportunity to take exercise or relax. For the last few days, we could hear the rumble of guns ahead, but when we stopped in the evening of April 22 we were told that we would be moving into reserve positions.'*

The next morning, he led his platoon through Enfidaville. *'We were a well-trained battalion and were properly spaced out and dressed in battle order with properly fitting webbing equipment, and wearing steel helmets . . . a strange contrast to troops coming out of action, marching down the road the other way,'* he wrote. *'Exhausted and dishevelled, but in light-hearted mood, they really enjoyed themselves at our expense. "What mob are you then?", "Get your knees brown", "What kept you so long?" The platoon pressed doggedly on, if a little self-consciously.'*

Then came the whine and crash of shells. *'Under fire for the first time, my platoon vanished. After this 'stunk' there was silence, and I gingerly lifted my head to see that the other lot were already on their feet and, much amused by our disappearing act, were already on their way. Still*



*somewhat apprehensive I got to my feet and gave the order to continue the advance, and I was very relieved and not a little proud when they all immediately fell in, and we moved off again in our anti-*

*aircraft formation. The funny thing is that, only three weeks later, we came out of action down that same road, and we looked just like that other mob. It is amazing what a bit of battle experience does.'*

When the Tunisian campaign ended, 2/6 Queen's had lost their Commanding Officer and a hundred others killed or wounded. After Salerno, Curtis's battalion slogged north, taking part in fighting at Monte Cassino, Anzio and beyond to the plains of Lombardy and the Veneto, during which he was wounded.

On repatriation he was in Lancashire when he met Mary Youdell, a civil servant. They married in 1946. Mary died in 2013. He is survived by a son, Michael, who ran a care home, and Deirdre (Dee), who worked at Southampton University. Another son Nigel, an executive with ExxonMobil, died in 2014.

Rather than return to Oxford, Curtis chose to remain in uniform. He served in a succession of command and staff appointments, seeing action again in Aden and Malaya, becoming a Queensman on the amalgamation in 1966, until retiring as a brigadier in 1977 to become ecclesiastical appointments secretary in No 10.

In 'Salerno Remembered' (1988), Curtis writes of the high morale of the battalions of the Queen's Regiment in Italy, and thereby of the accidental act of genius of the regimental system that the British Army struggles to maintain today, if sometimes half-heartedly: *'I venture to suggest that it was born of the unbeatable combination of good leadership and men who were at their best in a tight corner. Together it produced a subtle understanding of mutual trust that commanders would never knowingly put at risk the lives of their men nor, for their part, would the men ever let down their mates whatever their rank. It was a family business and once you were accepted into that family you had an inner feeling of confidence and belonging.'*

Brigadier Geoffrey Curtis OBE, MC, infantry officer, was born on June 7, 1922. He died on January 31, 2022, aged 99.



## Lt Col Desmond Wilson TD JP DL



Lieutenant Colonel Desmond Wilson TD JP DL, who died on 23 August, was the first Commanding Officer of 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment. He commanded 6 (V) QUEENS between 1971-74.

He was educated at Tonbridge School before joining the Army as a National Service Officer where he was commissioned into the Queen's Royal West Kent Regiment before transferring to the Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) Territorial Army in 1951.

After the amalgamation of 5th and 6th Battalions the Queen's Royal Regiment together with 565 LAA around 1960, 6th (Bermondsey) Battalion became just one company of the new 3rd Battalion the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. Desmond Wilson was appointed

company commander of the new company - a difficult assignment given the void left by the passing of the 6th Battalion and all that it stood for in the local community. Desmond handled the situation with tact, skill and patience, often using his modesty and somewhat disarming wit to overcome problems and pacify would-be troublemakers. He succeeded in pulling together the remnants of 6th (Bermondsey) Battalion into an efficient military unit. The surviving D Company won a number of Divisional prizes including shooting during his time at Bermondsey and carried out some tough training.

Desmond's voluntary work included becoming District Commissioner of Reigate Scouts and serving on the Surrey Scout Council. He was Chairman of the Venture Scouts as well as Chairman of the Rifle Club before becoming President. He served as a Magistrate on the Reigate Bench and was made a DL in 1976.

The attached photograph, taken from the book 'Soldiers of the Queen' by Lt Col JP Riley, shows Desmond on exercise (far left) as CO 6 (V) QUEENS.





If you had read in a comic about Jeff's wartime exploits, you could quite readily accept that it was fiction, which makes it all the more extraordinary that it was fact. By some quirk of fate, he was involved in so many pivotal actions of the Second World War. Ironically, he only joined his local Territorial Army unit, a company of the 1/7th Middlesex Regiment, because a friend of his asked him to go with him. But Jeff saw it as something to do in the evenings and an opportunity to get a few trips away. The company's weapon was the Vickers Medium Machine Gun, which was operated in theory by five-men teams, but they were never up to strength. The sum total of their instruction was from a manual.

Although his enlistment occurred in late 1937, they knew that war was looming, but never really discussed it and believed, in Jeff's own words, that 'It couldn't happen to us.' On Friday 1 September 1939, he was working in a house at Finsbury Park when the news broke that Germany had invaded Poland. Jeff said to the foreman: *"I don't think I'll be in tomorrow!"* and sure enough, that same day, general mobilisation was ordered and he ended up saying a rather awkward farewell to his mum and headed off to the Hornsey Drill Hall. During the subsequent training by Regular Army Instructors, on one occasion they marched behind the Regimental band. Jeff recalled: *"We were showered with kisses and free beer. I thought this war can't be too bad!"*

Around this time, he met Frank Dollin, who over the next few years would become a very close friend. On 13 January 1940, they sailed from Southampton to Cherbourg and then moved further into France by train to join the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). At that stage, Jeff said, *"We just about knew our left foot from our right, and which end of a gun the bullets came out."* Four months later on 10 May, the Germans attacked and broke through the French defences, and a large part of the BEF was forced back towards Dunkirk, where Jeff fought on the northern part of the perimeter. It was here that he

had his first lucky escape. With the sound of German gunfire behind them, he was sent back to the Company HQ to see if they should withdraw. As he sprinted back in the dark, the sentry, his friend Johnny Hunt, opened fire before Jeff could give the password, fortunately only grazing his arm.

Hunt apologised profusely saying: *"I aimed for your head, you know!"* Typically, Jeff replied: *"It's a bloody good job you're a rotten shot"* A few days later, towards the end of the Dunkirk evacuation, Jeff and a small group of his Middlesex friends managed to escape capture by boarding a small coal boat. In November 1941, his Battalion joined the famous 51st Highland Division, who didn't initially welcome these English Sassenachs with open arms. But in August 1942, the Division set sail for North Africa, where at that time, the 8th Army had been pushed back to El Alamein, the last defensive position before Cairo itself. After 40 days at sea, under the almost constant threat of dive bomber and U-Boat attack, they docked at Port Tewfik, at the southern end of the Suez Canal.

Acclimatisation and training then commenced, in preparation for the counterattack at Alamein. Up to this point it had been a seesaw campaign in the desert, but a new commander had taken over the Desert Rats, General Bernard Montgomery, and things were to change. On 23 October 1942, the Second Battle of Alamein began, and Jeff took part in the night advance, hearing the skirl of the bagpipes above the firing and explosions as they walked through the darkness into the desert. It was to be a turning point of the war. After weeks of intense fighting, the German Afrika Korps finally broke and was forced back across the desert. In one incident, Jeff was involved in the successful ambush of an Italian unit.

Part of the booty was a large amount of Italian food, much of which was tomato puree. Subsequently, the cook put the puree in every meal for a month, leaving Jeff with a lifelong hatred of it. Before the end of the campaign, in one incident they suffered a German artillery barrage that lasted for hours, with shells exploding all around them. Each man was sheltering in a small trench. The next morning, when the barrage lifted, Jeff called out to Johnny Hunt, in a trench six feet away from him. There was no reply. A shell had landed in the trench. All they could do was fill in the trench and perform a short service.



With the Germans and Italians cleared from North Africa, in July 1943 the invasion of Sicily began. Fortunately, the seaborne landing was unopposed, as was the move inland. However, they knew

things would change when they encountered German parachutists, their elite troops. During a subsequent night attack on an airfield at Gerbini, on the slopes of Mount Etna, Jeff jumped over a trench and was shot up the backside by a German. Nobby Novitt, a medic that was following behind, pulled Jeff's desert shorts down, and, naturally worried about his marriage prospects, Jeff asked, "Is it all still there, Nobby?" To which he replied: "Yes, but you won't be using it for a while!" After being flown to Tunis for treatment, he eventually got home.

Much to the frustration of the Highland Division and indeed the Middlesex, they were chosen to be at the forefront of the liberation of western Europe. They rightly thought that they had done their bit and that it was the turn of other forces that had been training in Britain for years. However, they were now battle-proven troops that Montgomery trusted. Reinforcements were supplied to the Middlesex, and their transport was changed from trucks to tracked carriers, and it was through this that he met two lifelong friends, his carrier driver, Dennis Daly and Harry Alcock.

The Middlesex were due to land on D-Day itself, but congestion on the beaches forced them to remain at sea until the following day. When they and the Jocks did get ashore, they went into action almost straight away. And that was how it remained throughout the hard fighting in Normandy and the breakout through France and into Belgium and the Netherlands. In February 1945, they were involved in fighting in the Reichswald on the Dutch-German border, and Jeff was ultimately awarded the Military Medal for bravery. To describe what he did, this is part of his official citation:

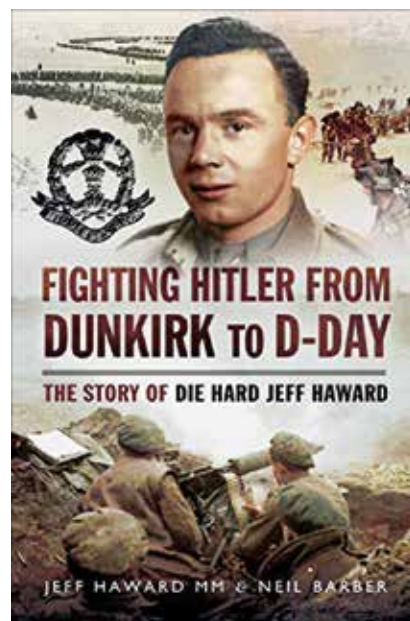
*Sgt Haward was with a small Company Reconnaissance Party which was sent to reconnoitre gun positions on the southern edge of the Reichswald. The party was fired on by the enemy, who were found to be occupying the area to be reconnoitred. It was immediately apparent that the enemy were much stronger than was at first thought. Sgt Haward and Sgt Dollin, although exposed to heavy enemy fire at short range, made several gallant attempts to work round to a flank, to bring fire to bear on the enemy position. Tanks were then brought up to fire on the position and Sgt Haward and Sgt Dollin again*

*attempted to outflank the enemy position. During this attempt, Sgt Dollin, hit by small arms fire, was seen to fall. Sgt Haward, although under intense small arms fire at short range, went forward with entire disregard for his own safety to see if he could help Sgt Dollin, who had in fact been killed instantly. A bullet had actually passed through Jeff's tunic, just under the arm.*

There was another part to his citation, when shortly after, in another action, an extremely unpopular officer was buried by an explosion. With the action still going on, Jeff got to him and cleared the earth from his face, allowing him to breathe. When that officer later said: "You saved my life!" Jeff replied, "Yes, but don't tell anyone, will you!"

In an almost poetic end to his military career, when the war finished, he received his medal ribbon from none other than Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery himself.

You'll read a lot about how good the German soldier was in the Second World War and Jeff had a high respect for them, but men like Jeff prove that they were just as good. They didn't want to be there or have to go through it, but they stuck it out. Jeff became a very professional soldier, who took his responsibility of being a sergeant very seriously. He looked after his men.





Charles was born in March 1933 in Kohat in the North-West Frontier Province of India, which is now part of Pakistan. He was the eldest of three boys - his twin brothers Mark and Hugh being five years younger. At the time, his father was an officer in the British Indian Army serving in the 4th Battalion of the 10th Baluch Regiment. During the Second World War, Charles was evacuated to York to live with his three aunts. It was here that his love of fishing began to take hold. Prep School would follow and then on to Sherborne School in Dorset, where he excelled. He would then go on to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst where he passed out and joined the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment as a young, fresh-faced 2nd Lieutenant ready to take on the world ... and take on the world he did! Apart from postings in the United Kingdom and appointments at The National Defence College and The Staff College, he served in Malaya, Cyprus (twice - once with the United Nations), Brunei (Borneo), Gibraltar, Germany and Northern Ireland.

He met and went on to marry Jane in 1957, and they had three children. His military career would take him

all over the world. The highlight was when he took command of the 3rd Battalion of the Queen's Regiment as a Lieutenant-Colonel. He retired from the regular army as a full Colonel at the age of 55. However, he continued to serve for a further ten years as a Retired Officer at the United Kingdom Land Forces in Wilton near Salisbury in Wiltshire.

When he finally retired in 1998, he enjoyed fly fishing and golf. He was a great family man and was very active in the lives of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Sadly, his wife Jane died in 2012. However, happiness would follow with the marriages of three of his eight grandchildren. Charles was well enough to attend all three weddings. In his later years, he became a great-grandfather to three great-grandchildren.

In his later years, as his Parkinson's progressed, he moved from Wiltshire to Leicestershire. He spent his last two and a half years in a care home in Lincolnshire, close to his family. He passed away peacefully there in March 2022, less than two weeks before his 89th birthday.



# IN MEMORIAM

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](mailto: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	2022	Battalion
8 Nov	Maj Andrew Hoad MBE TD		5th, RAOC and RLC
1 Nov	CSgt Alfie Burford		1st and MX
31 Oct	LCpl Mario Buttigieg		3rd
30 Oct	CSgt Bob Gawler		5th and QOB
28 Oct	Lt Col Michael Francis Deakin		4th, MX and AAC
26 Oct	Cpl Michael Pritchard		1st and 3rd
26 Oct	Cpl Michael Pritchard		1st and 3rd
24 Oct	Cpl Bill Soffe		1st and QRS
17 Oct	Errol Broomfield		1st
13 Oct	WO2 Eric Brown		1st
1 Oct	Maj Graham Turner TD		7th and QOB
Sep	Cpl Gary Easton		5th and REME
17 Sep	Capt Micky Gwilliam		2nd and QOB
12 Sep	Maj Alan Gregory		5th, 6/7th and 5 R Anglian
5 Sep	WO2 Noel Stevenson		6/7th
4 Sep	Cpl Stewart James Upton		2nd
3 Sep	Pte Paul White		3rd and 5/7th
31 Aug	Lt Col Desmond Wilson TD		6th
29 Aug	CSgt Geoff Tyderman		3rd, 4th and 1MX
18 Aug	Sgt Terry Fry		5th, 4 BUFFS and 5 PWRR
16 Aug	Pte Peter Hubbucks		2nd
13 Aug	Pte Joe Carroll		1st
13 Jul	Dmr Darren Shade		2nd and PWRR
9 Jul	Cpl Brian Philpott		5th and QOB
9 Jul	Maj Mike Drummond-Brady		3rd and R SUSSEX
8 Jul	LCpl Paul Gibb		3rd
8 Jul	Cpl Paul Burton/Reynolds		1st
5 Jul	WO2 (TQMS) Mick Fallows		2nd
14 Jun	Col John Francis		1st, 3rd, East Surreys and QRS
13 Jun	Pte Ian Brand		3rd, PWRR and 51st Highland Volunteers.
7 Jun	Cpl Robert 'Bob' Bumstead		3rd, 4th and R SUSSEX
27 May	Sgt David Rainey		3rd and R SUSSEX
25 May	Pte John 'Geordie' Wilson		3rd
23 May	LCpl Terry Blanchette		1st and 2nd
16 Apr	CSgt Phil 'Queenie' Toms		3rd
15 Apr	Pte Lennie Coombs		3rd
6 Apr	Major Richard Ingledew Hopper TD		6th, 6/7th and HAC
6 Apr	Dmr Colin Johnson		2nd
5 Apr	CSgt Nick Trenowden		3rd, 5th and 2 PWRR
1 Apr	LCpl Bruce Draper		5th
20 Mar	Pte Stephen Kiely		1st and PWRR
16 Mar	LCpl James Mount		1st and 4th
14 Mar	Dmr Maj Tom Raper		6/7th, 8 QF and The London Regiment
13 Mar	Maj David Margand TD		6th, 6/7th, MX and R SIGNALS
11 Mar	Col Charles Leigh Tarver OBE		3rd and R SUSSEX
11 Mar	Cpl Joe Sneyd		3rd and R SUSSEX
25 Feb	Pte Andrew Mash		1st
22 Feb	WO2 Phil Booker		1st, 6/7th and 6/7th PWRR
21 Feb	Sgt Tom Rogers		5th, QRS and MX
19 Feb	Pte John Seary		3rd and 1 and 2 PWRR
17 Feb	Maj Stephen Thorpe		1st, 2nd, 3rd, R SUSSEX
17 Jan	C/Sgt John 'Blondie' Barton		1st
13 Jan	LCpl Dave 'Bunny' Bunclark		3rd, R SUSSEX and 3 PARA
13 Jan	Maj Mike Humme		3rd, R SUSSEX and Int Corps
7 Jan	Maj David Festing		3rd, 5th and PWRR
7 Jan	LCpl Patrick 'Bernie' Byrne		2nd
		2021	
25 Dec	Pte Clifford Morrice		6/7th
13 Dec	CSgt Brian Williams BEM		5th, 6/7th and MX
7 Dec	Lt Tim Williamson		6th
7 Dec	Cpl Graham McDonough		2nd
1 Dec	Maj Forbes H Burn		2nd and Northumberland Fusiliers
29 Nov	WO2 Gerald 'Titch' Meade		1st
15 Nov	Capt Simon Daffron TD		5th and 6th
12 Nov	Pte Rupert 'Hughton' Brown 70		1st
12 Nov	Cpl Eddy Hall		1st
28 Oct	Sgt Andy 'Mac' McGregor		1st, 5th and PWRR



# 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 dependant 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

### 1. 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.

### 2. 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.

### 3. 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.

### 4. 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 will not have to find several thousand pounds at a difficult time, and it's much cheaper if you pay well before the event.

### 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!**



# 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 - Mobile: [0771 484 4069](tel:07714844069)

Email: [queensregimentassociation@gmail.com](mailto:queensregimentassociation@gmail.com)

## 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 on the weekend of the Spring Bank Holiday. 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: [07742 830 750](tel:07742830750)

Email: [steveparsons@1queens.com](mailto:steveparsons@1queens.com)

Web: [www.1queens.co.uk](http://www.1queens.co.uk); [www.facebook.com/groups/61525655230/](https://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: [davetilley47@hotmail.com](mailto:davetilley47@hotmail.com)

Secretary – Eddie Drew: - Tel: [01243 866887](tel:01243866887)

Email: [edwindrew@btinternet.com](mailto:edwindrew@btinternet.com)

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

## EAST KENT BRANCH

This branch is part of both Regimental Associations and welcomes everyone who served in the Queen's, PWRR and forebear regiments.

More details can be found at [www.facebook.com/groups/3068692916477013](https://www.facebook.com/groups/3068692916477013)

## EAST SURREY REGIMENT

The branch meets on a monthly basis at the Union Jack Club in London and hold an annual dinner. For more details please contact:

Chairman - Ken Bowden: - Tel: [07714 844069](tel:07714844069)

Email: [kjbowden@icloud.com](mailto:kjbowden@icloud.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: - Mobile: [07836 726236](tel:07836726236)

Email: [nigelferris21@outlook.com](mailto:nigelferris21@outlook.com)



## HORSHAM BRANCH

The Horsham Branch meet four times a year at the Horsham Cricket Club. For 2022 our dates are 7 March, 16 May (for Albuhera), 5 September and 5 December. We hold other events during the year and our main effort for 2022 will be the commemoration of the 41st Anniversary of the Presentation of Colours to the 6th/7th Battalion at Chichester Cathedral on Saturday 23 July 2022.

For more details of membership and events please contact:

Chairman - Colin Hurd: - Email: [ckh494@outlook.com](mailto:ckh494@outlook.com)

Secretary - Jonathan Purdy

Email: [j.purdy1@btopenworld.com](mailto:j.purdy1@btopenworld.com)

## ISLE OF THANET BRANCH

The Branch meets at the Royal British Legion (RBL), 16 Cliff Street, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 9HS on the first Saturday of every month at 1800hrs for a branch meeting, social get together, drinks and fund raising. Zoom is used for members who can't attend in person. We hold an Albuhera Dinner on the 16th May each year and an Annual Dinner in November. We will also be holding a QUEENS and PWRR Breakfast RV, and Branch Social RVs. Please see the branch Facebook page for upcoming dates and timings. Former members of the QUEENS, PWRR, forbear regiments, Armed Forces or serving personal are welcome to join us.

For more details please contact:

Chairman - Alan Buddle: - Tel: [01843 297137](tel:01843297137) or

Secretary - Kev Minnis: - Mobile: [07846 739472](tel:07846739472)

Email: [QRARamsgate@outlook.com](mailto:QRARamsgate@outlook.com) [QRA Ramsgate on Facebook](#)

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

The two London Branches of the Associations have a combined branch and meet informally quarterly. In addition, the branch meets at Twickenham for the Army vs Navy match 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 - Kevin Hibbert: - Email: [kevinhibbert75@yahoo.com](mailto:kevinhibbert75@yahoo.com)

Queen's Secretary - Dennis Sharrocks: - Tel: [07771 957 574](tel:07771957574)

Email: [branchsec.london@aol.com](mailto:branchsec.london@aol.com)

## MIDDLESEX BRANCH

The Middlesex Branch consider themselves the senior local branch of the Queen's Regimental Association, having formed in 1985. We currently have around 100 members. Most of our events are held in the Army Reserve Centre, Edgware, Middlesex currently home to B Company 4 PWRR, with whom we have a close relationship. Our functions include a New Year's Luncheon, a formal regimental dinner to commemorate the Battle of Albuhera in May, an annual battlefield tour in the summer and various remembrance services in November. We also hold a monthly breakfast club which is very popular. Membership includes access to our Facebook group 'Albuhera Company' as well as receiving our excellent newsletter 'Dispatches' which is sent out three times a year.

If you are interested in joining the branch, please contact our the Secretary email:

Chairman - Trevor Canton: - Tel: [020 8368 0407](tel:02083680407)

Email: [queensman67@outlook.com](mailto:queensman67@outlook.com)

Secretary – Les Vial: - Mobile: [07713 150191](tel:07713150191)

Email: [lesvial@btinternet.com](mailto:lesvial@btinternet.com)



### 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](tel:01462834134)

Email: [johnedwards518@sky.com](mailto:johnedwards518@sky.com)

Web: <http://queensmanlodge.co.uk/>

### QUEEN'S 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: - Mobile: [07715 135 238](tel:07715135238)

Email: [qracorpsofdrums@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:qracorpsofdrums@yahoo.co.uk)

### THE QUEEN'S REGIMENTAL RIDERS ASSOCIATION

This Branch is open to all ex-members of the Queen's, PWRR and forebear regiments who own and ride a motorbike or trike.

For more details please contact:

Secretary Tim Gifford: - Mobile: [07514 489777](tel:07514489777)

Email: [Please use the Contact Form on the QRRA website](#)

Web: [www.qrra.co.uk](http://www.qrra.co.uk)

### THE PWRR GOLF SOCIETY (QRA BRANCH)

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: Dave Body: - Email: [d-body@sky.com](mailto:d-body@sky.com)

Secretary: Tony Harwood

Email: [ice501@btopenworld.com](mailto:ice501@btopenworld.com)

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

### THE WEALD BRANCH OF THE QUEEN'S, QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS AND ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

The Branch meets at the New Telegraph Club, Priory Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 2AS and they meet every 2nd Wednesday on alternate months starting in January.

For more details please contact:

Chairman - John Grinham: - Mobile: [0776 5673262](tel:07765673262)

Email: [John@grinham.me.uk](mailto:John@grinham.me.uk)

Secretary - Barry Crocker: - Email: [barrycrocker@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:barrycrocker@hotmail.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: - Mobile: [07530 429926](tel:07530429926)

Email: [Queensmen1661@gmail.com](mailto:Queensmen1661@gmail.com)

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

## WEST SURREY BRANCH (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](tel:01276501644)

Email: [bobhill@sky.com](mailto:bobhill@sky.com)

Secretary - Dick Scales: - Tel: [02380 694974](tel:02380694974)

Email: [dickscales284@btinternet.com](mailto:dickscales284@btinternet.com)

Treasurer - Mrs Sharon Scales: - Tel: [01962 826088](tel:01962826088)

Email: [sturner@biopharma.co.uk](mailto:sturner@biopharma.co.uk)

## NON-AFFILIATED GROUPS which have contact with ex-members of the Regiment

### QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREYS

Secretary - Dee Hutchison - Email: [Fosim@btconnect.com](mailto:Fosim@btconnect.com)

### FRIENDS OF THE QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS REGIMENT

<http://friendsofthebuffs-rekr.com/>

### THE ROYAL SUSSEX ASSOCIATION

Chairman - Barry Lane - Email: [barry.lane@uwclub.net](mailto:barry.lane@uwclub.net)

Secretary - Edwin Drew - Email: [edwindrew@btinternet.com](mailto:edwindrew@btinternet.com)

# Soldiers of the Queen



Britons once did loyally declaim,  
About the way we rule the waves,  
Ev'ry Briton's song is just the same,  
When singing of our soldiers-brave.  
All the world has heard it, Wonders why we sing,  
And some have learn'd the reason why  
We're not forgetting it,  
We're not letting it fade away and gradually die,  
Fade away and gradually die.....  
So when we say that England's master  
Remember who has made her so



It's the soldiers of the Queen, my lads  
Who've been, my lads, who've seen, my lads  
In the fight for England's glory lads  
Of its world-wide glory let us sing  
And when we say we've always won  
And when they ask us how it's done  
We'll proudly point to ev'ry one  
Of England's soldiers of the Queen



War clouds gather o'er ev'ry land  
our treaties threaten'd East and West  
Nations that we've shaken by the hand  
Our honour'd pledges try to test  
They may have thought us sleeping thought us unprepar'd  
Because we have our party wars  
But Britons all unite  
When they're called to fight the battle for  
Old England's common cause  
The battle for Old England's common cause.....  
So when we say that England's master  
Remember who has made her so

## ~ Refrain ~

When we're roused we buckle on our swords  
We do deeds to follow on our words  
We show we're something more than Jingo  
The sons of Merry England answer duty's  
call

And military duty do, and tho' new at the game  
They show then all the same, an Englishman  
can be a soldier too

An Englishman can be a soldier too.....  
So when they say that England's master  
Remember who has made her so





## The Final Salute to Her Majesty in her Jubilee Year from Two Queensmen



**Yeoman Stuart Clarke and Raven Master Chris Skaife  
(Both ex-3rd Battalion)**





Charity No 1024418

[www.queensregimentalassociation.org](http://www.queensregimentalassociation.org)