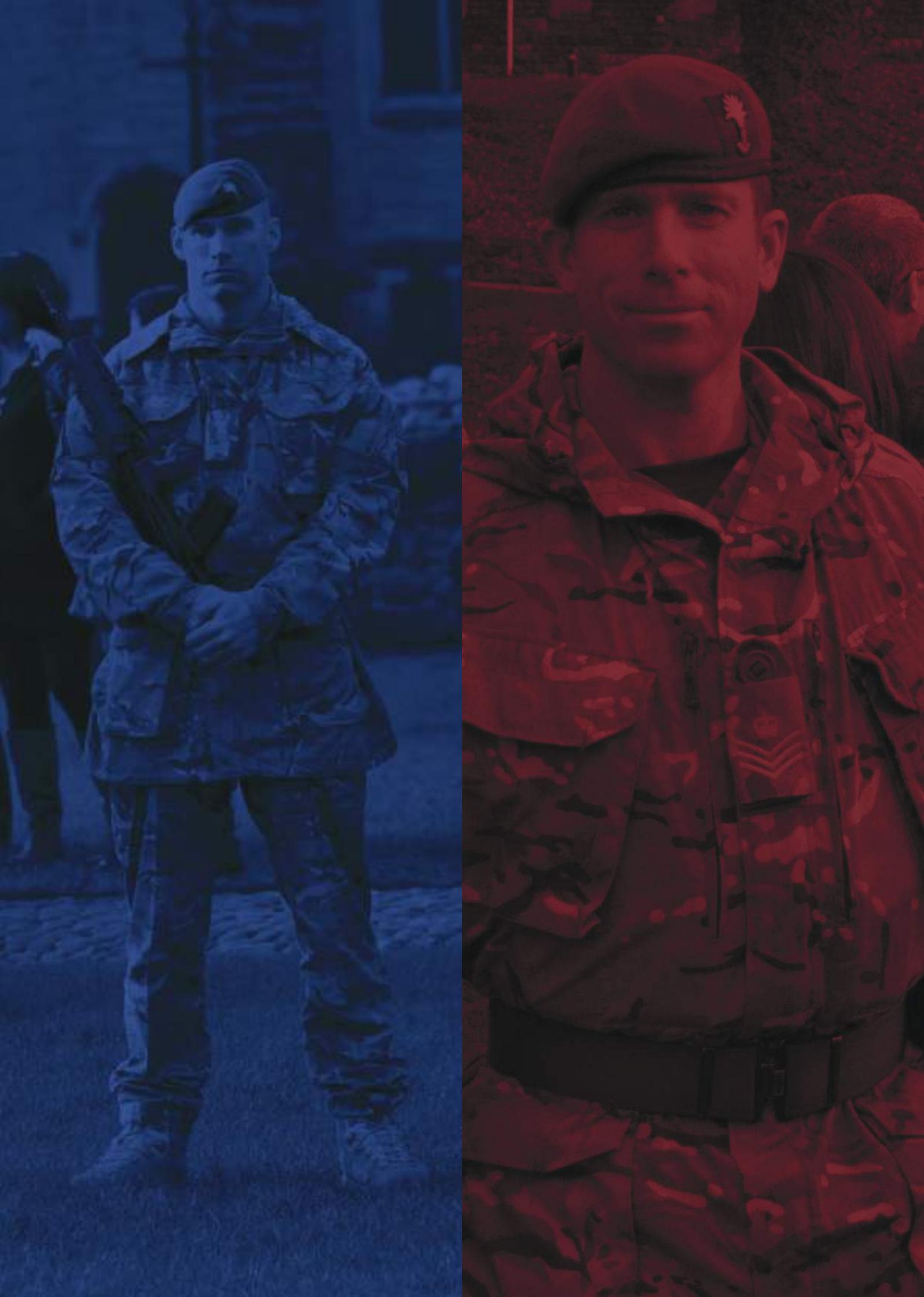




# WELSH GUARDS

REGIMENTAL MAGAZINE 2012







# **WELSH GUARDS REGIMENTAL MAGAZINE**

## **2012**

### **COLONEL-IN-CHIEF**

Her Majesty The Queen

### **COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT**

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales  
KG KT GCB OM AK QSO PC ADC

### **REGIMENTAL LIEUTENANT COLONEL**

Brigadier R H Talbot Rice

### **REGIMENTAL ADJUTANT**

Colonel (Retd) T CS Bonas BA

### **ASSISTANT REGIMENTAL ADJUTANT**

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View the Welsh Guards Association Website at  
[www.welshguardsassociation.com](http://www.welshguardsassociation.com)



### **AFFILIATIONS**

5th/7th Battalion The Royal Australian Regiment  
HMS Campbeltown

CYMRU AM BYTH



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Front Cover: Lt Hutton handing over ISAF PB Taalanda to AUP Authority in Nad-E-Ali.

Back Cover: Ryan Jones with the Welsh Guards Wives and Girlfriends fundraising event 'Bastion to Blighty' in Wellington Barracks 21-23 October 2012.



Brigadier RH Talbot Rice, Regimental Lieutenant Colonel

# FOREWORD

Turning to the Regiment, there have been many highlights this year not least the Battalion's OP HERRICK 16 tour, remembering the 30th Anniversary of the Falklands War in Wrexham in June and of course the Regimental Band's involvement in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympics. Readers will have a greater understanding of the role of the Battalion over the summer in later articles, primarily a combination of police mentoring and training and more traditional ground holding and infantry operations, but the Foreword would not be complete without me mentioning two things about the tour.

The first is to congratulate the Battalion on a highly successful tour and for reinforcing again its outstanding reputation in the Army.

The second is of course to remember the four Welsh Guardsmen who were Killed in Action, Warrant Officer "Perran" Thomas, Lance Corporal Lee Davies, Guardsmen Craig Roderick and Guardsmen Apete Tuisovura and to extend our deepest sympathy to their families whom the Battalion are in very close touch with. The tour also saw a significant number wounded in action but it is hoped that most will recover from their wounds and indeed many are back at duty. OP HERRICK 16 was the last tour the Battalion will do in Afghanistan.

Remembering the 30th Anniversary of the Falklands War is covered in more detail in a later article but I was delighted that there was such a good turnout from across the Regiment when we gathered in Wrexham on 23 June. The Association were out in force indicating that it continues to thrive and the Regimental Adjutant and I continue to remain very grateful and appreciative of all the work the Branch committees put in to make our Association the strong one it is. I hope we will have a big turnout at the Bi-Annual Dinner in Merthyr Tydfil on 23 April.

The Regimental Band continues to fly the flag for the Regiment and they remain outstanding Ambassadors for us. They have had another very busy year and you will have seen them in all manner of places, from the Band Tour in Wales in the spring to the Olympics in London in the summer. They have also raised a considerable amount of money for the Appeal and of course remain at the heart of Regimental events, whether it be St David's Day, Remembrance Sunday or the Battalion Homecoming Parade in Cardiff on 30 November. Under the Senior

Director of Music for the Household Division I am certain they remain one of the best Bands in the Army, if not the best.

The Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal continues to flourish and an article on it appears later in the magazine. Not a day goes by when we hear of another fund raising event for the Appeal taking place, large or small, and I am hugely grateful to the many who have rallied to the cause. The Appeal has raised £1.2 million to date and £150,000 has been paid out in support of our bereaved families and wounded as well as to the Battalion in support of families for the HERRICK tour. More grants are in the pipeline. There has of course been expenditure on costs incurred in supporting some (major) Appeal events as well as in such things as maintaining the website, making presentations to say thank you where applicable and other such costs. We are very fortunate and privileged that Ryan Jones has chosen our Appeal as his charity for his testimonial year in 2013 and we have already struck up a very close relationship with him and his team which I am certain will reap great benefit to both the Regiment and the Appeal. I would finally mention the "Walk on Wales (WOW)" Event taking place in autumn 2013 and led by Captain Jan Koops. Walk on Wales was launched at the Cardiff Homecoming Parade on 30 November and I have no doubt that not only will it be far the biggest fund raiser for the Appeal but will bring other considerable benefits for the Regiment. I am certain the next issue of the Regimental Magazine will have numerous articles on WOW but may I, in advance, thank

Captain Jan Koops and his dedicated team for their magnificent efforts on behalf of the Appeal and Regiment.

I believe the Regiment is in excellent shape and all its component parts are thriving, whether it be the Battalion, Band or Association. We continue to sustain excellence perhaps illustrated well by the fact that we currently have four Lieutenant Colonels in command and a further two already for command in the future as well as four Warrant Officer 1's in Regimental Sergeant Major appointments. We remain delighted and hugely appreciative that our Colonel dedicates so much of his precious time to us, whether it be by him attending Regimental Events, his very close interest in the Battalion on its Afghanistan tour, or his ceaseless support to the Appeal. We remain incredibly fortunate to have His Royal Highness as our Colonel.

I also remain very confident that the Regiment will continue to flourish in 2013. The Battalion are once again Trooping the Colour with three Guards on Horse Guards and will be moving from Hounslow in a barrack move to Pirbright in Surrey, a place many retired Welsh Guardsman will remember. I am grateful to all, whether serving or retired for all they do to sustain the excellent reputation we have as a Regiment, which at the heart remains that we are, and will remain, a close knit family Regiment.

My Foreword this year would not be complete without mention of the promotion of Lord Guthrie to the rank of Field Marshal. Although we have in the Regiment many very senior officers of Generals rank, past and present, this is the Regiment's first Field Marshal and almost certainly its last. I know many have already written to congratulate him but I think it most appropriate to do so here for the great honour his promotion has brought to the Regiment and which is in recognition not only of his outstanding qualities and success to Defence and to the Army, but also that he remains the loyalist of Welsh Guardsmen.

**"I believe the Regiment is in excellent shape and all its component parts are thriving, whether it be the Battalion, Band or Association."**



Lt. Col. DLW Bossi, **Commanding Officer**

# FOREWORD

Leafing back through previous issues of the Regimental Magazine I was amused to read a past piece by Gen Sir Redmond Watt in which he admitted that he had once been advised never, ever to agree to write a "Foreword". This was on the grounds that no one would ever read it and those that did would know what it contained anyway. Like him, I am therefore completely ignoring what sounds like extremely sensible advice in writing what follows below. It is perhaps doubly unwise even to attempt to write a "Foreword" when the Regimental Lieutenant Colonel has also written one which will run just before yours. I am conscious therefore of embarking on the literary equivalent of the lecture after lunch on a Friday...

That said, the Battalion has had a truly remarkable year this year. Much will be followed up in detail by a raft of articles by the Companies and by individuals from the Battalion in this edition, but perhaps a few words of introduction from me would be helpful.

As most will know, last year's magazine was dominated by accounts of the strenuous period of training for the Afghanistan mission that we all underwent. Beginning formally in July 2011, but informally several months earlier, we felt extremely well prepared for the demands of the operation. We deployed in March and recovered back to Hounslow in October of 2012 from what was known as Operation HERRICK 16.

The Operation was extremely testing and saw the Battalion deployed all over the British-controlled zone within central Helmand in a variety of tasks. Battalion Headquarters, along with Number Two, Support and Headquarter Companies formed the nucleus of the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group, known universally as "the PMAG" (pronounced Pea-Magg). They were reinforced by 2 company-strength groups from the Queen's Own Gurkha Logistics Regiment and the Light Dragoons and a further company from the Danish Army. In addition we were heavily reinforced by a large contingent of Royal Military Policemen as well as Royal Engineers, linguists and mobilised civilian policemen serving with the Reserves. All in all a veritable "rainbow nation" of 23 capbadges with the leek first and foremost.

The PMAG was tasked with developing the 3 main types of Afghan Police and owned the problem from beginning to end, starting with the training of police recruits and going all the

way through to the development of their administrative systems and their leaders and with conducting policing alongside them. This meant getting intimately involved in a range of scenarios that varied from something recognisable as "policing" within the protected communities of central Helmand, to light infantry actions on the flanks, areas of the desert and areas heavily given over to poppy production. With isolated small teams of PMAG soldiers usually vastly outnumbered by our Afghan Policemen, the soldiering challenge had a significant cultural, linguistic and intellectual dimension to it, ensuring that we were seldom bored and never complacent.

The Prince of Wales's and Number Three Companies had challenges of a different nature, both taking on the role of "Operations Companies" for the Nar-e-Saraj Battlegroup and the Brigade respectively. Details of how both Companies fared are provided in some detail in the articles that follow. Suffice to say that it is with no little pride that I can reveal that every element of the Battalion won the praise of all who encountered it and that our reputation as grittily professional, hard fighting and clear-thinking soldiers has been firmly re-established in the minds of the rest of the Army.

But the tour was not without its cost. None of us will forget the tragic loss of LCpl Lee Davies, Gdsm Craig Roderick, Gdsm Apete Tuisovorua and, alongside them WO2 Perran Thomas (30), formally Welsh Guards but serving with the

Military Stabilisation and Support Group as a Reservist Signaller and who was killed in the same incident as Roderick and Tuisovorua. Added to these are the numerous individuals wounded in action, in the main from gunshot wounds and the shrapnel from explosive devices. Many of these men are seriously hurt and will require the continued support of the Regiment through life. I cannot emphasise enough the importance of the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal to ensuring that we continue to offer them assistance and hope in the future. They fully deserve our collective pride.

Our return to the UK was marked by a series of truly memorable events in the form of two "Homecoming" Parades, one in Cardiff and one in Hounslow and a Medals Parade at which HRH The Colonel, Field Marshal The Lord Guthrie, the Major General and Brig Richard Stanford (formerly WG) presented medals.

Unsurprisingly, Cardiff was a fabulous spectacle and a wonderful day for the wider Regiment as well as simply the Battalion itself. Rather more unexpectedly, Hounslow also turned out to be an excellent day with a tremendous reaction on the streets of the Borough and a fantastic reception for the Battalion hosted by the Leader of the Council and the Mayor.

As we face the New Year and our move back into London District's tender clutches there remains much to do and to look forward to. In and around Public Duties and State Ceremonial (including the Battalion Trooping its Colour on the Birthday Parade in June), we have a varied programme which is deliberately packed full of sport and adventure training. We are then likely to move into the Aldershot/Pirbright area some time after the Birthday Parade and can look forward to re-visiting old stamping grounds and having a training area on our doorstep once again. We are well manned and recruited and professional standards continue to climb. I therefore deem we are well set for the future and ready for whatever events may throw at us.

Cymru am Byth!

**"Hounslow also turned out to be an excellent day with a tremendous reaction on the streets of the Borough and a fantastic reception for the Battalion."**



*LCpl Jones 91 and Gdsm Powell 81 take a break during operations*

# THE PRINCE OF WALES'S COMPANY

*Y Ddraig Goch Ddvyr Cychwyn - The Red Dragon Gives a Lead*

Maj Lauanders  
 Capt Young  
 Lt Lloyd George  
 2Lt Marsden  
 WO2 (CSM) Ryan  
 CSgt Roberts  
 Sgt Hughes  
 Sgt Scarf  
 LSgt Veuveuka  
 LSgt Greenman  
 LSgt Hayman  
 LSgt Lawrence  
 LSgt Rowlands 99  
 LSgt Skitt  
 LCpl Brown  
 LCpl Bamber  
 LCpl Caffery  
 LCpl Chance  
 LCpl Jones 89  
 LCpl Jones 91  
 LCpl Meek  
 LCpl Parry 26  
 LCpl Roberts 72  
 LCpl Deeks  
 LCpl Small  
 LCpl McCarthy  
 LCpl Rai  
 Gdsm Adekoya  
 Gdsm Asare-Bediako  
 Gdsm Baw  
 Gdsm Brown  
 Gdsm Bilton  
 Gdsm Cann  
 Gdsm Carr  
 Gdsm Charles  
 Gdsm Collins  
 Gdsm Cook  
 Gdsm Cray  
 Gdsm Dalton  
 Gdsm Davies 77  
 Gdsm Davies 87  
 Gdsm Dunn  
 Gdsm Edwards 93  
 Gdsm Evans 35  
 Gdsm Evans 89  
 Gdsm Evans 76  
 Gdsm Felton  
 Gdsm Greenan  
 Gdsm Glasby

Gdsm Gilbert  
 Gdsm Hall  
 Gdsm Harding  
 Gdsm Henneberry  
 Gdsm Heal  
 Gdsm Howells  
 Gdsm Hughes 71  
 Gdsm Hughes 13  
 Gdsm Hylend  
 Gdsm Jackson 35  
 Gdsm Jallow  
 Gdsm Jones 20  
 Gdsm Jones 23  
 Gdsm Jones 16  
 Gdsm Jones 60  
 Gdsm Kropacek  
 Gdsm Lambrick  
 Gdsm Lloyd  
 Gdsm Mason  
 Gdsm Mottram  
 Gdsm Morgan 54  
 Gdsm Peek  
 Gdsm Pervis  
 Gdsm Pickin  
 Gdsm Picton  
 Gdsm Powell 21  
 Gdsm Powell 81  
 Gdsm Rees  
 Gdsm Reynolds  
 Gdsm Rowlands 75  
 Gdsm Rutledge  
 Gdsm Saunders  
 Gdsm Saho  
 Gdsm Singleton  
 Gdsm Tavaga  
 Gdsm Threadgold  
 Gdsm Thorne  
 Gdsm Thomas 36  
 Gdsm Tyers  
 Gdsm Ward  
 Gdsm Wannell  
 Gdsm Watson  
 Gdsm Williams 22  
 Gdsm Williams 94  
 Gdsm Williams 62  
 Gdsm Williams 70



*Aviation operations*

2012 has been dominated by the preparation, deployment for and recover from Operation HERRICK 16 and this has resulted in new and varied experiences for all member of the Prince of Wales's Company.

Though still based in Cavalry Barracks, Hounslow, the Company has had two masters for much of the year. The Prince of Wales's Company was subordinated into Combined Force Nahr-e-Sarj (South) (CF NE(S)) under the command of 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, The Duke of Wellington's (3YORKS). The beginning of the year saw the

Company with many new attachments, mainly from the Royal Artillery and Royal Army Medical Corps deploying on a number of exercises with other units from CF NES(S) on the final tests and assessments required to receive approval to deploy to Afghanistan and to focus our efforts on the skills and drills required to be successful.



*The Prince of Wales's Company, with an Afghan Tiger Team*



*Jamboys enjoying the Guardsman's regimental dinner in PB5*

Despite this, the Company put in good showing in the inaugural Inter-Company Strongman Competition 2012, narrowly managing to win the event.

Following a short pre-tour leave and some final farewells to friends and family the Company deployed to Afghanistan on 11th April. Following some intense in-theatre training, which comprised of endless briefs and training, and tested the resolve of all to stay awake, most flew to Patrol Base 5, our new home for most during the months to come. COBRA 52A and 52B led by Lt F Wright and Sgt Hughes were tasked with

occupying a small Checkpoint in the neighbouring AO, so already the Company had been split. Reinforcement tasks were to become a familiar task to the men of the Jamboys. In our role as the NES(S) Operations Company, we were the main deployable fighting force for 3 YORKS and were sent not only to other areas of NES(S) but also across Helmand Province.

Throughout the tour the Company deployed on some 35 pre-planned deliberate operations and hasty operations. The latter were

usually to interdict insurgents, weapons and equipment to the north of NES(S) and the Company had some notable success both here and elsewhere. Indeed, no less than 6 PKM (a prestigious weapon for the enemy) and a variety of other small arms were seized by the Company over the six months. To aid to this haul, 26 IEDs and other components were removed from the battlefield and an Enemy IED/Weapons factory was discovered and decommissioned.

Most operations were undertaken as a ground assault force, and the number of personal out on the ground varied from 40-129 soldiers and anywhere up to 36 vehicles dependent on task and attachments. Some operations commenced with a flight in support helicopters when the Company deployed on short duration operations to strike and disrupt enemy activity.

COBRA 51 led by Lt Lloyd George and policed Sgt Scarf were given the unique task of establishing a new observation

**“The hard work of the platoon there had a massive positive effect on insurgent activity in the populated areas”**



*LCpl Small savours the moment on the final flight out of PB5 ▶*

*Sgt Scarf (on left) contemplates a tricky moment ▼*



post overlooking the Helmand river valley. The hard work of the platoon there had a massive positive effect on insurgent activity in the populated areas and proved to be an excellent means of keeping the enemy front line further away from the green zone, where once the majority of combat had been seen.

Mid-tour and mid-year, COBRA 52 was relinquished by Capt Wright and assumed by 2Lt Marsden. Capt Wright left the Afghanistan and immediately attended and passed AAPS, better known as P Company, which is no mean feat and now commands the Guards Parachute Platoon in 3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment.

Amongst all the positivity of the deployment, there were of course some negatives. As a Company, 11 IED strikes were suffered, though all emerged with no or very minor injuries. The same can not be said for the Company's vehicles with 3

Mastiffs and a Wolfhound being written off!

Following a successful recovery to the UK and some well deserved leave with plenty of recreation, the rugby players in the Company threw (literally) themselves into 300 Cup. Despite being well down on numbers the team performed exceptionally well and came in as deserved runners up.

The homecoming parades have already commenced in earnest with the City of Cardiff already hosting the Battalion on parade and then in Cardiff Arms Park. The Company now looks forward to a good slice of Christmas leave before facing the challenges of 2013. Not least this will involve getting into gear to provide the Escort to the Colour for the Queen's Birthday Parade in the summer. All ranks will be forgiven for performing this task with chests puffed having stood up to the plate and delivered during a truly testing but memorable year.

*The Company Commander issuing QBOs ▶  
Gdsm Pickin doing 'Hearts and Minds' ▼*





Gdsm Jackson 35 ▲

Gdsm Davies 77 with Company Tac ▼





*2Lt Marsden leads his men across the Helmand River ▲*

*Gdsm Jones 23 observes his arcs ▼*



# NUMBER TWO COMPANY

Gwyr Ynys Y Cedryn - The Men of the Island of the Mighty

Maj Salusbury  
 Capt Figures-Wilson  
 Capt Major  
 Capt Starkey  
 Lt Bardsley  
 2Lt Birrell  
 WO2 Dunn  
 WO2 Davies 90  
 CSgt Parry 19  
 Sgt Heath  
 Sgt Treharne  
 LSgt Challenger  
 LSgt Collins 63  
 LSgt Evans 36  
 LSgt Gwilym  
 LSgt Greaves  
 LSgt Hemmings  
 LSgt Marsh  
 LCpl Austin  
 LCpl Chard  
 LCpl Davies 65  
 LCpl Edwards 27  
 LCpl Edwards 40  
 LCpl Evans 08  
 LCpl Hughes 34  
 LCpl Hobbs  
 LCpl Love  
 LCpl Lucas  
 LCpl Thomas 01  
 LCpl Walters  
 LCpl Williams-Day  
 Gdsm Adams  
 Gdsm Arnold  
 Gdsm Bevan  
 Gdsm Bromley  
 Gdsm Campbell 90  
 Gdsm Campbell 85  
 Gdsm Craze  
 Gdsm Cole  
 Gdsm Collins 74  
 Gdsm Cotterill  
 Gdsm Dade  
 Gdsm Davies 35  
 Gdsm Davies 85  
 Gdsm Davies 89  
 Gdsm Dimmock  
 Gdsm Duffel  
 Gdsm Dudley  
 Gdsm Edwards 95

Gdsm Everett  
 Gdsm Foley  
 Gdsm Gent  
 Gdsm Griffiths 86  
 Gdsm Groves  
 Gdsm Harding  
 Gdsm Harris 26  
 Gdsm Harris 79  
 Gdsm Harvey  
 Gdsm Hawker  
 Gdsm Heath  
 Gdsm Hill  
 Gdsm Hurrell  
 Gdsm Jennings  
 Gdsm Jobarteh  
 Gdsm Jones 57  
 Gdsm Jones 69  
 Gdsm Jones 74  
 Gdsm Jones 83  
 Gdsm Kigotho  
 Gdsm Kirumira  
 Gdsm Locke  
 Gdsm Mathews 06  
 Gdsm Mooney  
 Gdsm Mortlock  
 Gdsm Moyo  
 Gdsm Martin  
 Gdsm Mitchell  
 Gdsm Mulready  
 Gdsm Nadin  
 Gdsm Niebling  
 Gdsm Pike  
 Gdsm Poole  
 Gdsm Powell  
 Gdsm Price  
 Gdsm Rees  
 Gdsm Reeves 53  
 Gdsm Rhisiarts  
 Gdsm Richardson  
 Gdsm Roe  
 Gdsm Retalick  
 Gdsm Roberts 78  
 Gdsm Roberts 09  
 Gdsm Robinson  
 Gdsm Simmons  
 Gdsm Webb  
 Gdsm Whiles  
 Gdsm Williams 43  
 Gdsm Woosnam



*Lt Bardsley practices his Shura technique during training*

This year has been particularly demanding for Number Two Company where the focus has been on deployment to Afghanistan. After summer leave the Company returned to Cavalry Barracks Hounslow to begin preparing for its police mentoring role, which would see it training Afghan police throughout Task Force Helmand's Area of Operations.

The program was busy and reflected the vast range of different skills we would have to master if we were to be successful in Afghanistan. Not only did the Company need proficiency in the skills expected of a rifle company in a ground holding role, but we also needed to be prepared to work closely with our Afghan partners and be able to mitigate where possible the risks involved when working so closely.

After a Police Mentoring and Advisory Group (PMAG) Concentration Day, which helped to expand on some of the principles and concepts of police mentoring, the Company led its own three week training package. Each week the Company deployed to a FOB location in order to practise basic patrolling techniques that

individual Police Advisory Teams would rely on to keep them alive in Afghanistan. These ranged from ground sign awareness training and contact drills to basic cooking and hygiene lessons, and for those unlucky enough to be based in a checkpoint without an Army chef, the latter was particularly welcome.

At the end of the second week of Company level training, we deployed on EX PASHTUN HAWK, which saw us complete all of our weapon training on a variety of different ranges designed to replicate different scenarios that we might encounter in Afghanistan. These started with basic section level ranges all the way up to compound clearance ranges where we were using simmunition to increase the level of realism. Number Two



*A joint cordon & search operation with the AUP*

Company was also the only Company in the Battalion and, indeed, the wider Army to complete the fantastic indoor live compound clearance range. It burnt down once we had finished. After our own three week training package we left Cavalry Barracks to complete the Confirmatory Final Exercise (CFX) on STANTA training area, which thoroughly tested us in the different scenarios we might expect to encounter in our role. This ranged from mass casualty situations to complex kinetic events that saw us fighting alongside a civilian 'Ghurka' force who played the role of Afghan Uniformed police (AUP). It was helpful to allow young guardsmen the opportunity to see what it would be like to work and fight alongside a native force that had different tactics and practices. It also gave commanders invaluable experience in planning missions with commanders from other nations.

By the end of the year we had completed all of the major pre-deployment training events except for the Final Training Exercise. This took place in January 2012 and re-assured the Battalion and the Brigade that Number Two Company was ready to deploy on Op HERRICK 16.

By late March all of the Company had arrived in Afghanistan and completed a comprehensive Reception Staging and Onward Integration training package in Camp Bastion. This was designed to refresh skills and drills and

ensure that everyone had the most up to date understanding of the real time situation on the ground and what we could expect when we arrived at our respective locations. This would be the last time that the Company was together for the duration of the tour, as at the end of this brief spell in Bastion the Company split into five independent PATs and moved out to five different locations.

Number Two Company operated across the entirety of Task Force Helmand's area of operations and all of these locations have had different problems and challenges. However, regardless of location, all the PATs faced considerable adversity and have given a brilliant account of themselves and the Company. In a part of the world where there is no such thing as a 'typical' day PATs could often find themselves conducting low-level training with AUP patrolmen in the morning before dealing with a real IED in the afternoon. The PATs faced the full spectrum of threats that one would expect in a modern day counter-insurgency campaign, where nothing is as simple as it seems.

Unfortunately the operational tour was dominated by the increased Insider Threat or

Green-on-Blue attack as it is more commonly referred to. Tragically the Company was directly affected by this on two separate occasions, when LCpl Davies was killed near PB ATTAL and when Gdsm Roderick and Gdsm Tuisovurva were killed near FOB OULLETTE. All three were killed by individuals in the Afghan National Police acting alone. It is testament to the Company that despite these most grave of setbacks, everyone continued to work as hard as they could to maintain relations with the Afghan Police and ensure that all of the good work was not lost.

As we get closer to 2014, everyone is asking themselves whether the current rulers of Afghanistan will be strong enough to stand alone without the military support of ISAF. The closer we get to this point, the harder it is to give a concise answer. In the PMAG role it is incredibly hard to quantify success. We have not been fighting over ground, but have been fighting to leave a more capable Afghan police force to secure the country after we leave. When the Afghans themselves can take two steps back for every one forward, evaluating whether we are achieving this aim is difficult, frustrating and probably only

subjective. Whatever happens in 2014, Number Two Company has achieved its mission and has left a small part of Helmand slightly better prepared for whatever it may face. The Company can be proud of what it has achieved.

At the time of writing all members of Number Two Company are now back in the UK. There will be in the inevitable parades and celebrations in the run up to Christmas before we return in the New Year to tackle something completely different. Public Duties loom with the chance to get the Company on the Troop in June 2013.

In the New Year we say farewell to Captains Scarlett and Starkey, both from the Coldstream Guards, who take on appointments as ADC/COMARRC and 2ic Number 7 Company respectively. We wish them the very best of luck. We also say a sad farewell to WO2 (CSM) Dunn who has been in the chair for some three years and who takes over as one of the Battalion's Drill Sergeants and then RQMS(T). WO2 Davies 90 steps up from CQMS to CSM and CSgt Parry 19 has returned from RMAS to be the CQMS. Sgt Heath will take over the Battalion's sniper platoon.

**"We have not been fighting over ground, but have been fighting to leave a more capable Afghan police force to secure the country after we leave."**



# NUMBER THREE COMPANY

Fy Nuw, Fy Ngwlad, Fy Mrenin - My God, My Land, My King

Maj Llewelyn-Usher  
 Capt Thompson  
 Capt Pike  
 Lt Bromfield  
 Lt M Wright  
 2Lt Luther-Davies  
 WO2 Taylor  
 WO2 Williams 05  
 CSgt Peters  
 CSgt Morgan 10  
 Sgt Cope  
 Sgt Jeffries  
 Sgt Todd  
 LSgt Brereton  
 LSgt Cunningham  
 LSgt Davies 29  
 LSgt Deren  
 LSgt Doyle 50  
 LSgt Evans 35  
 LSgt Haines  
 LSgt Hayton  
 LSgt Hedges  
 LSgt Hiscock  
 LSgt Hill  
 LSgt John 68  
 LSgt Mclean  
 LCpl Barnes  
 LCpl Bruford  
 LCpl Doyle 38  
 LCpl Edwards 97  
 LCpl Jayne  
 LCpl Jones 78  
 LCpl Langley  
 LCpl Malley  
 LCpl May  
 LCpl Morgan 44  
 LCpl Rowlands 39  
 LCpl Taylor  
 Gdsm Ankrah  
 Gdsm Bailey 51  
 Gdsm Bailey 97  
 Gdsm Bebb  
 Gdsm Benbow  
 Gdsm Berry  
 Gdsm Bishop  
 Gdsm Bladen  
 Gdsm Brown  
 Gdsm Butler  
 Gdsm Button  
 Gdsm Buxton 78  
 Gdsm Ceesay 09  
 Gdsm Ceesay 47  
 Gdsm Clarke  
 Gdsm Davies 05  
 Gdsm Davies 200  
 Gdsm Divavesi  
 Gdsm Ebeso  
 Gdsm Florence  
 Gdsm Foster

Gdsm Garvey  
 Gdsm Goodsall  
 Gdsm Hammond  
 Gdsm Hannaby  
 Gdsm Harding  
 Gdsm Harris  
 Gdsm Hathway  
 Gdsm Hayward  
 Gdsm Hibben  
 Gdsm Holland  
 Gdsm Hughes 41  
 Gdsm John 11  
 Gdsm Jones 97  
 Gdsm Kelly  
 Gdsm Kemp  
 Gdsm Korosaya  
 Gdsm Lewis 39  
 Gdsm Locke 23  
 Gdsm Matthews 80  
 Gdsm McBride  
 Gdsm McLaughlan  
 Gdsm Millins  
 Gdsm Mitchell  
 Gdsm Morris  
 Gdsm Msibi  
 Gdsm Nabukebuke  
 Gdsm Noyes  
 Gdsm Nyekanga  
 Gdsm Openda  
 Gdsm Parfitt  
 Gdsm Parry  
 Gdsm Payne  
 Gdsm Perkins  
 Gdsm Poole  
 Gdsm Prudham  
 Gdsm Pugh  
 Gdsm Richards  
 Gdsm Riley  
 Gdsm Roberts 25  
 Gdsm Roberts 49  
 Gdsm Roberts 55  
 Gdsm Rodgers 13  
 Gdsm Rowlands 15  
 Gdsm Slocombe  
 Gdsm Smith 68  
 Gdsm Soko 26  
 Gdsm Stephens 83  
 Gdsm Strinati  
 Gdsm Sweetman  
 Gdsm Thomas 56  
 Gdsm Thomas 500  
 Gdsm Toomey  
 Gdsm Wannell  
 Gdsm Watts  
 Gdsm Waqanisaravi  
 Gdsm Williams 07  
 Gdsm Williams 03  
 Gdsm Wright  
 Pte Watt



2012 has witnessed an intense period for Number Three Company – as indeed it has for the entire Battalion. The Company returned early from Christmas Leave to ensure it deployed in good order for its first key MST exercise on 7 Jan 12. Since that point and until the sunshine and beaches of Akrotiri in mid-October the Company has been relentlessly busy.

The Company's Pre Deployment Training focused on the premise that it would be a ground holding sub-unit in Nad-e-Ali as part of the 1 Royal Anglian Battle Group. This would prove to be true but only, however, for the initial nine weeks of tour.

On arrival in Nad-e-Ali the Company assumed control of PB PIMON from A Company 1 YORKS. PB PIMON was located on the North Western shoulder of the already transitioned Green Zone which the Company were tasked with protecting. It became abundantly clear within days that there was a significant threat from coordinated insurgent attacks from within 500m of the PB. From the outset the Company focussed its activity on disrupting an enemy that had enjoyed

absolute freedom of movement and who lived amongst a population that clearly acquiesced to the insurgent's every wish and demand.

Conducting long range foot patrols behind the clearly identified FLET, Number Three Company encountered a determined and well drilled enemy. In the first week of operations the Company received a genuine baptism by fire when two Little Iron Men received serious gun shot wounds. It was apparent to all that the insurgents were highly proficient shots, aware of camouflage and concealment, were well co-ordinated, and had the ability to manoeuvre at ease in their own surroundings – the Western Dashte. The Company understood that to be successful in these arduous



*The Little Iron Men*

surroundings, all efforts would have to be made to seize the initiative from the insurgent and to refine some of our Tactics, Techniques and Procedures.

Within a few weeks thanks to greater awareness and understanding of the local insurgency, an improvement in the Company's soldiering skills and an ethos of derring do, the Company started to achieve significant results: not just by removing insurgents from the battlefield through combat but also by finding lethal aid caches. Just as the Company was starting to achieve a significant effect in the local area, it was re-rolled.

In late June Number Three Company became the Brigade Operations Company (BOC). The aim of this Brigade asset was to disrupt the insurgency in depth of the traditional

Forward Line of Enemy Troops (FLET) and to attack their key C2 and G4 nodes. In practice the BOC quickly became a surge element for TSUs/ CFs to utilise within their battlespace (BS) at the behest of the Brigade Commander. The ability to force project into an area hitherto unvisited or uncontrolled by either ISAF or GiROA became our *raison d'être* and shaped planning and operating as we progressed through the tour. The pattern of projecting into a designated area and then remaining on the ground for days or weeks, not only caused disruption but significantly improved the overall understanding of the areas, their geography and most

important of all, the population.

The nature of the operations conducted meant that all ranks were forced to become comfortable with working in isolation often away from any reliable resupply routes, in areas unknown to any ISAF soldiers, and with the uncertainty of knowing that insurgents circled the Company throughout. All efforts were made to keep insurgents off balance. This was achieved by either conducting long, covert night patrols then cordoning compounds of interest prior to first light, or alternatively flying by either UK or USMC aviation into areas of interest.

Occasionally the Warthog Group would transport the Company onto target and then provide protection as the Company cleared through vast swathes of territory.

Op HERRICK 16 was a highly cathartic experience for the Little Iron Men having spent the summer of 2009 spread to the four winds across Helmand Province. Operating in such varied areas across Helmand, being supported by the most innovative assets, finding and then combating such well organised and well-resourced insurgents all meant that the summer of 2012 will forever be unforgettable for each of the Little Iron Men.

**The nature of the operations conducted meant that all ranks were forced to become comfortable with working in isolation often away from any reliable resupply routes**



*'Doing the basics well' - the Company's mantra on operations*





▲ View over Helmand

Operations in Ops Box Burma ▼



# HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Ofna Dduw, Anrhydedda'r Brenin - Fear God, honour the King

Lt Col Bossi  
Maj Bettinson  
Maj Cooling  
Maj Bowen  
Capt Dawson  
Capt Durham  
Capt Hughes 32  
Capt Pridmore  
Capt Robinson  
Capt Spencer Smith  
Capt Beare  
WO1 Baldwin  
WO2 Topps  
WO2 Jones 27  
WO2 Myers  
WO2 Brown 89  
WO2 Nelson  
WO2 Radford  
WO2 Smith 63  
WO2 Wilson  
CSgt De Wit  
CSgt Parry 00  
CSgt Savage  
CSgt Bowen  
CSgt Hayes  
Sgt Davies 83  
Sgt Evans 62  
Sgt Farr  
Sgt Green  
Sgt Griffiths 42  
Sgt O'Brien  
Sgt Lias  
Sgt Lewis 29  
Sgt Paddock  
Sgt Parry 64  
Sgt Phillips  
Sgt Prosser  
Sgt Plewa  
Sgt Smith 19  
Sgt Todd  
Sgt Whatling  
Sgt Williams 37

LSgt Buller  
LSgt Crombie  
LSgt Cunningham  
LSgt Davies 04  
LSgt Davies 44  
LSgt Davies 83  
LSgt Evans 88  
LSgt Harris  
LSgt Horrell  
LSgt Jones 11  
LSgt Mcfall  
LSgt Morgan 65  
LSgt Robinson  
LSgt Sanigar  
LSgt Stirling  
LSgt Taylor 67  
LSgt Wilks  
LCpl Bailey  
LCpl Barnes  
LCpl Buckley  
LCpl Clowes  
LCpl Divers  
LCpl Glanville  
LCpl Green  
LCpl Grindley  
LCpl Jones 68  
LCpl Knill  
LCpl Millins  
LCpl Rogers  
LCpl Stevens 68  
LCpl Lee  
Gdsm Adjei  
Gdsm Allen  
Gdsm Beattie  
Gdsm Bebb 63  
Gdsm Berry  
Gdsm Boulton  
Gdsm Clark  
Gdsm Collins 88  
Gdsm Evans 16  
Gdsm Lee 50  
Gdsm Pike

Gdsm Robinson-Shaw  
Gdsm Rowe  
Gdsm Sarr  
Gdsm Smith 65

Gdsm Stevens 46  
Gdsm Sweeney  
Gdsm Watts

## ATTACHED

Maj Zaffar  
Capt Gill  
Padre Jones  
Capt Miller  
Capt Pike  
Lt Marx  
WO2 Cooper  
WO2 Godfree  
WO2 Mclay  
WO2 Webb  
SSgt Henton  
Sgt Barnes  
Sgt Collins 46  
Sgt Chadwick  
Sgt Lowe-Barrow  
Sgt Santos Carey  
Sgt Wills  
Sgt Smith 89  
Sgt Washer  
LSgt Brown 11  
LSgt Brooks  
LSgt Brereton 67  
LSgt Evanson  
LSgt Howat  
LSgt Jackson  
LSgt Limbu  
LSgt O'Neil  
Cpl Anderson  
Cpl Bentley  
Cpl Bell  
Cpl Forrester  
Cpl Pell  
Cpl Mckay  
Cpl Whyte  
LCpl Clayton  
LCpl Forster  
LCpl James

LCpl Logie  
LCpl Pickard  
LCpl Rai 52  
LCpl Rai 17  
LCpl Saru  
LCpl Williams 92  
LCpl Sutton  
Pte Afidemenyo  
Pte Bailey  
Pte Che  
Cfn Colwell  
Pte David  
Cfn George  
Pte Godfrey  
Pte Herbert  
Cfn Hewitt  
Cfn Jayes  
Cfn Joyce  
Pte Kiletjie  
Cfn Lucan-Wilson  
Cfn Millington  
Cfn Mclenahan  
Pte Payne  
Pte Pun  
Pte Rai 07  
Pte Rai 78  
Cfn Reid  
Pte Robinson  
Cfn Singh Dhindsa  
Pte Smith  
Pte Tamang  
Pte Thorley



**A**s we arrived back from Afghanistan the e-mail call came in reminding everyone of the requirement for Regimental Magazine Notes, once again. It was only after re-reading notes from last years magazine that I realised how much time has passed since our last edition. The flux due to changeover of personalities in the previous twelve months has been replaced by a wide and varied dispersal of Headquarter Company over this reporting twelve months.

Spread across the Battalion supporting various operational requirements has been a challenging task. The Company has covered forward with the Police Mentoring Advisory Group Headquarters and has been involved in the Police training effort at the Lashkar Gah Police Training Centre. Rear based effort at Camp Bastion in the Brigade Troops Echelon was overseen by RQMS(M) Topps and we had personnel embedded with the Quartermaster of the Joint Operations Base. The Rear Operations Group (ROG) was driven and directed by the three Late Entry Officers:

Capt Dawson, Pridmore and Hughes.

The very nature of the Company covering all these areas both before and on the deployment has at times tried the patience of all the Company staff. The Regimental Administrative Officer, Capt Andy Gill, the Regimental Signals Officer Capt Dusty Miller and the Transport Officer, Capt Pete Robinson had to balance their platoons/ detachments to meet the need on many fronts. They all

succeeded without any impact across the whole Battalion, with most of our senior Non Commissioned Officers taking the initiative without direction. CSM Nelson has shown his man management skills fully by juggling all manning requirements across the Battalion, and throughout the year we have not been found wanting.

The start of this year's article saw the Battalion deploying to various Mission Specific Training events ready for deployment. With Company Headquarters needing to be part of the training regime, this meant that a lot of direction was given early with departments running solo. The Quartermaster Technical, Capt Karl Dawson has had an increase in his workload by covering both his and the

Quartermaster's brief due to early deployment of the Quartermaster, Major Alun Bowen. He has kept up that workload throughout the deployment improving the infrastructure in Cavalry Barracks and supporting Op OLYMPICS. Capt Al Hughes' effort was very much focused on our casualties as they returned.

All areas of effort will no doubt be articulated within each departments' articles. That effort, work rate, and sheer determination by all across Headquarter Company has meant that the Battalion has been able to concentrate its effort knowing it has a 'tail' that maintains and sustains with the most minimal of direction. It has been a busy, but extremely successful year.

**"They all succeeded without any impact across the whole Battalion, with most of our senior Non Commissioned Officers taking the initiative without direction."**



*The Coy Comd with his mates*



*The CSM with his mate*

## QUARTERMASTER'S DEPT

Op HERRICK 16 has dominated the activities of the Quartermaster's Department for the last 12 months with support being provided to Pre Deployment Training (PDT) across the UK. The Technical Department and those who remained on the ROG, led by Capt Dawson and WO2 (RQMS) Jones 27, have performed outstandingly.

It is difficult to explain the sheer amount of work that has been completed by the likes of Sgt Williams 37, Sgt Paddock, LSgt Buller and Gdsm Boulton as they have dealt with the entire Battalion's worth of equipment prior to, during and on return from Afghanistan. WO2 (RQMS) Campbell was to the fore during PDT but he only managed to last until his promotion to Warrant Officer Class One and the appointment of Regimental Sergeant Major at the Honourable Artillery Company. His feet have not moved off his desk since his arrival! Prior to deployment, the Gymnasium looked more like a department store with the Battalion's clothing and equipment stacked neatly by Sgt Davies 83 and his team of willing volunteers. In his final year in the Army, Sgt Farr

provided much needed humour and experience to a frenetically busy ROG. We wish him well after a full career and thank him for his service. The Master Tailor and his team of LSgt Abraham and LCpl Jones 09 have all been busy preparing the Battalion for "scarlet soldering" as we look ahead to our Troop in 2013. This has been a significant year for the Tailors' Shop with the promotion of the Master Tailor to WO2, the swap of LSgts Abraham and Wilks and the assignment of Gdsm Bisp. The ROG G4 Team had the small matter of Op OLYMPICS to contend with and the Regimental Catering Warrant Officer was to the fore with his

team working all hours to feed the hundreds of additional personnel that descended on our barracks. Sgt Smith REME and his small team in the LAD spent the summer ensuring that our vehicles were maintained and his efforts are clearly reflected in the Battalion having the highest percentage of equipment availability for quite some time.

In Afghanistan, we provided Sgt Phillips, LSgt Cunningham - who both were promoted this year - and Gdsm Beattie to the Camp Bastion Joint Operating Base Quartermaster's Department where they provided another great example of how well members of 1WG perform when away from the Battalion. WO2 (RQMS) Topps was selected for the post of Brigade Troops Echelon RQMS, also based in Camp Bastion. This resulted in a key enabler placed into the heart of the logistics support for the PMAG. RQMS Topps was supported by Sgt Parry 64 who provided the PMAG with a

superb service through his renowned ability to "acquire" spare parts from myriad sources. WO2 (CSMiM) Radford was dropped into the logistics world as the senior PMAG G4 Liaison Officer and suffice to say he has aged and lost a bit of height - now down to 6 ft 20! The Quartermaster was employed as a Logistics Mentor working alongside an Afghan National Police Colonel who was a seasoned veteran. Afghan Logistics are not quite the same as our own but bizarrely their system seems to work to varying degrees. Very few members of the ANP do not have adequate kit and equipment and neither do they go hungry. Quite how it all works, who knows! One area that real progress was made was in Afghan Equipment Care (EC). If an item of equipment stopped working then a new one would be requested and this results in a very inefficient system. A hugely effective Equipment Care Course was developed by PMAG and on returning from Op HERRICK 16

**"Prior to deployment, the Gymnasium looked more like a department store with the Battalion's clothing and equipment stacked neatly by Sgt Davies 83 and his team of willing volunteers."**

we had trained 150 members of the ANP in basic EC across numerous locations within Central Helmand. This concept has been replicated by the US Army Logistics Advisors so the spread of EC is now well under way. It is hoped this will have a

positive affect within the Afghan National Police for years to come. The progress from this basic course is for the Afghans to instruct EC themselves and Op HERRICK 17 have inherited a course plan to achieve this.

## TRANSPORT PLATOON

Over the last 12 months the Motorised Transport (MT) Platoon has been tested to the limits. It has had to support all Mission Specific Training (MST) requirements which was not an easy task with the Battalion being split into three different entities for the Op tour.

Coupled with this, the reduction of its manpower to support the companies and the Lashkar Gah Training Centre (LTC) on Op HERRICK 16 made the task even more difficult. Lastly, it still had to maintain and sustain the Rear Operations Group (ROG) back in the Cavalry Barracks, Hounslow and transport those deploying, returning on R&R and returning from theatre.

In late 2011 the platoon reconfigured to support Op HERRICK 16. This saw the formation of the ROG with newly promoted Sgt "Mikey" Smith 19 stepping into the MTOs shoes. LSgt "Hank" – get off my train" Harris 58 as his 2ic. Newly promoted LSgt "Honk" Horrell as the Servicing Bay NCO, LCpl Green as the Stores NCO, LCpl Grindley as the POL NCO and Gdsm Berry, Rowe 30 and Pike as the Drivers. Number Three Company benefited from LSgt Hayton as their MT Representative and Gdsm Morgan 44, Bebb and Williams 07 as UOR Drivers. The LTC gained the MTO Capt Robinson as the 2ic, LSgt "Trigger" Evans 88 as a Team Commander and LSgt "Red Rob" Robinson as the MT Rep.

Urgent Operational Requirement (UOR) vehicle training began in 2009 and continued up until a few weeks before deployment. This saw the MTO beg, borrow and steal courses from any source available in 12 (Mech) Brigade and 4 (Armoured) Brigade ensuring that not only the Battalion were qualified and ready to drive and command the complex array of Protected Mobility vehicles, but also the Light Dragoons (LD) and Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR) who were both attached to the 1WG PMAG.

MST continued after Christmas. The platoon supported this throughout which culminated with the FTX Ex PASHTUN DAWN on Salisbury Plain. The Exercise required MT support in terms of vehicles, drivers and transportation over a four-week period which stretched and tested the Platoon to the maximum but with the "Nothing's a drama" attitude from Sgt Smith all was accomplished.

No sooner had MST finished, the Op deployment began. Over the three months that followed, the MT was



The MTO at the LTC



Sgt 'Mikey' Smith under pressure



LSgt Evans 88 in his new role as a Team Comd /Instructor



LSgt Robinson the LTC MT Rep



The ROG MT Pl - Gdsm Pike, LSgt Harris 58, LCpl Grindley, Sgt Smith 19, Gdsm Hopkinson, Gdsm Berry and Gdsm Hathaway



Gdsm Rowe 30 on Driving Detail



Gdsm Hopkinson on Driving Detail



LSgt Harris 58 and Gdsm Pike brushing up their skills before the fuel strike training on Op ESCALIN

constantly managing the driving details to RAF Brize Norton dropping off troops, kit and equipment ensuring they met the flight timelines. On completion of the deployment and before a blink of an eye, the RRR rotation started and the focus was switched to ensuring that transport was provided for all those returning for the well deserved two-week period. As rapidly as the RRR phase finished, the redeployment back to the UK began. Driving to RAF Brize Norton became a relentless task with some of the drivers, Gdsm Rowe 30 in particular having driven there on 35 occasions.

As for the ROG, the MT continued with its normal routine. Prior to deployment the MT received a Fuel and Lubricants Logistic Support Inspection (LSI) and in Jun a ROG Health Check took place with an Inspection Team arriving from HQ LONDIST. Thankfully, and due to the hard work being maintained by those who remained behind, the Battalion received a "Green" for both inspections on the MT side of house.

In April the ROG and particularly the MT Platoon were involved in Op ESCALIN the task of preparing fuel tanker driver operators for the fuel strikes.

This entailed members of the ROG attaining ADR (HAZMAT) licences and conducting tanker training with civilian firms in Grantham. LSgt Harris 58 and Gdsm Pike who were already ADR qualified were deployed to Kingsbury in the Birmingham area and under the instruction and keen eye of British Petroleum instructors were put through their paces. They were trained to drive, bulk load and drop fuel at BP filling stations using civilian tankers. Thankfully the strike never happened but at least those individuals involved benefited from the preparatory work.

Driver Training has continued throughout the year. Those who did not deploy were given the opportunity to upgrade their existing driving qualifications in order to maintain the Battalion's driving skill set. More courses will be allocated to the Companies and run by the MT Platoon on return of the Battalion. The Battalion's Road Safety campaign has continued throughout with regular visits from the Metropolitan Police participating in a series of Drink, Drug and Driving presentations headed up by Sgt Smith.

On reflection the MT Platoon has undergone and survived

through an extremely busy and challenging year. Those who deployed on Op Herrick 16 benefited from the MST which saw them through the Op tour. Those who remained on the ROG equally worked extremely hard and came out on top, continually maintaining

and sustaining the Battalion's movements and transport requirements whilst continuing normal MT routine. The Platoon as always remains in high spirits and is looking forward to getting back to normality with the Battalion re-ORBAT in Jan 13.

## CIS PLATOON

Another year passes for the CIS Platoon. Now firmly established in Cavalry Barracks we turned our attention to the dual challenge of training for operations and also training others for operations. This places a significant burden on the Platoon but with the usual humour from WO2 (RSWO) Smith 63 the Platoon managed to deliver.

As with all deployments the Platoon is essentially spread to the four corners in the role of supporting the commanders. This deployment has been no exception. The Battalion HQ and each of the Companies have been supported through training and in theatre. One mustn't forget also the efforts made by the team left behind to manage the CIS account which is one of the largest in the Battalion.

Once deployed, the Signallers were given two distinct tasks. The normal role of providing CIS and ECM subject matter knowledge to the troops goes without saying. The other more complex task was one of mentoring the Afghan Police in their communications. The Signallers found themselves operating with the Police Advisory Teams (PATs) and at District HQs across the Central Helmand AO. Before they could begin to deliver any form of training, the Signallers had to familiarise themselves with the Afghan equipment. Once accomplished the Guardsmen and attached R SIGNALS soldiers started to slowly develop their Afghan counterparts. After six

months it was apparent that improvements had been made and a number of clearly defined plans were handed over to the RDG for the next six months.

Back in the UK, the small team led by Sgt Griffiths 42 managed the account including a large project to upgrade all of the FFRs with anti roll bars. The hard work hasn't gone unnoticed especially the new stores layout. The ROG team have also supported a number of Parades and fund raising events.

Possibly the Platoon's biggest event this year has seen the reigning Go Kart champion retain his title. Sgt Griffiths 42 managed to withstand the challenge of Sgt Todd and LSgt Brown to win the final race. One of the surprises of the day came in the form of Gdsm Allen who despite not being able to drive a car seemed to do quite well.

The platoon has again seen members come and go. Sgt Webb has left the Army, Sgt Fuller posted to Warminster and Gdsm Payne posted to Sandhurst. Returning to the Platoon were Sgt Lias, LSgt Stirling, LCpl Bailey and Gdsm Adjai.



LSgt 'Charlie' Brown at the LTC



Sgt 'Dish' Washer at the LTC

LCpl Divers at the LTC





CIS PI Members on ROG windsurfing



Sgt Griffiths 42 at St David's Day Parade

## OP HERRICK '16 by LCpl Knill

As a member of the OCC within PAT Silicon 26, I was in charge of maintaining our own kit as well as mentoring the Afghans on their communications.

The challenge which I first faced when I arrived at Paind Kalay Police Station was that I had to familiarise myself with our main source of comms, the SWED=ISH. This is the satellite comms which was used to send data and run the SECRET phone. It was the first time I had encountered the equipment. Then I had to get into the Ops Room with the Afghan Police to start mentoring their Comms Officer. This was hard at the best of times as they don't take your advice and they don't want to do things for themselves; they just want everything done for them. But I feel that I did accomplish something even if it wasn't as much as I'd hoped for.

It wasn't only my job to maintain these two locations. There was also 12 other smaller Check Points spread throughout the NES(S) area. They weren't as complex as the Headquarters but they all had

their own problems, from power problems to simply ordering new kit. This turned out to be a massive ask, as the format for ordering new kit required someone to be able to read and write, of which there was only one person who could. This turned out to be one of my biggest tasks.

From the Detachment Commander side of life, the job was manageable as it simply required some good hard work to keep on top of it. I was assisted by Gdsm Adjei. The biggest problem was equipment breaking due to the conditions they are used in. I personally went through 3 SWED=ISH satellite systems due to its location and the conditions. As for the man pack kit such as ECM and radios, there were next to nil faults - just minor things like antennas bending or breaking. All in all this was a demanding but rewarding tour.

## AGC (SPS) DETACHMENT

The Detachment started the year heavily involved supporting the Battalion to be 'G1 Ready' for the deployment on Op HERRICK 16.

Preparing and checking the personal records and documents of every individual and ensuring that they were properly briefed on insurance and wills kept the whole Detachment busy, whilst those deploying from the Detachment also completed their Pre Deployment Training (PDT).

The Detachment welcomes to the Battalion Lt Marx, SSgt Henton, LSgt McLean and LCpl Clabby while we have bade farewell to WO2 Godfree, SSgt Rees, and LSgt Mitchell.

Due to the nature of the Battalion's deployment, the Detachment were deployed to a number of different locations and in most cases employed outside of their normal roles in the UK. Capt Gill was employed as a G1 Mentor to the Provincial

Police HQ, which was responsible for the entire Province, to mentor three Afghan Colonels and a few more junior officers. Persuading the Afghans to promote Patrolman (Policemen) was one of the many tasks that kept Capt Gill busy. SSgt 'B20' Rees's (FSA) tour is shrouded in mystery and intrigue while the increased demand for 'Black and Nasty' (industrial sellotape) when he and a camera were in the same location did not go unnoticed.

Sgt Barnes (SSA) and Sgt Santos-Carey (Sys-Coord) were based in Camp Bastion in the PMAG J1 Cell with the Adjutant and Buzzard. They had to administrate approximately 460 PMAG personnel from other units and capbadges

**"The increased demand for 'Black and Nasty' (industrial sellotape) when he and a camera were in the same location did not go unnoticed."**

attached to the PMAG, dealing with flights, discipline, pay and allowances, medals, casualties, compassionate, reports and general admin issues. Being the sole point of contact and providing support to personnel on the ground who did not have access to JPA or any means of communicating with personnel in the UK, they had to relay messages and complete tasks on their behalf.

At the end of Aug 12, the role of PMAG SSA was handed over to LSgt 'The Muscle' Mclean who did the final two months of the tour. Never missing a chance to don a vest, his main effort was adjusted to take spinning classes with the medics in Camp Bastion. It was no wonder women were having babies in Bastion!

LSgt Limbu (G3 Clerk) was employed as the Operations Clerk in the busy PMAG HQ in Lashkar Gah. His main role was to support the Operations Officer with his critical job being the co-ordination of the daily foot patrols to the Provincial Police Headquarters (PPHQ) and vehicle movements to various locations for the Commanding Officer's Mobility Group. With the PMAG scattered across the Helmand, one of the important jobs was to prepare and send away morale boosting bags of mail and parcels (approx 40 bags) to each PAT location weekly. The record was 100 bags of parcels on one particular day.

LSgt Howat was employed as the G1 and G2 Support for the LTC. Part of his duties saw him in Camp Bastion (aka the Bastion Triangle) completing Headquarter Company Gdsm Annual Reports and a lot of sunbathing; getting out of Bastion is quite a nightmare! With helicopter flights cancelled

at the last minute, days on end could be spent down at the flight line trying to get back.

LCpl Gurung (Support Company Clerk) was working in OCC-D NDA (also known as DPHQ NDA) as a J2 NCO. His job included briefing the Joint Operational Room, PAT Teams and the HQ everyday on significant activities around Nad-e-Ali District. LCpl Gurung's 3rd tour to Afghanistan was a completely different experience with mentoring the Local Police and Army, a challenge he overcame using his Urdu language skills helping to build good relationships.

Pte Sutton (Support Company Clerk) was employed in theatre as the RSOI Chief Clerk. She was responsible for tracking the training progression of every individual who entered theatre and tracking those who failed to attend the RSOI package. Throughout the tour Pte Sutton accounted for over 14,000 individuals, which included most of the Herrick 16 & 17 RiP ITP packages and the whole of the Herrick 16 Steady State ITP package. She also represented 1 WG in the Afghan Triple Crown, an AGC-based March and Shoot Competition in a mixed unit team.

Pte Watt (Number Three Company Clerk) deployed to PB PIMON NDA where she found herself often juggling long periods of relative inactivity with periods of high intensity. Having seen how all aspects of the Company worked, it became apparent to her that this is in fact a key feature of being on tour. In her own words:

"My first patrol was 11 hours long and being a slight girl not known for my physical prowess I was duly given the



*Capt Gill mentoring at the Helmand Police Headquarters* ▲



*ROG - LSgt Moray, Sgt Barnes, WO2 Godfree, Lt Marx, LCpl Clabby and Sgt Wills* ▲



*LSgt Limbu at the Headquarters* ▲

*Pte Watt on patrol with No 3 Coy* ▼





*LBdr Dalleywater and our own LSgt 'Chuckles' Howat at the LTC*

ECM to carry. As had become the norm for a patrol in the Western Dashte, we promptly got contacted in the open ground. Now one would like to think that the basic infantry skills that 'all' soldiers are supposed to be equipped with would kick in; however being a creature of rational thought, I found my self thinking that if I get down on my 'belt buckle' and everyone else decides to get up again (everyone else already being down) and move off in a hurry, there is no way I will be able to move. After a short period of reflection it became apparent that the alternative probably involved getting shot, so I decided to join the rest of the Company in lying as flat as humanly possible in the middle of the desert.

At this stage my problems were only just beginning, for I soon realised I was lying on a boulder, and if that wasn't bad enough... I was facing the wrong way. One may laugh however getting contacted is no laughing matter and nor is

**"After a short period of reflection it became apparent that the alternative probably involved getting shot."**

lying on a boulder with ones buttocks facing the direction of enemy threat. With not an insignificant amount of effort I managed to manoeuvre myself from the boulder and to face the right way. No sooner had I done so than the rest of the Company was up and running for cover. With what felt like the speed of light but in reality was probably no faster than that of a waking sloth, I ran across the open ground to cover. Now towards the end of the tour I feel I better understand. As a Clerk one can often get used to the comforts of an office, the security of knowing what tomorrow will be like, and most of all that its somebody else's job to do the security bit. However, as a female in Afghanistan in a rifle company, you are an essential asset on the ground. Engaging with the local population and in particular females and children is an important part of getting the population onside. Back in camp my job involves keeping the Company functioning on the day to day

G1. Whatever the task is, it requires getting involved and being flexible enough to do things beyond your original skill set."

The Rear Operations Group (ROG) continued to provide the support during the deployment phase and subsequent re-deployment. Ably led by Lt Marx, the

Detachment which now consisted of WO2 Godfree, Sgt Wills, LSgts Mclean and Mitchell, and LCpl Clabby provided the ROG with the G1 support during the deployment.

The Detachment will return to its normal ORBAT in the New Year and looks forward to supporting the Battalion throughout another busy year.

## WELFARE NOTES

**2012** has been a been a challenging year for the Welfare Team with the PDT and the subsequent deployment on Op HERRICK 16. The year began with pre deployment briefings to the families in North and South Wales, followed by briefings in Hounslow and Aldershot; they were well received by all that attended.

St David's Day saw our annual get-together and our farewell to the members of the Battalion that were deploying. There was plenty for the families to keep them occupied during the day, starting with the Parade. This year the Leeks were issued by HRH The Prince of Wales, which is always a large draw for the families. He spent a considerable amount of time speaking with the

families and listening to their concerns prior to the deployment. There was plenty of entertainment for the children in the form of numerous fairground rides whilst the Mums and Dads were treated to a free bar courtesy of Fullers brewery whose trailer was strategically placed next to the Welfare Office to ensure everyone had an opportunity for a free beer.

The day was a great success and appreciated by all that attended.

The task of looking after the families began as soon as the Battalion had deployed. There were 28 trips provided throughout the tour; we held a monthly BBQ at Cavalry Barracks, during which the weather was generally kind; and the entertainment was varied throughout ranging from our Diamond Jubilee BBQ which was a sea of red, white and blue, to our Olympic BBQ which consisted of races for the children and Mums; the main event for the day was the archery which was popular amongst all.

Trips out were extremely popular and well attended. Overall, the Welfare Team spent in the region of £48,000 to ensure the families were kept busy during the tour.

We organised two trips away during the tour: a camping trip to Avon Tyrell and a weekend break to Minehead Butlins. The camp sight was located in the New Forest with the trip split into two phases, each consisting of three days. The trip was well supported with a total of 20 families attending during the week and the three days were packed with plenty of activities for all, including a high ropes course and a trip to Paultons Park. The trip to Butlins was a much needed break for the majority that attended, although reports back suggested the Mums were run ragged. The trip saw 32 families attend and a good time was had by all.

A number of wives and girlfriends kept themselves very busy during the tour. They organised a charity bike ride

covering the distance from Helmand to London - a total distance of 4,847 miles. Wellington Barracks staged the event, the bikes were placed on the Drill Square and the girls were in full view of the passing public on Birdcage Walk. Welsh rugby star Ryan Jones visited the event over the weekend providing much needed support and an element of eye candy for the ladies. A breathtaking £23,000 was raised for the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal (WGAA) and the girls should be extremely proud of themselves. We certainly are of them.

The tour concluded with Homecoming Presentations in North and South Wales followed by presentations in Hounslow and Aldershot.

The Welfare Office had the sad task of assisting the families of the three Welsh Guardsmen who were tragically killed during Op HERRICK 16. A bearer party consisting of Maj Tom Smith, WO2 (RQMS) Scholes and eight members of the ROG were sent to Fiji to conduct bearer party duties; reports back from the High Commission stated that they were outstanding throughout. The work with the families is of course ongoing.

The Welfare Team were kept busy during the tour dealing with the 44 casualties that returned from theatre. On average we were covering around 1,000 miles a week travelling to Birmingham, Headley Court and Wales. A special 'Thank You' goes out to all the staff at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham and Headley Court for nursing our injured back to health. For some of those injured, the process is ongoing and will continue for the foreseeable future.

**"A breathtaking £23,000 was raised for the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal (WGAA)"**





**Rear Operations Group (ROG)**

The ROG took over the running of Cavalry Barracks in Dec 11. After a period of Christmas duties, the task of keeping the Barracks up and running gained momentum into the New Year.

February saw Lt Marx and WO2 (DSgt) Brown facilitate the movement of freight to theatre. This aged the DSgt by at least 10 years; rumour has it he had a full head of hair before he began the task. To add to the hair loss issues of the DSgt, he along with Lt Marx ensured the BCR and IR pool were trained and administered in preparation for deployment to theatre. A total of 23 BCRs were deployed to theatre.

The ROG supplied various Marching Parties throughout the summer months beginning in April with the Armed Forces Day in Cardiff. May saw Marching Parties supplied for a service at the National Arboretum in Staffordshire and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in London whilst Guardsmen were also tasked to take part in the Falklands Conflict Remembrance Parades in Wrexham, Cardiff, and Swansea.

The ROG were tasked with supporting various WGAA events throughout the tour. Additionally it supported the Lt Col Thorneloe annual polo match and there was an opportunity for all the junior members of the ROG to attend a week's Adventure Training in Capel Curig which was a much needed break from the guarding of Cavalry Barracks.

Op Olympics witnessed the influx of 450+ soldiers into Cavalry Barracks to conduct security for The Games. There was an element of upheaval for the members of ROG, however Op Olympics passed without incident.

Coy Comd at the LTC ▲ The Transport Officer with the Afghan Sergeant Major at the LTC ▼



# SUPPORT COMPANY

Nac Ofna Ond Gwarth – Fear Nothing but Disgrace

Maj Moukarzel  
 Capt Davies  
 Capt Dunlop  
 Capt Maltby  
 Capt Simpson  
 Lt Hutton  
 Lt Budge  
 WO2 Griffiths 50  
 WO2 Ridgeway Buckley  
 CSgt Griffiths 96  
 CSgt Davis 76  
 CSgt Hughes 87  
 CSgt Lawman  
 Sgt Lias 92  
 Sgt Soko 03  
 Sgt Jones 78  
 LSgt Cummins  
 LSgt Davies 84  
 LSgt Deren 96  
 LSgt Devine  
 LSgt Evans 07  
 LSgt Evans 35  
 LSgt Evans 88  
 LSgt George  
 LSgt Hill  
 LSgt Hillier  
 LSgt Jones 73  
 LSgt Jones 51  
 LSgt Lewis 51  
 LSgt Lewis 88  
 LSgt Pearce

LSgt Powell  
 LSgt Rowlands  
 LSgt Thomas 90  
 LCpl Davies 47  
 LCpl Davies 95  
 LCpl Evans 13  
 LCpl Forde  
 LCpl Griffiths 04  
 LCpl Gurung  
 LCpl Harries  
 LCpl Howells  
 LCpl Kastein  
 LCpl Liddy  
 LCpl Lodwick  
 LCpl Nuku  
 LCpl Potts  
 LCpl Rees  
 LCpl Ryan 69  
 LCpl Selby  
 LCpl Sheppard-Smith  
 LCpl Tancock  
 LCpl Viavalevu  
 Dmr Agu  
 Dmr Armstrong  
 Dmr Asamoah  
 Gdsm Brownett  
 Gdsm Buretini  
 Gdsm Butterfield  
 Gdsm Chambers  
 Dmr Daffern  
 Gdsm Davies 11

Gdsm Duval  
 Gdsm Edwards 86  
 Gdsm Evans 91  
 Gdsm Evans 84  
 Gdsm Evans 94  
 Gdsm Faulkner  
 Gdsm Francis  
 Gdsm Flynn  
 Gdsm Fullman  
 Gdsm Griffiths 39  
 Gdsm Hertzog  
 Dmr Hillman  
 Gdsm Holmes  
 Gdsm Hughes 29  
 Dmr Jawara  
 Dmr Jones 91  
 Gdsm Jones 84  
 Gdsm Jones 83  
 Dmr Jones 92  
 Gdsm Kennedy  
 Gdsm Kingdon  
 Gdsm Lawrie  
 Gdsm Macedru  
 Dmr Marsden  
 Dmr Maund  
 Gdsm Morgan 21  
 Gdsm Mortimer-Rees  
 Dmr Msibi  
 Dmr Needs  
 Gdsm Niuyagoyago  
 Gdsm Parfitt 94

Gdsm Parr  
 Dmr Parry 71  
 Dmr Parry 23  
 Dmr Parry 15  
 Dmr Price  
 Gdsm Richards  
 Gdsm Sanchez-Thomas  
 Dmr Sarpak  
 Dmr Sheppard  
 Gdsm Siviter  
 Dmr Siwale  
 Gdsm Skates  
 Pte Sutton  
 Gdsm Taylor 40  
 Gdsm Thomas 58  
 Gdsm Thomas 22  
 Dmr Turner  
 Gdsm Vaganalu  
 Gdsm Van Eysen  
 Gdsm Walters  
 Gdsm Watts  
 Gdsm Webb  
 Dmr Williams 22  
 Dmr Williams 60  
 Dmr Williams 63  
 Dmr Wolfenden  
 Gdsm Woodman  
 Gdsm Woosnam  
 Dmr Workman  
 Gdsm Worthington

## Nac Ofna Ond Gwarth – Fear Nothing but Disgrace



*2Lt Budge with a member of the NDS in Nad-e Ali*

In common with the remainder of the Battalion, the past 18 months have been exceptionally busy for Support Company. Inevitably the Company has been split in numerous directions all in order to support the breadth of the Battalion's commitments on Op HERRICK 16. The primary task given to the Company was to provide the District Advisory Team for the Afghan National Police (ANP) in Nad-e Ali.

MST for the deployment was fast and furious for all, none more so than the twelve men from the Recce Platoon who had made it through the selection process for the Brigade Reconnaissance Force. This group had a high intensity pre-deployment package that saw them trained and pushed to their limits, which would prove a vital under-pinning for the high-tempo of operations they would be involved in once deployed. The remainder of the Company had a progressive journey through their own role specific training throughout the autumn and winter of

2011/12. At times it can be an exhausting process, but we got to the start line in relatively good order and prepared to face the challenges that Op HERRICK 16 had to throw at us, whatever role we were fulfilling. For the deployment the Company took under command one multiple from the Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR), who formed one of our Police

Advisory Teams (PATs) in Nad-e Ali, and within a few weeks of arriving in theatre also a multiple from the Light Dragoons (LD). This was in addition to all the usual attachments a deployed Company would expect to see, including RMP, INT CORPS, R SIGNALS, RAMC Medics and REME Fitters to name but a few. We also, unusually for Support Company, had a Second-in-Command attached to us, in the shape of Lt Andrew Speechley, a TA Officer from 3 R ANGLIAN. The final note of change during MST was that WO2 (CSM) Jenkinson was promoted and assumed the appointment of RSM of Bristol UOTC. WO2 (CSM) Griffiths 50 replaced him a few weeks prior to deployment; freshly

back from a tour as a Jungle Warfare Instructor in Brunei and loudly expounding the virtues of Ground Sign Awareness at every opportunity!

For those of us returning to Nad-e Ali it was a sobering, humbling and reassuring experience to be back on the ground that was so familiar to the Battalion from Op HERRICK 10. The security situation was unrecognisable, and the sphere of influence that the Afghan Government enjoyed was cast over a far wider geographical area than in 2009. What was also reassuring was that the police in the locations we were advising were clearly functioning, and we were

**"At times it can be an exhausting process, but we got to the start line in relatively good order and prepared to face the challenges that Op HERRICK 16 had to throw at us"**



*DMaj Lawman and Gdsm Hughes teaching members of the ALP*

really focusing on developing and improving existing structures, rather than starting from scratch. The PATs were spread across the district, working closely with the Company Commanders from the Transition Support Unit (Battle Group) who had overarching responsibility for the AO (for Op HERRICK 16 this was 1 R ANGLIAN). This was a challenging but ultimately rewarding experience for the Officers and NCOs of the Company. Whilst we had tried to maintain some of the traditional platoon identities in the three PATs that were directly provided by the Company, in reality each Team had representation from the FSG, Mortars and indeed the Recce Platoon. This was a great way to bring the spirit of the Company together and share the benefit of different experience levels and backgrounds. The first two

PATs directly manned from the Company were led by two new Platoon Commanders fresh from PCBC: 2Lts Alex Budge and Tom Hutton. They were supported by Sgt Evans 07 (and later LSgt Jones 73) and Sgt Soko respectively. The final PAT were ably led by the Mortar Platoon Commander Capt Simpson, with CSgt (DMaj) Lawman from the Corp of Drums (CoD) acting as his 2ic. Throughout the deployment members of the CoD were trying to maintain their musical skills and LCpl Potts represented the Company with honour playing the bugle at all vigil services for the Battalion's fallen.

Finally during the deployment the Company took under

command two further PATs, one formed from 3 RIFLES and the other from 1 R ANGLIAN. It was with great sadness that we lost Lt Andrew Chesterman 3 RIFLES, who was commanding one of the PATs. He received a fatal gun shot wound whilst on patrol in Nade Ali. An intelligent, fit and committed young officer, he had impressed me from the first day he came across to work in the police advising role with his focused and clearly considered approach to all he and his men were asked to do. It was truly humbling to see the way his men responded to his death and continued to perform to the highest standard, even after such a loss. His family remain in our thoughts and he will not be

forgotten by the men of Support Company.

Over in the BRF LSgt Evans 88 was responsible for running the snipers, whilst Capt Charlie Maltby, the Recce PI Comd, was one of the troop commanders. Capt Chris Fenton and CSgt Geen were both on a long term posting to the LD from the Battalion and they both now return - Capt Fenton as the Operations Officer and CSgt Geen as the Recce PI 2ic. The BRF had some notable successes during their deployment, conducting over sixty deliberate operations, removing large quantities of lethal aid, including over 2,100 kg of HME and disrupting nine IED factories. It has been great to welcome them back in to

**“This was a great way to bring the spirit of the Company together and share the benefit of different experience levels and backgrounds.”**

the Company since our return to Hounslow and to have a valuable platform of experience from which to reconstitute the Recce Platoon over the next year.

Members of the Company came together under Sgt Mclvoghue and LSgt Hillier (FSG) to form the PMAG Mobility Group, effectively the Comd Offr's TAC Group. They travelled all across Helmand from their base at the PMAG HQs in Lashkar Gar, either escorting the Comd Offr, or assisting in delivering people and equipment where it was most needed. Whilst not the most glamorous of roles, it was a vital one that was always executed to a high standard. It is also worth noting that despite such close proximity to the Comd Offr and RSM, LCpl Selby (CoD) managed to keep his rank throughout the deployment - an achievement worthy of wider recognition!

LSgts Deren, Hill and Rowlands all worked as MFCs to different elements of the Brigade, notably Deren and Hill in support of Number 3 Company whose exploits are covered elsewhere in this publication. CSgts Dewit and Hughes, with LSgt Thomas 90, worked alongside Number Two Company in mentoring the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and CSgt Davis 76 and Sgt Lewis 29 were working with HQ Company running basic training for the Afghan Police. Again this is covered in detail elsewhere in this publication. Capts Davies and Dunlop were both used to fill difficult planning and co-ordination roles that required their extra experience, and thus were detached from the

Company in the last few months before the tour and worked to Number Two Company.

After a somewhat staggered return to the UK, the Company are all now back in the UK complete, and have enjoyed a great post tour leave. We were extremely happy to win The 300 Cup during the Battalion's two weeks in camp in late Nov/ early Dec. The team was well led on the pitch by LSgt Hillier, with LCpl Tancock, Gdsm Brownnett and LSgt Powell all making notable contributions. It was particularly gratifying to see Gdsm Francis fill the role of manager so well, ably assisted by Sgt Jones 78 as his head coach. It is the first time that the Company have won the Cup in over a decade and was well earned from all of the team, who put in a spirited and thoughtful performance.

It has been a positive experience for the Company to be involved in so many corners of the Brigade battle space. In the coming year, as we look to regenerate and retrain in our traditional roles, I have little doubt that the broad and deep experience gained across the Company on Op HERRICK 16 is going to add real value. The Company strength is currently being bolstered with additional manpower from the rifle companies prior to Public Duties, and then a full program of Cadres is to be run later in 2013. The Company will be heading to Aberystwyth in January to represent the Battalion in exercising the Freedom of the Town, and are looking forward to a successful year ahead.

Nac Ofna Ond Gwarth.

**"I have little doubt that the broad and deep experience gained across the Company on Op HERRICK 16 is going to add real value."**



Sgt Evans 07 with a member of the AUP



LCpl Nuku and a member of the AUP taking a break on patrol



DMaj Lawman presenting an Eid Gift

# BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS

Written by Musician Natalie Cutland Welsh Guards Band



Members of the Band on Adventure Training in Snowdonia.  
Pictured from L to R: LSgt Whitwham, Band Sergeant Major Charles, Musn Knowles, LSgt Milne

2012 has been a truly incredible year for the band that has left us with memories we will never forget and will be very hard to beat!

## A GENTLE START

As the Senior Household Division Band we started the year looking forward with heads held high in anticipation of what lay ahead and the contribution we would be making. It started easy enough in the January and February with a fantastic week's Adventure Training doing some skiing and a consolidated period re-qualifying on MATTs 1-8. Rehearsals for our planned Tour of Wales in March also

began in earnest. With a vast programme of diverse and exciting music to learn - as well as children's workshops to plan - the band was kept busy. The PR/Media Team had the mammoth task of publicising all the concerts making sure we got maximum Press and TV coverage. The purpose of the concerts was to raise money for the Afghanistan Appeal and so we were keen to make them a resounding success, mindful of the toll HERRICK is having on the Battalion and their families.



LSgt Whitwham with LSgt Milne looking on



Jools Holland shows his support for Armed Forces Day. Pictured from L to R: LCpl Mercer, Mush Challinor, Jools Holland, LCpl Laing, LCpl White

## THE KAPE TOUR TO SOUTH WALES

The week long KAPE Tour was an exhausting, but fantastically rewarding experience. We visited Aberystwyth, Pontyberem, and Brecon. The days were spent in local schools working with some very musical young musicians. In the mornings the children had a short sectional rehearsal followed by the chance to play with the full band. We ended each session with a short concert to Years 7 and 8, including teachers, each afternoon before packing down to move onto the evening concert venue. It was fantastic to meet and work with so many talented

youngsters, many of whom expressed an interest in joining the band. The Band was on sizzling form at the concerts and we sold loads of the fund raising CDs in the intervals. We were helped massively with some prime time TV and Radio coverage on Welsh TV and the BBC news, which helped us to raise over £11000 for the Appeal.

## A STINT AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The very next week saw us at the Royal Military School of Music Kneller Hall for a Roulement tour of duty to provide music for the conducting examinations for trainee bandmasters. The band was slightly weary from the Tour the week before, but

managed to rally superbly and produce some high quality music making. It was also good to work with the 3 new recruits still in training who would be joining us in September.

## BEATING RETREAT ON HORSE GUARDS MILITARY PARADE

Beating Retreat on Horse Guards Parade saw us performing some fantastic music under the baton of Lieutenant Colonel Barnwell, Senior Director of Music. The Royal Omani Mounted Band, Kings Troop and the Muskets of The Moscow Militia (a re-enactment group) were amongst the guests that joined the Massed Bands for a

spectacular showcase to large audiences. The programme of music included an item from 'War Horse', complete with the incredible life-sized puppet horse "Joey" from the stage show, and it finished with a rousing rendition of the 1812 Overture complete with fireworks, canons and muskets. It was a real celebration of military music from around the world and gave the musicians in the Household Division bands a chance to enjoy the full force of playing as a massed band.

## THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE AND A DASH ACROSS LONDON FOR LUNCH WITH THE QUEEN

The next big event in the calendar was the Queen's Diamond Jubilee (also in June of course). We were very

**"We made it!" Climbing Snowdon was a highlight of Adventure Training - as was the October sunshine!**

## BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS

thrilled to learn that the WG Band would be playing for the Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral on the day itself - June 5th. As we were only required to play the incoming/outgoing voluntaries we had plenty of time to take it all in on the day itself and to savour the whole experience: The Royal Procession in all their glittering finery making their way down the aisle; the wonderful address by the Archbishop of Canterbury; spotting within the congregation the great and the good of the land. The Band played magnificently and had many favourable comments come from the congregation before they departed.

I had been given the personal honour of attending the Jubilee Lunch at Westminster Hall as a guest of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. I literally had to tear across London at breakneck speed to beat The Queen to Westminster Hall from St Paul's Cathedral. I was certainly glad to be in the "300 club" on this occasion and thanks to a kind policeman who gave me a lift in his police car when I couldn't get through the crowds at Westminster, I made it, though rather red and flustered.

### THE BBC'S DIAMOND JUBILEE CONCERT AT THE PALACE

The Fanfare Trumpeters were then very honoured to be asked to accompany Robbie Williams no less at the BBC's

Diamond Jubilee Concert at the Palace the night before the Service of Thanksgiving. With superb TV coverage and a huge cast of stars, the lucky few who were on the gig came back buzzing, with some rather wonderful photographs of the guys with Cheryl Cole and Tom Jones.

### SOUNDS OF LONDON DOCUMENTARY AND ARMED FORCES DAY

In late June we teamed up with another great name in the music world Jools Holland who was making a BBC Documentary entitled "the sounds of London". He wanted to feature the band on a guard changing ceremony as part of the programme. We took the opportunity to get him to help us trumpet Armed Forces Day, which was fast approaching, and he graciously obliged without a moment's hesitation.

### LONDON 2012 THE CLOSING CEREMONY

After another successful Trooping Season, which saw the well rehearsed massed bands looking and sounding fantastic and huge crowds adding to the atmosphere, we started rehearsal towards yet another exciting event... the closing ceremony of the Olympics. We had been looking forward to this since we learned we would be a part of the closing ceremony back in March and we had a huge sense of anticipation as rehearsals led us ever closer. We learned that four of the

1 Jools Holland introduces the band on camera to the viewers of the BBC Documentary "Sounds of London."

2 The Band enters the fray at the London 2012 Beach Volleyball Event on Horse Guards Parade.

3 LCPL Gary Llewellyn "giving it his all" at the London 2012 Beach Volleyball Event on Horse Guards Parade.

4 Caught on camera and the big screen a snapshot of the band "giving it their all" at the London 2012 Beach Volleyball Event on Horse Guards Parade.

## BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS





*Bandmaster WO1 Bywater acknowledges the appreciation of the crowd at the London 2012 Beach Volleyball Event on Horse Guards Parade*

Division's Bands were to do a short display to 'Parklife' by Blur in the opening section of the ceremony. After some rehearsal on the Square back at Barracks, we travelled to East London, for the Dress Rehearsal. We were ushered through security and into a huge tented village - each tent full of dancers, singers, and celebrities in colourful costumes and outlandish makeup. As we waited to have our first rehearsal, we got to watch some of the ceremony taking shape, before we marched on to Parklife, surrounded by colourful dancers and floats full of

musicians. It was amazing to be a part of it all and we left the rehearsal looking forward to performing in the ceremony for real, and anticipating the atmosphere that would surround us in the stadium.

A week later and we arrived at Olympic Village for the closing ceremony. We had a long day of waiting for our very brief rehearsal in the incredible stadium that afternoon. Our nerves started to build as evening came, our kit gleaming and our routine firmly embedded in our minds. As we stood in the tunnel ready to go on, the full force of the experience started to hit us

and our excitement reached fever pitch! Suddenly, WE WERE ON... walking out to be hit by the thousands of camera lights flashing, screams, the group Madness going past on a float, our hearts pounding as Parklife started up. Our display went perfectly, some of us even managing to watch ourselves on the big screens in the stadium at the same time! All of us felt sad as we finished our display only a few minutes long, wishing we could stay on for longer. It was unequivocally the most heart pounding experiences many of us could have imagined and as we walked back at dusk past the thousands of Olympic Athletes all waiting for their final march past, we all felt a huge sense of pride to have been a part of the 2012 Olympic Games.

**ON THE BEACH AT HORSE GUARDS PARADE**

The Band were also required to perform for the beach volleyball event on Horse Guards Parade, much to the delight of the male members of the band! We enjoyed stepping out onto the volleyball sand to play a 10 minute set in front of TV cameras and a very appreciative crowd. We had many favourable comments from Olympic personnel and visitors about how much they enjoyed the upbeat music we played and the Fanfare Trumpeters even got to perform "Down with the Trumpets" with the RIZZLEKICKS. We then went on summer leave buzzing from Olympic fever and an unforgettable summer season.

**THE BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOUR 2012**

By Lance Sergeant Milne

On 19 March 2012, The Band of the Welsh Guards departed Wellington Barracks to commence its Community Engagement tour of South Wales. Community Engagement is the process whereby Army units work closely with organisations and individuals in their immediate environment in order to establish and maintain links with the local community. This included several school 'look at life' workshops during the days and concerts in the evenings.

The first day was taken up with a long coach journey and a stop at the local service station fish and chip shop, after which, the band took up residence at RAF Brawdy. Early the following morning we headed to our first workshop at Milford Haven School. Milford Haven is the home town of our very own CSgt Adrian Beckett MBE, who organised the bulk of this successful tour. The band were greatly received as we rehearsed with musical

students from local schools and later performed during an afternoon assembly to the remainder. That evening we performed our first concert at the Garrison Chapel in Pembroke Dock alongside the Pembroke and District Male Voice Choir. The proceeds from the evening went to the Pembroke Dock Sunderland Trust and The Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal. This week was a great opportunity to launch CD sales of the single



*Working together in harmony. Young musicians from schools in the Brecon area sit in with the Band on a concert to their classmates*



*The Fanfare Team backstage with Robbie Williams. Musn Challinor is second on Robbie's right hand side, front row*

'Tell My Father' recorded by the band alongside Welsh baritone Mark Llewellyn Evans. We were lucky enough to have Mark join us throughout the week to perform the single.

The third day saw the band travel to Penglais Secondary School to hold our second schools' workshop, after which we travelled to the University of Aberystwyth to perform another concert. The University campus is lucky enough to house the Aberystwyth Performing Arts Centre, which boasts the Great Hall, a purpose built concert venue.

Our next stop was Sennybridge, Brecon, which is always nice. In its picturesque surroundings, Theatr Brycheiniog played host to both workshop and concert for the day. That evening our guest soloist Mark was joined by his brother, Wynne Evans, otherwise known for his part in the 'Go Compare' adverts. They performed the theme from Chess and not a black tie nor a

twizzled Italian moustache in sight!

The final day took the band to Pontyberem Memorial Hall, Llanelli. The last time the band performed at this venue was in 1915, the same year the regiment was formed. Pontyberem is predominantly a Welsh-speaking town and local news teams took the opportunity to interview a couple of our Welsh-speaking Musicians, Tony Watt and Bedwyr Morgan.

On the completion of a successful week the band managed to raise in excess of £10,000 for the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal. We also gained the interest of several potential young musicians wishing to consider a career in Army music. These young musicians have subsequently gone on to attend the residential summer school at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall and the Household Division Bands open day on 7 December 2012.

## BBC DIAMOND JUBILEE CONCERT 2012

By Musician Challinor

**A**s day to day conversations with colleagues go, it started like any other...

"Have a nice day off?"

"Yeah thank you, what are you looking up?"

"We have a fanfare gig in a couple of weeks."

"Oh really, what for?"

"Diamond Jubilee."

"Really? Which part?"

"We're opening the concert with Robbie Williams".

If anybody (females particularly!) could find the words to describe the feeling of performing with the man

you had a teenage crush on in front of millions of viewers, please let me know!

The fanfare team which opened the Diamond Jubilee concert was made up of trumpet, trombone and percussion players from all five Foot Guards bands. Our initial rehearsal was held in the gymnasium at Wellington Barracks with the arranger of the song and the BBC choreographers. In the two weeks that followed we



*On stage with Robbie Williams. Musn Challinor is the second trumpeter on Robbie's right hand side*



▲ The Fanfare Team backstage with Sir Elton John. Musn Challinor is first on Sir Elton's left hand side, second row.  
The Fanfare Team backstage with Dame Shirley Bassey. Musn Challinor stands shoulder to shoulder with Dame Shirley, a fellow countryman, on Shirley's left hand side ▼





*Bandmaster WO1 Bywater in a more familiar pose at the London 2012 Beach Volleyball Event after completing the London Marathon earlier in the year.*

attended more rehearsals in North London and at the venue where we got to meet Gary Barlow and I was (for once) speechless.

The Queen Victoria memorial (more commonly known as the Birthday Cake), underwent a massive transformation spanning all of the area immediately in front of the Buckingham Palace railings. The roads we use every day on our Public Duties were closed off completely to traffic and the public in order for work to begin. The result was an incredible metamorphosis. The memorial now almost looked like it had wings, with a stage erected across the front of the water fountain itself. Even in the early stages it was clear that against such a backdrop this concert was going to be visually stunning.

So, our first rehearsal with Mr. Williams himself on the stage was to begin. The choreographer looked at me and said, "You're much smaller than the rest of these guys. I think we should put you in the middle." This was nothing new to me initially, as I am somewhat smaller than many of the other trumpeters. However when a microphone stand was placed directly in front of me, and Robbie stood there, I then permitted myself a

little giggle of excitement.

All that remained now was to perform the opening number, "Let Me Entertain You", on the night itself – the real thing. Walking out on that stage, in front of the thousands of people stretching to the deepest regions of the Mall, was like nothing I'd ever experienced. That was just the beginning. We started it all off by playing a fanfare based on the song's chords, which was immediately followed with the on-stage rock band firing up. The noise when Robbie Williams walked out (in front of me!) was indescribable. Not only this, but once we had finished we were allowed to wait backstage and meet all the other performers; Sir Elton John, Stevie Wonder, Sir Cliff Richard, Dame Shirley Bassey, Sir Tom Jones, Will.I.AM, Kylie Minogue, Jimmy Carr, to name but a few! To top it all off we finished the concert with the Gordon Jacob National Anthem in front of Her Majesty and the Royal Family.

But perhaps the best highlight for me, and my family, is that in every photo of that concert that appeared in the press and on the internet afterwards there I am right in the middle. Lack of height has its advantages sometimes!

## THE LONDON MARATHON

by WO1 (BM) Bywater

Since my assignment to the Band of the Welsh Guards I had become increasingly familiar with the fabulous work of Afghanistan Appeal and was already giving some serious consideration as to what I myself could do in support when I received notice of the ballot for the 2012 London Marathon. I promptly applied and was successful in gaining a place.

I also recall my conversation with Alison Elson which left me simply thinking that this was something I had to do and to raise as much money as I possibly could for the appeal. My parents organised an Open House coffee morning, which raised in excess of £500 and got my efforts off to a good start. I opened a "Just Giving" page on the internet and by advertising it during the Band's KAPE tour in Wales donations began coming in.

The Marathon was creeping up on me quicker than I thought and to be honest I wasn't completing anywhere near enough training. I was going to have to rely on my determination, conscious of the support that everyone had given me in sponsorship. Spurring me on most of all was the inspiration I had received just from speaking to members of the Battalion who

had sustained life changing injuries.

The run was going to be hard. The training I had done had been in very cold conditions on early mornings and late evenings whenever I could grab time. When Marathon day finally arrived it was a beautiful warm sunny day – not what I needed I thought. Still, after a gruelling 4 hours plus, I completed the London Marathon more than a little worse for wear in the final stages I confess. I was so pleased however, that I had completed this, my third (and last) marathon. It meant a lot to think that I had done my bit to support the appeal and to know that the money raised just over £1,500) would go towards helping those who have given so much. I am really grateful to those who supported me.

# DISTRIBUTION OF OFFICERS

## DISTRIBUTION OF OFFICERS AS AT 1 JANUARY 2013

### REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

*Colonel-in-Chief*  
*Colonel of the Regiment*

*Regimental Lieutenant Colonel*  
*Regimental Adjutant*  
*Temporary Equerry*  
*Assistant Regimental Adjutant*  
*Director of Music*

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF  
WALES KG KT GCB OM AK QSO PC ADC  
Brigadier R H Talbot Rice  
Colonel (Retd) T C S Bonas  
Captain C Beare  
Major (Retd) F K Oultram  
Lieutenant Colonel S Barnwell

### 1st BATTALION

Lieutenant Colonel D L W Bossi  
Major H G C Bettinson  
Major E N Launders  
Major J D Salusbury  
Major H S Llewelyn-Usher  
Major M Cooling  
Major A F Bowen  
Major N R K Moukarzel  
Major K Dawson  
Captain T C Spencer Smith  
Captain P Robinson  
Captain P J Durham  
Captain M Miller (R SIGNALS)  
Captain C J P Davies  
Captain A Major  
Captain B Figgures Wilson  
Captain D W Pridmore  
Captain A Hughes  
Captain J Young  
Captain B Bardsley  
Captain T R Thompson  
Captain C Maltby  
Lieutenant R Emlyn-Williams  
Lieutenant F O Lloyd-George  
Lieutenant T Hutton  
Second Lieutenant J Marsden  
Second Lieutenant E Birrell  
Second Lieutenant J O Dinwiddie  
Second Lieutenant T A G Evans  
Lieutenant A Budge  
Second Lieutenant A J N Smith  
Second Lieutenant D Luther-Davies

*Commanding Officer*  
*Second in Command*  
*Officer Commanding The Prince of Wales's Company*  
*Officer Commanding Number Two Company*  
*Officer Commanding Number Three Company*  
*Officer Commanding Headquarter Company*  
*Officer Commanding Headquarter Company*  
*Officer Commanding Support Company*  
*Quartermaster*  
*Adjutant*  
*Technical Quartermaster*  
*Operations Officer*  
*Regimental Signals Officer*  
*Intelligence/Training Officer*  
*Officer Commanding Reconnaissance Platoon*  
*Officer Commanding Mortar Platoon*  
*Regimental Careers Management Officer*  
*Unit Welfare Officer*  
*Second in Command The Prince of Wales's Company*  
*Second in Command Number Two Company*  
*Second in Command Number Three Company*  
*Second in Command Support Company*  
*FSG Commander*  
*Platoon Commander The Prince of Wales's Company*  
*Platoon Commander The Prince of Wales's Company*  
*Platoon Commander The Prince of Wales's Company*  
*Platoon Commander Number Two Company*  
*Platoon Commander Number Two Company*  
*Platoon Commander Number Two Company*  
*Platoon Commander Number Three Company*  
*Platoon Commander Number Three Company*  
*Platoon Commander Number Three Company*

### EXTRA REGIMENTALLY EMPLOYED

**EXTRA REGIMENTALLY EMPLOYED**

Brigadier B J Bathurst OBE	<i>Director Training (Army), Army Headquarters</i>
Brigadier R H Talbot Rice	<i>Head, Combat Tracks Group, Land Equipment, DES</i>
Brigadier R J Æ Stanford MBE	<i>Chief, Joint Fires and Influence Branch, HQ ARRC</i>
Colonel R H W St G Bodington LVO MBE	<i>Chief of Staff London District</i>
Lieutenant Colonel G A J Macintosh OBE	<i>Commanding Officer Cambridge UOTC</i>
Lieutenant Colonel G Bartle-Jones	<i>Commanding Officer 2nd Regiment, ATR Pirbright</i>
Lieutenant Colonel C K Antelme DSO	<i>Ministry of Defence</i>
Lieutenant Colonel R G B Pim	<i>Commanding Officer The London Regiment</i>
Lieutenant Colonel G R Harris DSO MBE	<i>SO1 Resources &amp; Plans, Ministry of Defence</i>
Lieutenant Colonel B P N Ramsay MBE	<i>Staff College Defence Academy</i>
Major G C G R Stone	<i>SO2 Ministry of Defence</i>
Major D W N Bevan	<i>Academy Adjt RMAS</i>
Major CT Sargent	<i>Company Commander 1GG</i>
Major M L Lewis	<i>Company Commander 1CG</i>
Major T A Smith	<i>Company Commander 1SG</i>
Major T A H Eastman	<i>Company Commander 1IG</i>
Major A R M Spry	<i>2IC London Central Garrison</i>
Major T J Badham	<i>SO2 Rct Ops, HQ 143 Bde</i>
Major J W Aldridge	<i>SO2 Future Plans, Army Headquarters</i>
Major J D Livesey	<i>ICSC(L)</i>
Major N P Mott	<i>Abbey Wood</i>
Captain A J Plewa	<i>Unit Welfare Officer, Ministry of Defence</i>
Captain S C Broughton	<i>Ministry of Defence</i>
Captain J J Bethell	<i>Defence Attache Staff, Pakistan</i>
Captain G C Charles-Jones	<i>Adjt New College, RMAS</i>
Captain A Dunlop	<i>OC Training Team, Fort Polk, Louisiana</i>
Captain M C Simpson	<i>OC HDPRCC</i>
Captain F J Wright	<i>OC Guards Para Pl, 3 PARA</i>
Captain C Fraser Sampson	<i>Resettlement</i>

**INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE CATTERICK**

Lieutenant J Bromfield	<i>Platoon Commander</i>
Lieutenant M Wright	<i>Platoon Commander</i>

# DISTRIBUTION OF WARRANT OFFICERS

## DISTRIBUTION OF WARRANT OFFICERS AND BATTALION STAFF AS OF 1 JANUARY 2013

### REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

<i>Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant</i>	24815189	W02	DP	Brown
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### REGIMENTAL BAND

<i>Band Master</i>	25032421	W01	C	Bywater
<i>Band Sergeant Major</i>	24862977	W02	S	Charles

### 1ST BATTALION

<i>Regimental Sergeant Major</i>	24823463	W01	BJ	Baldwin
<i>Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Main)</i>	25014288	W02	M	Topps
<i>Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Tech)</i>	24842827	W02	JJ	Jones
<i>Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Main)(des)</i>	25026698	W02	LM	Ryan
<i>Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Tech)(des)</i>	25015807	W02	P	Dunn
<i>Drill Sergeant</i>	24908590	W02	J	Myers
<i>CSM The Prince of Wales's Company</i>	25061898	W02	M	Ridgeway-Buckley
<i>CSM Number Two Company</i>	25066690	W02	A	Davies
<i>CSM Number Three Company</i>	25040205	W02	C	Williams
<i>CSM Headquarter Company</i>	24898807	W02	P	Radford
<i>CSM Support Company</i>	24921250	W02	E	Griffiths
<i>Regimental Signals Warrant Officer</i>	24902063	W02	M	Smith
<i>Master Tailor</i>	24866734	W02	L	Wilson

### EXTRA REGIMENTALLY EMPLOYED

<i>Garrison Sergeant Major London District</i>	24520588	W01	WDG	Mott OBE MVO
<i>Command RSM ARRC</i>	24830440	W01	M	Pollard
<i>RSM Honourable Artillery Company</i>	24797497	W01	A	Campbell
<i>RSM UOTC Bristol</i>	24906414	W01	J	Jenkinson
<i>Counter Terrorist Training Team</i>	24738040	W02	GW	Jones
<i>Royal Military Academy Sandhurst</i>	25050230	W02	CA	Taylor

### LONG SERVICE LIST

<i>ACIO Wrexham</i>	24623898	W02	RJ	Brace
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# HONOURS AND AWARDS

## HONORARY FIVE STAR RANK

Field Marshal The Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank GCB LVO OBE DL

## KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE VICTORIAN ORDER

Lieutenant Colonel Sir A C Ford KCVO

## COMMANDER OF THE VICTORIAN ORDER

Lieutenant Colonel A C Richards LVO

## MEMBER OF THE VICTORIAN ORDER

24520588 WO1 W D G Mott OBE

## ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Lieutenant Colonel A J Davies 22 (New Years Honours List)

## LONG SERVICE & GOOD CONDUCT

25066550 LSgt Whitwham

# BATTALION EVENTS



## 300 CUP IN PICTURES









**The Winners: SUPPORT COMPANY**



### 1st Bn Welsh Guards Football Team

by Capt Miller R SIGNALS Football Officer

The Battalion football team took a season-long break due to commitments last season. Upon return from operations the team has already begun to take shape. There has been a change in personnel with Captain Miller coming in as the new Manager, ably supported by Head Coach WO2 (CSM) Davies. LSgt Cunningham will assist the coaching as he returns from injuries sustained during the tour. CSgt Peters remains as the club captain.

The team are entered into a total of four competitions this year. The Army Cup sees a tough home draw against 1 R ANGLIAN. The Infantry Cup will see us travel to Aldershot to face 1 IG. There is both a LONDIST League and a LONDIST Cup Competition to complete the fixtures list. A lot of these fixtures will be played almost immediately after the return from Afghanistan. Luckily there is a large group of players to choose from and the team will begin to develop nicely by the end of the season. A blend of young Guardsmen and some old heads will be the key to our success.

#### The Ellicott Cup

Back in November 2011 the Battalion held the Ellicott Cup Inter Company Football Competition. On the morning of the event the football pitch at Cavalry Barracks was completely covered by a thick blanket of fog which threatened the whole day due to the tight time constraints. Luckily enough the fog began to clear and play commenced.

The competition was based initially on a league format with each Company playing each other to decide the top two teams who would then

play a final match to determine the overall winners. From the early matches it was clear that one or two of the companies were at a higher standard than the others. By the last match of the group phase, the PoW's Coy had qualified for the Final. The final place would be decided by the winners of the match between Sp Coy and No 3 Coy. An enthralling match took place with Sp Coy moments away from the Final until No 3

Coy took decisive action and booked their final berth with a telling victory.

The Final match took place with a keen level of support from the touchlines. In a tight match the PoW's Coy showed the extra class and deservedly won the match and the cup as a result. Gdsm Jones 23 was on hand to receive the trophy from the Battalion Second in Command much to the delight of the rest of the Company.



The PoW's Company vs No 3 Company in the Ellicott Cup Final



# CARDIFF WELCOME HOME PARADE IN PICTURES









# OPERATION HERRICK 16



## MENTORING THE AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE COMMUNICATIONS IN HELMAND PROVINCE

by Capt M Miller R SIGNALS  
Battalion Signals Officer and PMAG S6 Mentor

The PMAG is responsible for the institutional development of the Afghan National Police (ANP) within the boundaries of Task Force Helmand. The PMAG for Op HERRICK 16 was formed from 1st Battalion Welsh Guards and Attached Arms. As the Regimental Signals Officer for the Battalion, I deployed into theatre as the S6 Mentor and was based at the Helmand Provincial Police HQ in Lashkar Gar.

Developing the ANP is key to transition, ahead of the withdrawal of ISAF combat troops by the end of 2014. Just like the British Army, the ANP have a recruiting cap that can't be breached and they are now reaching the limit. This means that the ANP have to be able to do more with the same amount of people they now have, without expanding to match the ISAF laydown and numbers. We had to improve

the police ability to plan, command and control operations. Focus for development was still on Police at Provincial, District and Precinct levels. As ISAF enters Security Force Assistance (SFA) the emphasis on advising takes on more importance as partnered operations begin to drawn down. This was itself a

challenge to those of us who advised particularly where Force Protection was limited. Subject Matter Experts deployed as Mentors and Advisors to Police Check Points in order to improve the basic skills of the police. This was where the team of signallers in the PMAG worked hard to achieve communications effect.

The team was a mixture of Signallers from the Battalion and fourteen Rear Link Detachment Signallers from 12 (Mech) Brigade Signal Squadron.

### POLICING IN HELMAND

#### Afghan Uniformed Police

The AUP have primacy in the Province. They are the largest pillar of the ANP and are stationed throughout the Province. They are responsible for protecting the communities and enforcing the Afghan Rule of Law. As a general rule, most AUP are based at static locations with patrolling regularity dependent upon location and stage of transition for which the Precinct is entered.

#### Afghan Local Police

The ALP is the result of a GIRoA-sponsored community overwatch programme. They are locally recruited and locally employed police force which remains accountable to the elders and local jirgas within the community it is employed to secure. ALP have "citizen's arrest" authority and can

detain people to hand over to the AUP.

#### Afghan National Civil Order Police

The ANCOP is the police element responsible for civil order, riot control, SWAT and natural disaster response. They are nationally recruited and trained in Kabul. They are formed of a higher standard of recruit who complete a sixteen basic training package. There is a rotating ANCOP presence in Task Force Helmand's (TFH) Area of Operations (AO).

#### Afghan Border Police

The ABP are only deployed in areas with an international border. Helmand has ABP in the south and west of the Province with a Zone HQ in Lashkar Gah.

#### National Directorate of Security

The NDS are the security and intelligence services for Afghanistan.

Helmand Province consists of 14 Districts, of which Nad-e-Ali (NDA), Nahr-e Saraj (NES) and Lashkar Gah (LKG) are covered by TFH battlespace. In addition to the District AUP, there are two Reserve Kandaks and a Provincial Response Company. The Reserve Kandaks are currently committed to ground holding roles in LKG District Centre and along Highway 601. Elements of the ANCOP are carrying out security tasks in NDA and NES.

**"Developing the ANP is key to transition, ahead of the withdrawal of ISAF combat troops by the end of 2014."**



LCpl Knill (centre) adjusting antenna siting

## AUP COMMAND, CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS

Helmand's AUP are controlled and administered through the Provincial Police HQ (PPHQ). Besides the Chief of Police (PCoP) and his immediate staff, the PPHQ houses the administrative and logistical support elements of the force as well as certain specialist sub departments. District and Precinct C2 mirrors PPHQ but at a much reduced scale. Control in the AUP is very centralised. As a result, subordinate officers rarely have the latitude to make decisions without first consulting with their Chief.

Afghan operational and tactical command is much less formal than western military forces. It is quite normal for commanders to run operations over mobile telephones without reference to the wider situational awareness (SA) or reliance on any form of staff. Central to developing this system of C2 is the Operational Coordination Centre (OCC). The role of the OCC as decreed by GIRoA is:

- *Coordination between leaderships of ANSF, civil organisations and ISAF during meetings for assessment of security and operational situations.*
- *To develop joint security measure plans for their area of responsibility on the working map of OCC Commanders.*
- *Provide sustainable communications systems and receive timely situational reports from security organisations and disseminate information.*
- *Conduct daily and weekly security, reconnaissance, coordination and situational awareness meetings.*

OCCs exist to strengthen SA and operational coordination within the ANSF and between ANSF and ISAF. It must be stressed that the OCC is a coordination centre and does not wield any significant power of command. That

remains vested in the AUP Chief, with the ANA as a significant supporting actor. At provincial level the OCCP is manned by liaison officers from all pillars of the ANSF. At district level this depends on the geographical location and subsequent ANSF laydown. The OCCs are the G3 branch of the Police HQ. At provincial and district level HQs, the PMAG mentored the Chief and his staff branches of which the OCC is key terrain.

OCCs are a crucial link to ANSF stations and CPs and a good source of real time information. Joint SA is enhanced by two way information flows. As the ISAF laydown changes due to SFA, the OCC will become central to the 'Intelligence Collect' process for both ANSF and ISAF alike. In the timeframe left to develop the OCC concept and the ANSF Liaison Officers, the PMAG is working on areas such as map reading, accurate

reporting, battle rhythm and empowering liaison officers to make decisions rather than relying on a chief that is not always present at the HQ.

A capable, trained and empowered OCC will only be effective if it has the capacity to control through a robust communications network. CIS capability is broadly delivered through VHF and HF insecure voice. There is also a fledgling data capacity provided by a mixture of laptops with aircards, and the Ministry of Interior (Mol) intranet.

## INFORMATION FLOW TEMPLATE

The CIS solution is already provided and is based on an Information Exchange Requirement submitted pre 2009. Within the constraints of the Mol Information and Communication Technology system, it will not be practical to request changes to this solution and therefore the

**"It is quite normal for commanders to run operations over mobile telephones without reference to the wider situational awareness."**



Signaller Tovey teaching ANCOP

network is planned and managed accordingly. In order to advise the AUP communications chief I conducted an information flow research project. Based on the results of the project, the CIS requirement can be better understood.

Each pillar of ANSF has its own reporting chain from which a link into the OCC is provided. The detail of the research is not shown in this article but results lead to the following assessment:

- *AUP communications should be the primary link between the OCCs.*
- *OCCs should be collocated at District Police HQs.*
- *There isn't currently a single command network throughout the province.*
- *Further HF equipment is required to establish a single network*

#### **ANP COMMUNICATIONS INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

The AUP at the provincial level and below use the follow radio systems:

- *VHF Motorola Repeater MTR 2000 series.*
- *VHF Motorola GP and GM360 using commercial band frequency range.*
- *VHF ICOM.*
- *HF Codan 2020 transceiver and vehicle variant.*

Within the TFH AO, the AUP are not equipped with HF which will not be further discussed in this article. The VHF Motorola radio is the official fielded system with ICOM being a legacy system pre 2009 and will be phased out as radios become unserviceable. The VHF network is based on a half duplex repeater network which provides coverage to a radius around each district HQ where the repeater is located. Whilst the transmit planning range of the repeater is an impressive 40km, the receive sensitivity is only as good as the radio which is used to transmit at the distant station. Therefore if a policeman is

equipped with a handheld radio with a planning range of 1-4km, the ability to join the repeater network is severely reduced. The work round for this is the 'Talkround' feature which allows simplex operating. In order to improve the coverage of the repeater system and to reduce network lockdown<sup>1</sup> a plan has been submitted for funding to install a further eight repeaters across the TFH AO. This plan will see the vast majority of the protected community covered by the VHF network which greatly enhances the ability for police to join and benefit from a number of police networks across the AO. (1 The result of a 'sticky pressel'. Where the whole half duplex network is blocked as a result of a single radio having the pressel continuously pressed).

#### **GROUND UP MENTORING**

The capacity of the police network will only be as good as the police that require

connectivity. In order to develop a police force that has received zero communications training I adopted a 'Ground Up' approach to mentoring. This was achieved using 56 Mentors in police locations across the AO and by delivering distributed training using mobile training teams. Signallers were attached to District Advisor Teams (DATs) and Police Advisor Teams (PATs). The DATs worked at the DPHQ delivering training and mentoring the systems and processes that facilitate the OCC concept. The PATs were small multiple sized units which patrolled to all police CPs delivering military, police and specialist training. The PATs deployed in vehicles or on foot and deployed for overnight stays in the CPs. DAT and PAT tasks included:

- *Delivery of sustainment training on the ground to AUP and ANCOP.*

**"The capacity of the police network will only be as good as the police that require connectivity."**

- Focused on the S2, 3, 4 and 6 functional areas at district, precinct and CP level.
- Auditing the police.
- Facilitating movement of ISAF Advisors.
- Advising the TSUs.

On Op HERRICK 16, the success of the S6 Mentors was achieved by an understanding of the systems used, a defined set of guidance, and initiative and ingenuity from signallers at all levels. The deployment saw R SIGNALS operators and engineers deploy to the most forward and austere police CPs as part of PATs and deliver communications training. They identified the areas of weakness and instructed on how to use the Motorola radio. It was the basic knowledge of communicating which brought about success. Examples of this included repositioning antennas to avoid interference, teaching relay voice procedure and explaining the virtues of increased elevation and power. Visits to CPs and police stations also enabled them to advise on basic control room set ups with net diagrams and maps on the wall. There was much to be done but slowly the principles of propagation, equipment care and accuracy in reporting were being taught at all levels of police.

**MOBILE TRAINING TEAMS**

Two areas of significant weakness were identified early on in the tour. Power management and radio operations and maintenance. As a result two courses were designed, developed and delivered by mobile training teams. The first was a Vehicle and Generator Maintenance Course. As part of a REME team, Signaller Tovey (RSE) worked his way around the entire TFH AO. Every week he visited yet another location to

deliver generator and power management courses. He was required to deploy one day ahead of the course start date and learn the type of generator in use at that location. He self taught and delivered training on four different generator systems.

The second course was the Communications Engineer Course. A title which lended itself to the Afghan perception of the course, rather than being an engineer-specific course. The course delivered training on the following subjects:

- Basic antenna and propagation theory.
- All Motorola radios operation including translating the LCD screens.
- Fault diagnosis, reporting and basic or improvised repair.
- Coaxial cable repair and re-termination.
- Radio diagrams and checks.
- Solar panels.

LCpl Thomson (an augmentee from 16 Sig Regt, was the lead instructor throughout. Calling upon instructor assistance from locally based signallers he, like Sig Tovey worked his way around the AO distributing communications courses. It was not uncommon for the police to attend the course having arrived with broken equipment which was repaired where possible.

**THE FUTURE OF AFGHAN POLICE COMMUNICATIONS**

The future will rely on police trained at all levels from the Communications Chief to the patrolmen on the ground. The flow of information will be enhanced by a police force that is trained, advised and equipped with the necessary CIS. Below the provincial level,

the next big step is to understand the levels of fielded radio equipment and to mentor the maintenance process. This will be greatly improved by the introduction of the Regional Radio Workshops at the PPHQ towards the end of 2012. At the time of writing, there was no facility to repair radios other than send them to Kabul. The police are reluctant to release broken equipment as they believe they will not receive a replacement.

At the PPHQ we witnessed the installation of the infrastructure required for the Mol Intranet along with the delivery of computers and VoIP telephones. This provided data connectivity to the higher formation HQs in the region and direct to the Mol in Kabul. It will be the responsibility of my successor on OP HERRICK

17 to introduce SOPs on the use of this capability to the OCCP.

A further development will see the introduction of a national 119 call centre at the PPHQ. Using the mobile phone infrastructure network, Afghan local nationals will have a means to request civil emergency support or to report corruption. The call centre will be linked to the OCCP which will illicit a civil response.

These initiatives combined with greater connectivity and coordination between ANSF which will lead to a far better protected community in the province of Helmand. Time is short until December 2014, but with dedicated signallers performing at all levels there will be no shortage of effort towards reaching the necessary end state.

**THE ROAD AHEAD – WELSH GUARDS POLICE ADVISORY TEAMS ON HERRICK 16**

by 2Lt T W J Hutton



Lt Hutton handing over ISAF PB Taalanda to AUP authority in Nad e Ali

The transformation of Nad-E-Ali has been astounding. The men of the Welsh Guards under my command who returned to Helmand Province for a second time, this summer on Op Herrick, have seen schools and shops riddled with the scars of their last tour that were the scene of sustained fighting during Op Herrick 10. These places are now thriving markets and children wonder freely through the streets as a testament to the success that ISAF has achieved over the years.



*My Interpreter, author, LSgt Powell and members of the AUP after an operation in which we seized nearly 70kg of opium worth around US \$25,000 – pictured in the foreground*

This achievement however cannot be claimed by ISAF alone. We have shared our battles, trials and tribulations alike, with our colleagues in the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The dedication and commitment of these men and women helped create the conditions that will allow British Forces to handover full control of security in Helmand and leave this land with our heads held high.

I have had the privilege to command a Police Advisory Team (PAT) comprised of 13 Welsh Guardsmen with an attachment of Royal Military Police and a Signaller from the Royal Signals, charged with mentoring Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) units; a role that presented unique challenges for commanders and Guardsmen alike. These AUP

are established in precincts, of which I worked personally with two, bringing well over 100 individual Patrolmen into my area of responsibility. Thankfully the Welsh Guards were able to experience the best possible training to ensure we were ready to tackle our task head on. The actions of the AUP challenged our intuition, training and sometimes personal values and sometimes conflicted with what we deemed to be an acceptable. That is not to suggest they were unprofessional in their work; but that the cultural and social norms of Helmand are truly a world apart. Working in such

perpetual and close proximity, the most junior soldiers shared this burden just as much as commanders and it gave me huge pride that the men in my command continued to conduct themselves with the highest levels of professionalism that one can expect from Guardsmen.

Through partnered patrols, training and working together on deliberate operations we were able to enhance the capability of the AUP through encouragement and example, and the use of established training techniques. Our level of independence and freedom of action granted by our Chain

of Command was an unusual privilege granted to a junior platoon commander. It was however essential in allowing us to react to the ever changing security situation that is presided over by the ANSF. The emphasis we prescribed to the ANSF as ISAF prepare to draw down our forces was that they must take ownership of their own security and that the future of Afghanistan lies not in our hands, but theirs. We trod carefully in doing so, working alongside multiple Company Commanders whose area of operations were represented within the bounds of the AUP Precincts I worked with. Matching their intentions

**“Thankfully the Welsh Guards were able to experience the best possible training to ensure we were ready to tackle our task head on.”**



*Members of SILICON 54 pose with our "trusty" Ridgeback and Husky vehicles decorated of course with the Welsh and St David flags*

with those of the AUP presented frictions that were usually lubricated in long meetings known as 'shuras' sustained by and the aptly named Afghan 'foot' bread' and local delicacies, washed down with copious amounts of 'Chai' tea. Not one of the mentoring challenges we faced yet could match the comedic weakness of our insides and the unenviable hours spent dashing to the nearest 'thunder-box'!

During my time spent training through Sandhurst and Brecon, sadly there was no 'realities of war' lesson that fully prepared me for conducting a shura on the security situation of a village, whilst bathed in a cloud of smoke emanating from local national who was clearly enjoying what I was assured was the finest 'Afghan Black' hashish. Happily the individual was not a key party in the talks but it was sufficient to reduce the Guardsmen acting as my 'Guardian Angel' to a fit of hysterics at the possibility that the Boss was going to be joyfully stoned for the rest of the day and he may have the afternoon off. Unfortunately

for him, this was not the case.

Principals of basic infantry soldiering such as fire control are not disciplines necessarily observed by the AUP. The AUP stepping into a killing area and returning fire, whilst highly courageous and laudable, was sadly not conducive to the personal wellbeing. Mentoring at Guardsmen to Patrolman level was the best method of overcoming issues such as this. This responsibility is more prevalent with soldiers working in an advisory role, and with no exceptions, every soldier developed solid relationships with members of the AUP that required empathy and rapport, demonstrating responsibility and maturity beyond both their age and rank.

On Op Herrick 16 the Welsh Guards sadly suffered the loss of four soldiers in Green-on-Blue attacks. In order to achieve our task we sustained and nurtured trust with the AUP, and although appropriate measures were always in place, every soldier carried an inherent risk when working in close proximity with ANSF. These tragic incidents shone a spotlight on our working

relationship with the AUP, and yet it was indicative of the fortitude and courage of the Welsh Guards that we were able to maintain the operational tempo to develop the future and security of Nad-E-Ali alongside our Afghan brothers in arms.

Although the future of conflict in Helmand Province remains uncertain, mentoring roles of ISAF soldiers such as PATs will continue to represent a key capability. We will strive to develop the ANSF to a position whereby they are able to take full ownership of security. What they perhaps lack in finesse is made up for many times over by a fearless

determination to succeed and drive the insurgent threat away from the people they protect. Their candour and their ability to literally laugh in the face of danger makes them a joy to work alongside in this unforgiving environment. The trust and even friendships we developed with our colleagues showed us another side of Afghanistan; one of warm hospitality and good nature. It gives me great heart to know that these people stand firmly in the way of the insurgency and will continue to do so on the road ahead as we transition to the new model of security that will be the future of this extraordinary country.



*Members of SILICON 54 on patrol in the Green Zone*



2Lt Luther-Davies, Seven Platoon Commander

## PLATOON COMMANDING IN THE BRIGADE OPERATIONS COMPANY –

The Overlap between The Principles of War and The Principles of Counter-Insurgency

by 2Lt D Luther-Davies

For OP HERRICK 16, Number Three Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, was given the role of Brigade Operations Company from June to October 2012 having spent the earlier part of the tour as a ground-holding sub-unit. It was this latter task that defined the tour (for me) as an Infantry Platoon Commander. The operations that were undertaken were highly challenging, but well within the remit of the capability required for a conventional and competent infantry sub-unit.

The Brigade Operations Company (BOC) was part of Task Force Helmand's ISTAR Group, which is a manoeuvre asset attached to a battle group for specific operations or given its own targets to exploit. For the most part the BOC participated in two separate series of operations: Op QALB and Op DAAS. QALB operations for the BOC were part of a battle group operation that was seeking to expand or enable the ANSF/ISAF footprint in order to extend its influence to GiRoA; whilst the DAAS operations were designed to disrupt insurgent facilitation of lethal

aid. In each instance the BOC was used as an additional manoeuvre sub-unit to operate in isolation, and in depth of the FLET, disrupting the insurgent in areas with little to no ISAF or ANSF influence.

For the Platoon Commander, this meant leading his Platoon against a competent and at times well drilled enemy in areas that were unfamiliar, with different threat levels, in the insurgent's own backyard.

**“For the Platoon Commander, this meant leading his Platoon against a competent and at times well drilled enemy in areas that were unfamiliar, with different threat levels, in the insurgent's own backyard.”**

Walking to targets, or inserting by HAF, at night, enabled the BOC to establish a foothold at first light and clear an area or village with a known enemy presence, and this quickly became the modus operandi of BOC operations. Some operations required the establishment of a Temporary Check Point (TCP) for a variable number of nights, others required fighting through a village and securely extracting to the desert or back to base by air. These operations were offensive by nature, requiring the BOC to constantly seize the initiative in combat with the insurgency. This was war fighting in its most base form, where the Six Section Battle Drills were often the most doctrinally apt process of countering our enemy.

The context in which BOC operations took place during Op HERRICK 16 sits in stark contrast to much of the wider more generically Counter-Insurgency (COIN) focused operations that TFH was conducting. Sitting in the wider

context of COIN operations, the BOC's function sat firmly within the remit of securing the population by neutralizing the insurgent; all conducted on the periphery of ANSF and ISAF areas of operations. The BOC's disruption in one area would in effect enable the supported Transition Support Unit (TSU) or Combined Force (CF) Battle Group to achieve a COIN effect in another. At Platoon level however, in depth areas where the ANSF had no intention of going into and GiRoA had no intention of ever governing – COIN considerations were often not so applicable.

During what was by wider TFH standards, a highly kinetic summer, the Company found that The Principles of War often overlapped with or even, overruled The Principles of COIN. For the Platoon Commander in the Brigade Operations Company, the Section Battle Drills and the Principles of War applied first and foremost to all we did.

By examining each principle and considering how it applies



*During one operation, the BOC spent 16 consecutive days in a TCP and dominating the surrounding area. In this case, holding ground to allow the Royal Engineers to demolish enemy firing points, required patience and lots of morale*

to the considerations of a BOC Platoon Commander, this essay will demonstrate that COIN principles are not as relevant as the Six Section Battle Drills and the Principles of War when operating in hostile enemy territory that GiRoA or ANSF have shown little intention of influencing either in the short-term or long-term.

**PRINCIPLES OF WAR**

**Selection and Maintenance of the Aim**

The BOC’s missions were ordinarily to achieve a find, disrupt, deny, block and understand. The benefit of mission command allowed the Platoon Commander to explain to his men what, where and

why they were flying to the unknown, either when filtering information while the Estimate was being conducted or during Orders.

The Platoon Commander must ensure that his Company Commander’s intent will be achieved. In the instance of establishing a block, this means ensuring the area in and around a TCP, for example, is dominated with patrolling and no insurgent can pass through uncontested. Any attempt by insurgents to attack a TCP must be met with a frightening and precise return of firepower. For the Platoon Commander this means the deployment of the correct weapon systems (GPMG, Sharpshooter or 338) in the right place and at the right time.

**Maintenance of Morale**

The greatest threat to the morale of the men is the weight of the equipment carried combined with difficult ground to move through. In the short term, during and after an engagement with the enemy, the men will fight through. Even casualties will not hinder their determination to operate effectively and survive. It is during the non-kinetic movements, however, that morale takes a dive because of the ground and weight of their kit.

Ways to mitigate this and ensure that morale is maintained are simple. Firstly, fitness: every single member of the Company partakes in fitness training. PTI’s ensure that the training is diverse and incorporates the entire body, and not just running, for example. Secondly, kit carriage discipline: the CSS paragraph in Orders must make a consideration for the ground

and the threat, and equip accordingly, trying to minimize the weight. Finally, and most importantly, leadership: the Platoon Commander must set the pace and lead from the front, encouraging his men to follow him, and that their lives depend on it.

Boredom is another factor that can adversely affect morale. Especially when in a TCP, the men are in routine and they cannot necessarily sleep due to the heat. A thoughtful replen from the ground or air should include magazines, playing cards and radios, which will alleviate boredom.

**Offensive Action**

Applying this principle as a Platoon Commander is vital for survival. The basics of infantry manoeuvre will ensure that Offensive Action is maintained. Always maintaining one foot on the ground when moving from compound to compound will also ensure mutual support is achieved; the enemy can be fixed should they decide to attack the moving callsign. The Platoon Commander must think of compounds as cover and high ground, and not as the exclusive private space of the local national. Ideally, one will move into occupied compounds with the owner’s consent. In reality, in contact and in situations when one can anticipate the enemy’s intent from ICOM, one will enter wherever and whenever one must. The risks of being static in the open in the enemy’s backyard are too high.

The Platoon Commander must react to the enemy’s intent decisively. If the Company Commander decides to exploit an expected insurgent movement, be prepared to lead an ambush or a night OP

to maintain a relentless effect on the enemy. Using the cover of night will give one freedom of movement and allow one to be on top of the enemy when they wake up at first light. The Brigade Ops Company will almost always choose to be on target before first light.

In contact with the enemy, the Platoon Commander must place his weapon systems appropriately so that all firepower is accurate, falling onto PID'd targets only but remaining ferocious in achieving the desired effect. Aggressive Offensive Action is vital to mission success.

**Surprise**

Much like Offensive Action, Surprise is achieved by utilising the night. The enemy has only on a few occasions maintained his tactical effect at night. For the Platoon Commander this means ensuring that basic infantry skills and drills are maintained. Noise discipline, hand signals, obstacle crossing and best practice of night sights are the remit of a well-trained and well-rehearsed company. The same is true for moving in the day in dense Green Zone, where the enemy is able to close in as near as a few metres.

Navigation is the key for the Platoon Commander to uphold this principle. He will no doubt be leading the Company to target and will put the lives of his men at risk if he is not at the right place at the right time in good order and without being seen or heard.

**Security**

Applying this principle in Afghanistan ensures that casualties are minimized and that the enemy is unable to seize the initiative. At Platoon level, this means that route



*Gdsm McLaughlan covers his arcs from cover while another callsign moves across open ground*



*Once ECM is centralized, all the arcs are covered and the compound searched, 2Lt Luther-Davies listens to ICOM, sends a sitrep and listens in for QBOs from the Company Commander*



*In this instance, both Sharpshooter and GPMG were used on the same target to achieve a suppressive and precision effect*

selection must be random and the hardest route possible within the parameters of time and space.

Listening to the ICOM will enable one to second-guess the enemy's intent. If they are trying to find oneself, one still has the initiative and must hold onto it by preventing them from seeing you. The Platoon Commander must choose the route that is in cover from view and deny the enemy the ability to know exactly how many soldiers there are on the ground.

In a TCP, security must be maintained by good practice of Platoon Harbour drills. Building up defenses and creating hard cover, enforcing light and noise discipline, Standing To and covering dead ground with night OP's and CLAYMORE are all well within the capability of

basic infanteering. This will ensure that the Platoon or Company is secure, and can survive and defend itself deep in insurgent territory.

#### **Concentration of Force**

In Afghanistan, there is zero tolerance for any form of collateral damage. Avoiding collateral damage is best achieved by deploying the appropriate weapon system. The GPMG will achieve the greatest suppression onto an enemy firer; the UGL will achieve this at ranges between 100 and 400 metres. A Sharpshooter and 338 will neutralise targets at long range.

Once an enemy is identified he must be hit with a fierce and intense concentration of force. This will not only render him useless, but demonstrate to his

comrades that they face a robust and effective adversary that has placed itself in their backyard by choice.

#### **Economy of Effort**

In the heat of the day, with little rest and a challenging operational tempo, this principle must be applied when looking at the order of specified and implied tasks, and the extent of the resources required to achieve them. This means stopping in the heat of the day when clearing through villages. In a TCP, this means ensuring the stag rotation is not too degrading of physical strength and spirit on the men. If force numbers permit, it means switching from patrols to guard to QRF and ensuring that the Platoon and Company is not over extending itself.

#### **Flexibility**

The Platoon Commander in the BOC must be flexible at all times. The nature of time-sensitive targeting, the authorisation and revision within the planning cycle at Brigade and Battle Group level means that the plan will change all the way until H-Hour. The repercussions of these changes are that there must be flexible changes to the mapping, ORBAT, the lift capacity and battle prep.

This is a key principle for all ranks within the BOC. The plan will change and therefore everything else will. The Platoon Commander must regularly update his men, using his sense of humour, and exacting good leadership will ensure that his men are always flexible and able to adapt to new circumstances.

#### **Cooperation**

This principle is vital in the planning stages at Company level, in particular, the designation of Helicopter Landing Sites (HLS's). In instances when the BOC has worked with other units, like the Warthog Group, for example, the Platoon Commander must go out of his way to thank the other sub-unit's troops and maintain good relations with other sub-unit commanders. This is a natural component of cohesive esprit de corps.

#### **Sustainability**

For the Platoon Commander, this principle must be applied to ensure that his men are ready to fight and are fully operational at all times. Water discipline, ammunition, rations and battery consumption is the remit of the Platoon Sergeant. The Platoon Commander must support him

in supervising that the appropriate levels of survivability are maintained. This might include marking an HLS for an under-slung helicopter delivery of supplies, an air drop, recceing, clearing and securing a crossing point for a Ground Line Of Communication (GLOC) and even man-packing supplies to take on foot.

Sustainability must be applied in the event of casualties, making sure that BCR's back at base are ready to go straight to the battle as MERT or PEDRO is lifting casualties.

**PRINCIPLES OF COIN**

**Primacy of Political Purpose**

The BOC has overwhelmingly operated in battle-space that is beyond the reach of conventional ground-holding sub-units. These operations have provided breathing space for other operations elsewhere to extend ANSF influence. However, for the Platoon Commander, the political reason for the operation is only applied when communicating

with local nationals. At the tactical level, the Platoon Commander does not need to apply this principle to achieve mission success.

**Unity of Effort**

This principle is applied primarily at Company level, as it will ensure assets and other friendly callsigns are utilised. For the Platoon Commander in the BOC, this is working with a Tiger Team or ANCOP and ensuring they understand their role in sequence of a compound takedown and gathering intelligence.

**Understand the Human Terrain**

When the Platoon Commander is moving, he must assess the enemy's intent on ICOM and look at the atmospheric on the ground. Once secure in a compound, the Platoon Commander must enable the local national to offer up information on the enemy, and gauge the impunity and brutality that the insurgents operate with.

It is also important to find out who is who. The Mullah of a village should always be treated as someone who can exert influence, as are landlords. Looking at the quality of the compound one can normally glean this information: a clean and well-built compound with basic sanitation indicates some degree of education and wealth. For the BOC, understanding the human terrain was more to search for combat indicators than to look for a meaningful understanding of the peoples' needs and desires.

**Secure the Population**

Due to the limited timeline in which the BOC operates on the ground, it is difficult to achieve a lasting effect that applies to this principle. A BOC operation may enable other units or sub-units to exert security in the long term. The BOC was focused more on the enemy and less on the population.

**Neutralise the Insurgent**

This is best applied using

precision firing and outmaneuvering him using ICOM and deception. Hasty Vehicle Check Points (VCP's) and TCP's will temporarily disable his scouting screen. For the BOC, this principle can only be achieved at the lowest tactical level and circumstantial to enemy activity at that moment.

**Gain and Maintain Popular Support**

As BOC operations are temporary, this is an impossible task to maintain in the long-term. This principle can only be applied for as long as the BOC is on the ground. The Platoon Commander can ensure this happens by allowing the Tiger Team to take the lead in questioning and gathering intelligence from compound inhabitants. The Platoon Commander must always be respectful to elders, ensure that women are kept out of sight in one room and that his men show him that they have no intention of looking at them should the women be required to move



*LSgt Haines, 2Lt Luther-Davies' Multiple 2IC closes in for a face-to-face and offers up solutions to consider*

from one room to another. This is done to ensure that BOC soldiers can search compounds with minimal dissent by the inhabitants and so the locals can see that we are professional and respectful. Their support is not vital to BOC missions, but reduces friction.

#### **Operate in Accordance with the Law**

This principle goes without saying. All British Forces regardless of their role on Op HERRICK 16 apply this principle. Entry into compounds at night is always authorised from senior command, as are compound takeovers and the eviction of its inhabitants.

#### **Prepare for the Long-Term**

BOC operations may provide a long term impact for other units in terms of the wider operational picture. Yet, the Platoon Commander will infiltrate and exfiltrate ideally by night without being seen or heard, having achieved his commanders intent for the time he was on target. His next priority is planning for the next operation in a different part of Helmand. Thus, this principle does not apply.

#### **Integrate Intelligence**

BOC operations rely upon a fluid intelligence feed that comes from either brigade or battle group level. The BOC operates independently when in camp and in isolation when on the ground. Therefore the integration of intelligence is limited to what we report back during the post-operation and debriefing phase.

#### **Learn and Adapt**

After an operation when the BOC is in the debriefing phase, the Platoon Commander can

take points from there and enhance the training programme between operations and update the Intelligence Cell accordingly. The Platoon Commander must ensure his Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP's) are of the highest and safest standards, as the threat will change depending on where the next operation is being conducted. Like many other COIN principles, this is relevant only at the tactical level. For example, refining the evolution of bringing search equipment to bear after a contact IED. This does not occur during operations. The principle of Flexibility covers the BOC necessity to adapt and overcome any challenges from the enemy or the chain of command.

#### **CONCLUSION**

For the Platoon Commander in the Brigade Operations Company to assess the overlap between the Principles of War and the Principles of COIN, he will often find that one set of principles is far more relevant than the other. Nonetheless, it is vital to remember that these principles are not mutually exclusive and best application for the Platoon Commander is to apply a combination of all of them. The reality remains the same: BOC operations are offensive and focused on attacking the insurgent at a time and place of ISAF's choosing. By its nature, and the realities of the operations undertaken, it is war fighting against a tenacious and determined enemy, and the Platoon Commanders consideration for Counter-Insurgency take second place. The Platoon Commander must focus on the battle in front of him first and foremost.

## **BLIND-FOLDED CHESS: Outmanoeuvring the Insurgent in the Dashte and Maize**

By Lt M J Wright

**N**umber Three Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, originally deployed on Op Herrick 16 as a Ground Holding Sub Unit based in PB Pimon on the North Western shoulder of Nad-e-Ali. In June, the Company re-rolled and became the Brigade Operations Company (BOC).

The BOC were invariably tasked with conducting operations beyond the FLET in order to disrupt insurgents allowing Combined Forces/Transition Support Units (ISAF Battle Groups) and the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to improve their hold of the population centres. Operating within areas where the insurgent often enjoyed uncontested freedom of movement and action resulted in many challenges: foremost were the difficulties in initially locating him and then attempting to outmanoeuvre him.

A stark feature of some operations in Helmand is the significant challenge in identifying insurgents. This statement is more expansive than the oft stated difficulty in identifying the firing point itself. Engagements with insurgents often confirm their locations and dispositions, but rarely does one understand their modus operandi. Is their intent to delay or attrit the patrol, or to deter and deny our own freedom of movement? Prior to the engagement commencing, one often witnesses a panoply of activity – tractors in fields, men upon motorbikes, children playing, locals watching – all of which effectively screen insurgent intentions, positions and movements as we remain

unable to accurately differentiate between insurgents and acquiescent locals. Too often it is only the insurgents' fire that offers an opportunity for soldiers to find and then attempt to outmanoeuvre the enemy. Despite these difficulties, with careful and considered application, the tactical commander possesses within his arsenal the ability to understand, pre-empt and, finally outmanoeuvre the insurgent across the spectrum of Helmand's geographic conditions. The use of ICOM scanners in concert with directional finders; the constant re-evaluation of the Estimate; use of ANSF partners; patrolling at night; insisting on deception, depth and concealment when patrolling and, finally, using well-considered and effectively planned ISTAR all prevent the British soldier from being blind-folded from insurgent action. Whilst one may be, somewhat, in the dark as to insurgent intentions, with considered thought, agility and some degree of cunning, ones eyes should never be forced closed.

The utility of the ICOM scanner when used in conjunction with directional finders to illuminate insurgent locations and intentions proved a battle-winning asset during my tour



*Commander attempting to differentiate between the normal and abnormal in an area that the BOC had not previously operated in*

of Helmand. These assets give a relatively accurate bearing toward the insurgent's scanner and the distance to it, thus giving a likely direction of threat enabling one to manoeuvre teams into position to mitigate potential risks. Armed with this information, the tactical commander can study the ground, make an informed decision on the insurgents' likely position and future intentions before seeking to pre-empt insurgent action. There are, however, limitations to the ICOM scanner. Insurgents are sometimes aware that ISAF troops listen intently to ICOM "chatter" and therefore choose to conceal their own exact locations and, it has been known, try to deceive British soldiers. Additionally, insurgents sometimes seek to intimidate and deter Coalition Forces' actions by using overtly aggressive messages over ICOM. Messages such as "We will fire all the big things

immediately" must be considered within the tactical scenario before being necessarily believed. Despite these frustrations, all of which can be mitigated through consideration and common sense, insurgent's COMSEC is often woeful allowing ICOM scanners to accurately detail his planning cycle and brief orders process. ICOM usually sheds light upon the insurgent's intent and likely scheme of manoeuvre allowing the ISAF patrol to reconsider its next move, adjust its plan or route in a genuine effort to outmanoeuvre and out-think the insurgent on the ground.

Deductions from intense attention to and study of ICOM "chatter" should supplement

the Commander's Estimate and the STAP. As ICOM "chatter" escalates during a patrol, occasional statements can give overt but unintentional hints as to the insurgent location and the method of engagement. If ICOM accurately states that "ISAF have just crossed the small bridge next to the poppy field and we are now preparing to engage with PKMs" then it is essential to assess which locations can effectively see the crossing point and then prepare for an engagement from those positions. Insurgent statements over ICOM must lead to deductions that enhance the Ground Study commenced by the tactical commander prior to the patrol commencing. This should not just be an esoteric exercise

conducted by the commander but rather communicated to all members of the patrol as such information allows other multiples to manoeuvre into depth positions reducing the overall risk by removing the initiative from the insurgent. Alternatively, listening to ICOM can suggest methods of outmanoeuvring insurgents. For example when ICOM stated that insurgents are "... beginning to encircle a patrol and can easily see it next to the wall and in front of the thick maize field" then my multiple swiftly moved into the high, concealed maize and took an unexpected route before appearing again in an unanticipated location. Alternatively, my multiple used kalays (villages) to evade insurgents: we used the

**"We used the "Grand National Method" of climbing over walls then running on top of roofs, before moving into secondary and then tertiary compounds to lose insurgents within a labyrinthine maze of compounds as insurgents attempted to find and fix us."**



*Considering the next phase of the operation after a long, covert, night-time infiltration into Insurgent territory*

“Grand National Method” of climbing over walls then running on top of roofs, before moving into secondary and then tertiary compounds to lose insurgents within a labyrinthine maze of compounds as insurgents attempted to find and fix us. In such circumstances deductions drawn from ICOM illuminated insurgent intensions and likely locations, allowing my patrol to evade their ambushes by outmanoeuvring them.

ANSF attachments dramatically improve a commander’s tactical understanding by drastically reducing ISAF’s inability to differentiate between suspicious, potential insurgents and GIROA supporting local nationals. Western soldiers have a limited social lens through which to analyse those with whom they interact. Despite heavy investment in HIIDE and SEEK

cameras which aim to map the human terrain, biometrical enrolment retains severe limitations to actively catching members of the insurgency. Often, Afghans cannot be detained even if they have TNT traces on their hands and have been acting highly suspiciously as there is no record of them on the HIIDE database. This prevents exclusively ISAF patrols from removing suspected insurgents from the battlefield or realising those who are genuine causes of concern. ANSF alone have the experience, knowledge, understanding and rapport with local nationals to enable ISAF commanders to decipher between the normal and the abnormal, i.e. between a local farmer and an out of area fighter. Such ANSF knowledge inevitably reduces much of the Western inherent cultural blindness caused by operating

in such a vastly different setting and context. Occasionally, ANSF attachments successfully assess what insurgents have just done and what they may attempt next. They are able to enter mosques, engage more coherently with local nationals, and at times confirm if a building has recently been used as a bed down location by insurgents who probably departed moments prior to the patrol’s arrival. I would often request tactical recommendations from our ANSF partners. Questions such as “Do you think that that motorcyclist is suspicious?” “Where do you think the likely direction of threat lies?” Or “Is that lack of movement to our front suspicious” not only resulted in greater Afghan co-operation within the patrol but sometimes revealed tactical suggestions that altered my

original plan allowing me to mitigate a previously unconsidered threat. Such information not only fed into the post-operational intelligence de-brief, but allowed me to re-evaluate my plan armed with up to date and accurate information, thereby further reducing any tactical blindness and allowing opportunities to outmanoeuvre the insurgent.

By far the best way to disrupt the insurgent, get inside his OODA loop, and out - manoeuvre him was by operating at night. An unexpected night-time operation into areas where insurgents enjoyed freedom of action and movement demonstrated that ISAF possesses the ability to outmanoeuvre him at times of its choosing. Long range night time covert infiltration patrols on foot dramatically seize the initiative from the insurgent allowing a strike at first light. This basic scheme of manoeuvre should always be considered if the target area cannot be approached during the day due to known insurgent defensive positions, open ground and the presence of a strong reconnaissance screen. The technological overmatch enjoyed by ISAF due to night viewing devices means that only at night is it possible for such insurgent positions to be breached without taking unacceptable levels of risk. In these circumstances it is the case that “In the Land of the Blind the One Eyed Man is King.” Unfortunately, this concept is not always applicable. Irrigation ditches, thick vegetation and tree lines can all drastically slow a company’s movement towards a target and potentially lead to the patrol being compromised

**“Afghans cannot be detained even if they have TNT traces on their hands and have been acting highly suspiciously as there is no record of them on the HIIDE database.”**

prior to its arrival on target leading to insurgents "Standing To" and key leaders and lethal aid slipping through the ISAF net to safety. Alternatively using CH-47 helicopters to transport ISAF soldiers at night allows companies to quickly establish themselves within insurgent territory before conducting a series of strikes or clearances through an area after daybreak. The primary challenge to successfully completing such tasks is that without landing on top of the target compound itself, key insurgents can easily escape as soldiers take time to off-load from the CH-47 and then identify their target. Despite this, the arrival of a company of soldiers into an insurgent-dominated area instantly disrupts him, forcing a quick reassessment of his options and reallocation of his resources and personnel, particularly if he remains unaware as to where exactly all ISAF multiples are located. As the insurgent is blind only at night, it is essential for British soldiers to use the darkness' opportunities to outmanoeuvre him and enter areas deemed firmly locked during the daylight hours.

Irrespective of the IED threat, we found that The Principles of Patrolling are as applicable in contemporary Afghan operations as they were in other previous theatres as they allow forces to outmanoeuvre insurgents and clarify insurgent actions. Depth and, in particular, Concealment are essential when operating within areas where insurgents enjoy complete freedom of action and movement. These two principles allow the tactical commander to drastically increase his situational awareness as it is

## "All members of a patrol must be aware of the accurate normal pattern of life prior to departing so that they can recognise abnormality."

unlikely that insurgents will be capable of approaching potential firing points undetected by ISAF. Furthermore, invariably patrols are not decisively engaged until insurgents are abundantly aware of the exact locations and dispositions of all multiples on the ground. This is unlikely to occur if numerous multiples are moving simultaneously through different routes and approaches or if a multiple cannot be detected. It is, however, utterly imperative to keep one foot on the ground in over-watch. This provides protection but also enables a multiple to remain covertly hidden to the insurgent scouting screen thus reducing the risk of engagement. Furthermore, this depth should drastically limit the dead spots or areas where the commander believes that he is tactically blind. Additionally, depth enables greater study of

local atmospherics. Understanding the local dynamics is essential when attempting to pre-empt insurgent kinetic activity. Often there are direct verbal warnings from local nationals made to ISAF soldiers, or alternatively local nationals will quickly depart an area. Often, entire families mounted tractors and were driven at speed from villages. In absolute extremis pet animals and even cattle were left as women and children were forcibly hurried by their husbands. These events may not give direct indications as to the number of insurgents, their likely avenues of approach, the firepower adopted or the exact time of the eventual assault but nevertheless offer a highly accurate combat indicator of insurgents' presence. The local nationals' public demonstration of fear, shown by their sudden departure, helps the commander to clarify

the severity of the situation. As the commander becomes increasingly aware of the insurgent presence, the metaphoric blindfold which prevents him from making informed decisions is removed.

Well-planned and implemented ISTAR gives the commander greater ability to look into insurgent depth positions before, during and after an operation. ISTAR must, if possible, be used to accurately study the pattern of life in an area prior to a patrol's arrival. The nature of expeditionary operations prevent a company from understanding the detail of an area – as they have often never been there previously - and such weaknesses can only be mitigated by dedicated ISTAR at the time and place that the next operation will be conducted. All members of a patrol must be aware of the accurate normal pattern of life



*OC BOC considering his next move*



*One foot on the ground – Gdsm observing activity through a Compound window*

prior to departing so that they can recognise abnormality: an increase in motorbike traffic, a sudden ceasing of movement down a track or an increase in the number of farmers within a field. Once deployed on the ground, even if commanders implement all of the techniques noted above which help in elucidating insurgent actions, commanders are inevitably shielded by the limits of sight and of our cultural understanding. ISTAR, in all of its varied forms, can be used to lift the blindfold from the commander's eyes. ISTAR should be used not to study likely or previous firing points but rather activity in depth. The commander must ascertain whether there are males moving towards his patrols carrying suspicious packages, whether people are attempting to block key routes by digging objects into likely approaches or whether people are fleeing in depth. All these potential actions can dramatically affect the commander's intended plan allowing time to change

his original scheme of manoeuvre. Due to the sometimes detailed evidence presented by ISTAR, the commander is in a position to accurately consider where he believes the insurgent centre of gravity is placed and subsequently attempt to outmanoeuvre it. Too often ISTAR coverage of a target area ceases once the patrol or operation is concluded. It is essential that ISTAR continues to monitor subsequent insurgent actions as such activity will often further inform the intelligence picture – an insurgent burial, a tactical de-brief in a mosque or replenishing ammunition can all be witnessed after an operation and immediately feed into the F3EU cycle. It is a falsehood, however, to consider ISTAR as the perfect ticket for situational awareness. It is solely a bird's eyes view of activity immediately below: ISTAR is

unable to look into concealed rooms, through murder holes or into subterranean firing points. ISTAR is not a replacement for well trained and attuned soldiers; it merely supplements and informs assessments and deductions made by commanders on the ground. ISTAR itself, literally, gives the commander another set of lenses enabling him to reveal insurgent likely courses of actions, routes and, potentially, numbers.

Unlike Ground Holding Sub-Units, the commanders within the Brigade Operations Company - tasked with disrupting the Insurgency significantly beyond the FLET – are invariably not familiar with the areas in which they operate. Not one member of the Company will have experienced the local dynamics, atmosphere, key personalities, and pattern of life or commercial activity as

they have not patrolled in the area previously. However, numerous steps are taken prior to and during an operation to ensure that the blindfold that could easily neutralize the Company's effectiveness is removed. Insurgents are easily camouflaged in all conditions – the dry, flat, inhospitable desert and the dense, thick, highly vegetated and agricultural Green Zone – and are indecipherable from those local nationals who choose to actively support ISAF and GIRoA as even technological developments cannot sufficiently breach the gap in understanding caused by ISAF's cultural blindness. That said, it is simply untrue to state that insurgent intentions and actions are completely hidden from Western patrols. There are numerous techniques, patrol formations and ORBAT dispositions that help to shed light onto much that the insurgent attempts. By linking together hints drawn from ISTAR, ICOM, local atmospherics, ANSF experience and constant re-assessment of the commander's Estimate it is possible to make accurate predictions as to the insurgent's next move on the tactical chess board and then outmanoeuvre him.

Too often commentators suggest that ISAF faces an enemy who refuses to play by the same rules, moves across the tactical chess board with absolute impunity and blinds Western forces by effective camouflage amongst the population. This is a simplistic and inaccurate analysis.

**“That said, it is simply untrue to state that insurgent intentions and actions are completely hidden from Western patrols.”**

## MENTORING AT THE TIP OF THE TRANSITION SPEAR

Capt C E B Starkey COLDM GDS

**A**s an Infantry Platoon Commander, mentoring Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) was not something I ever thought I would be leading on. Before carrying out the job as a police mentor I questioned whether it was an infantry job; after all it did not really fit directly into what I had pictured as our job description.

Having completed a seven-month tour I am now certain it is a job ideal for a small infantry multiple<sup>1</sup>. The dismounted force protection aspect is something we have always specialised in, but the police mentoring is something relatively new to combat arm commanders. It is a job that requires quick thinking and good judgment, in hostile and isolated environments. This is something that most infantry commanders should be proficient in. The steep learning curve has taught my multiple and me a lot. Now returned to the UK, we are in a good position to pass on our hard earned knowledge to the next generation of Police Mentors.

My multiple has just returned from Helmand having been made responsible for mentoring the AUP in Nahr-e-Saraj (North) (NES(N))<sup>2</sup>. It will surprise very few that words such as 'frustrating' and 'thankless' spring to mind, but this is often the case with the lot of infantry tasks. As a member of Number Two Company 1st Battalion Welsh Guards<sup>3</sup> I think I am in a good place to comment on the 'Risk versus Reward' aspect of working closely with the Afghan Police. The Insider Threat<sup>4</sup> during Op HERRICK 16 was felt acutely throughout most areas of operations and played on all our minds during joint

exertions. The majority of our casualties and fatalities were due to this very real threat. This brings about the question: 'Which way is this transition spear actually facing?' Both the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and ISAF<sup>5</sup> wield it together. But it was not always pointing out towards the insurgents. It was sometimes, unfortunately, facing back towards us. This was something we had to adjust to and be aware of from day one. It was a threat we managed well and I believe could not

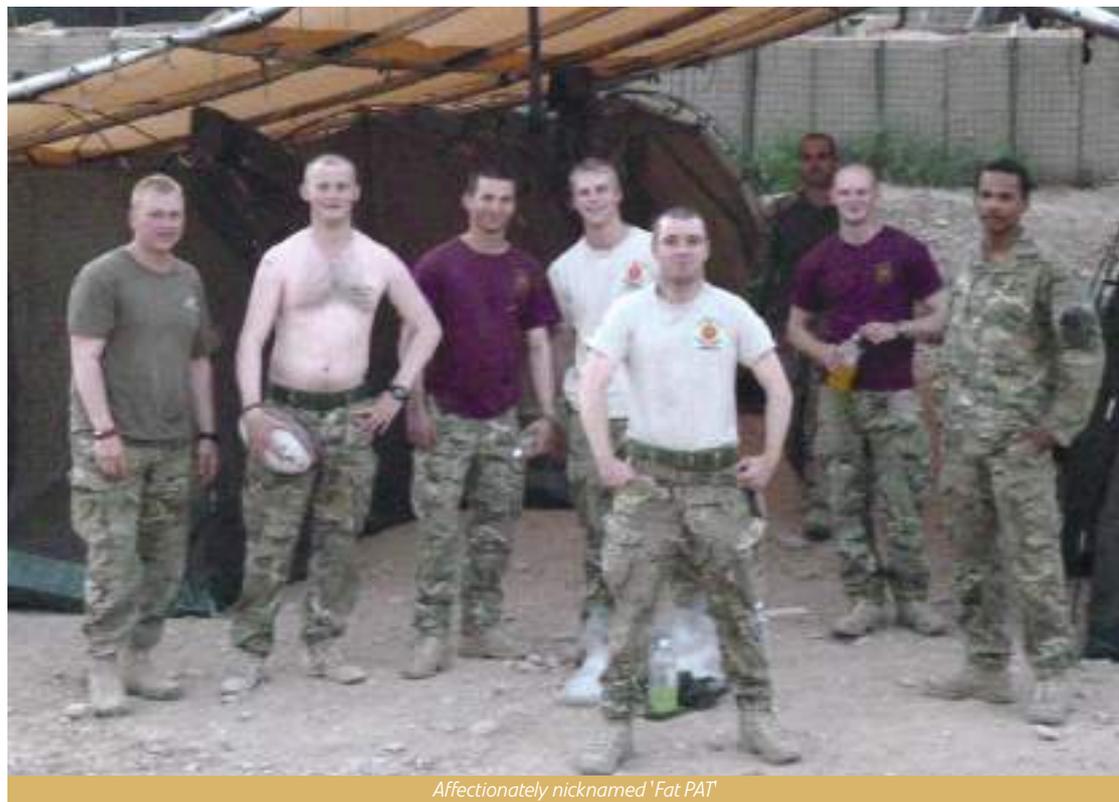
easily be removed completely without jeopardising the ability to conduct the role of being an AUP Advisor.

There is no doubt that advising in Afghanistan at any level comes with its own risks, whether it is the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), the Afghan Local Police (ALP), the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) or the Afghan National Army (ANA). As a commander, even of a small multiple on the ground, the Insider Threat played strongly on one's mind. This was draining and had a real effect on the men. For my Police Advisory Team (PAT), the job did not entail large six-hour contacts<sup>6</sup>, but every day brought about new challenges and threats.

As a general rule the Afghans we worked with were on-side and wanted GIRoA<sup>7</sup> to succeed. Mentoring or advising, whichever way you look at it,

has changed. Beforehand we were useful to the Afghans in Check Points (CPs) and on operations, as we provided a lot of their real life support. Now the tables are turning and we are putting considerable pressure on them to support each other. This makes complete sense to us, as they must learn to sustain themselves to enable them to continue providing security once transition is complete and ISAF has extracted. Many of the AUP, especially the younger less experienced, saw us as very little direct use to them. This made the tour far harder and the quick 'wins' once available to a mentoring team were not achievable.

As with most things it was the minority who spoil things for the majority. In Number Two Company's case it was just a very, very few ANSF who caused most of the spoiling for others. Some did not agree



Affectionately nicknamed 'Fat PAT'



*During our 'Down Time' lessons were regularly given*



*PAT Commanders (l to r) LSgt Collins 63, LSgt Marsh and the author*



*Gdsm Dade goes firm on patrol in Gereshk*

with the preaching's of GIROA, but I believe most had some external pressure put on them by insurgents. It is to PMAG's credit, and Number Two Company's strength of character, that not all was ruined by the Insider Threat and that Police Mentoring continued through to the end with a genuine commitment.

Police Mentoring is not a new concept to ISAF, but one would have thought it was during Mission Specific Training (MST)<sup>8</sup>. The best was made of ground-holding exercises that were crudely molded to suit mentoring roles. Little was mentioned about any Insider Threat, what the role would involve on a day-to-day basis and words like 'Community Policing' were banded around during briefs as if we were about to walk the beat in Hammersmith. The reality was very different. I do not think this is an OPTAG<sup>9</sup> problem, but it is proving to be a steep learning curve for the British Army as a whole. I could see these changes for myself only a couple of weeks ago in Thetford (STANTA) whilst supporting a CFX as a HERRICK 18 Theatre Advisor<sup>10</sup>. Since we were there a year ago, training has developed and those deploying as Police Mentors are, quite rightly in a far better position than just 12 months ago.

Emphasis has always been put on forming relationships and bonds with our Afghan colleagues. Rightly so, for this is one of the main vehicles in aiding us towards a clean and effective handover to the Afghan Security Forces. Doing this is far easier said than done. I liken a CP visit to visiting my grandparents. Firstly, being careful to watch your 'P's and Q's' whilst eating and drinking

whatever is put in front of you. Secondly and most importantly, when it is time to leave saying you loved every minute of your visit, even if it could not be further from the truth. This feeling of trying to be positive and friendly was challenging in itself without considering any of the threats surrounding us. It is unfortunate but due to their culture and way of life, we were sometimes sharing a room with fairly unfriendly or hostile characters. This somewhat awkward situation did not detract from the fact that maintaining a good working relationship was vital despite being tough. Without being too disrespectful, a lot of the Afghan commanders were somewhat childish. This resulted in them being fairly sensitive and easy to upset or aggravate. Keeping the correct balance was hard, mentally draining and extremely difficult to quantify.

For us, in Gereshk, Op HERRICK 16 brought about a switch from visiting CPs on a weekly basis to focusing on the Tolay<sup>11</sup> (Company) level. This switch, I believe, is the way forward. For transition to work in NES(N), a very clear and robust chain of command needs to run alongside a transparent and efficient logistics supply all the way down to the patrolmen on the ground. For a PAT like ours, focus needs to be placed on supporting transition in these two ways. Most patrolmen on the ground know what to do because a fair proportion have now graduated from the Lashkar Gah Training Centre.<sup>12</sup> Yes, lessons to two or three patrolmen in a CP on a weekly basis are 'Nice to haves' as a 'Remind and Revise'. Unfortunately this will not help develop the Police as a whole into an organization that can

sustain and command itself in the future. Something that will hold for longer is making sure, firstly they can train themselves and secondly, they can maintain themselves. This sounds simple, but the latter is proving hard to manage.

Afghans have and always will be very different culturally and morally to us in the West. This is something that I thought we would struggle to adjust to. In fact I could not have been more wrong. Things were very different but actually we adapted to the Afghan way of life very quickly. The problem I found was with the sheer volume of literature and handbooks available, supposedly guiding you through this difficult adjustment. From what we have seen on the ground over Op HERRICK 16 there is little to be worried about. Of course you need to be sensitive - burning Qur'ans<sup>13</sup> is just foolish. This aspect of our job is closely linked to the relationships cliché. But it is no dark art. Granted it is harder through an interpreter, but I think it is all about being conscious and understanding of their situation whilst just trying to be a good bloke and get the job done.

Trying to gauge success in this environment is hard. Trying to identify the line between achievement and disappointment is hard enough, but identifying the areas we have done well in is equally hard. Small things have happened on our tour where relationships and bonds have been strengthened. Some have included using the Medical Emergency Reaction Team (MERT) to extract Afghan

casualties as well as securing a new CP build through the Military Stabilisation and Support Team (MSST). The hardest thing is realising that it is simply in their nature to want more (but isn't it everyone's?). So however hard you try to satisfy any of the AUP's expectations you rarely tick all the boxes. Despite this and the reduced logistics support we now provide, I still think they value our input and still widely acknowledge the effort and risk we go through to support them.

I think all PAT commanders would agree with me when I say we never thought PMAG on Op HERRICK 16 was going to be easy or straightforward. I think they would all now support me in saying this was an understatement. It has been challenging and rewarding for very different reasons than most of us expected. Because of this I have no doubt we are in a better position as junior commanders. The real result, in terms of Afghanistan and their police, of our tour will remain harder to quantify and judge. Having worked at the 'Tip of the Transition Spear' I hope what we have achieved holds and helps the Afghans strengthen their security further, which remains vital to the country's development. As for the whole bigger picture, if it fails I think we will know sooner rather than later. If, and we all hope, GIRoA succeeds with providing its own stability and security I think the work 1st Battalion Welsh Guards and PMAG put in during Op HERRICK 16 will have contributed positively to the Afghan Police role in the overall stability of Afghanistan.



LCpl Evans takes a few minutes rest during the hottest part of the day

- 1 *Infantry Multiple* – consisted of 12 to 14 dismounted personnel. This included attachments such as Royal Military Police (RMP) and Military Stabilisation and Support Team (MSST) personnel, an Afghan interpreter and other specialists.
- 2 *Based out of the AUP Headquarters in Gereshk. Sharing a compound with the AUP and working closely with the NES District Advisor Team (DAT) formed from the Light Dragoons.*
- 3 *I was attached to the Welsh Guards from the Coldstream Guards.*
- 4 *The Insider Threat is the descriptive umbrella for two types of attack: Insurgent Infiltration (carried out by an insurgent posing as a member of the ANSF) and Green-on-Blue (carried out by a legitimate member of the ANSF).*
- 5 *International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)*
- 6 *As is often did for the Grenadier Guards who were ground holding in NES(N).*
- 7 *GIRoA – Government Islamic Republic of Afghanistan*
- 8 *Intensive training period - building up to our eventual deployment to on H16.*
- 9 *OPTAG – Operational Training and Advisory Group*
- 10 *To keep the training as up to date as possible, soldiers returning from theatre are asked to visit the training exercises for the next Herrick to deploy as subject matter experts and the most current voice of experience.*
- 11 *We mentored the 1st Tolay with a Danish POMLT callsign (PAT equivalent).*
- 12 *Lashkar Gah Training Centre (LTC) was a regional AUP training centre on the outskirts of Lashkar Gah along Route 601. It was run by 1st Battalion Welsh Guards Headquarter Company supported by elements from the Light Dragoons, RMP and QOGLR.*
- 13 *During Herrick 16 the outfall from a US Pastor burning a Quran is hard to quantify, but certainly wasn't good and was felt on the ground.*



## The Principals of War in a Counter-Insurgency

by Lt FO Lloyd George

Every Officer Cadet for years has had the same experience when they arrive at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. First they are made to wear a ridiculous set of green coveralls, they then get a bizarre haircut, receive their kit, attached to it an impossible cumulative ironing time and a list of particulars they need to learn.

These range from the Values and Standards of the British Army to what the Academy Adjutant's horse is called ('Winston' during my intake). In there though are 'The Principles of War'. As I recollected them in the shower or between 'costume changes' or during press-ups when I got one wrong on muster parades, they seemed old fashioned for a modern officer about to embark on counter-insurgency. Indeed I believed Patrick Hennessey and The

Junior Officers' Reading Club that much of conventional training was just punishment and we should be training for a specific type of warfare. However I learnt during Op Daas 2, during my tour of Afghanistan on Operation Herrick 16, that it is vital that we continue to understand these principles, as they are vital to any type of warfare.

Op Daas 2C was an opportunity to conduct some deep disrupt into an area of

Afghanistan that is notorious for its facilitation of lethal aid. Known as the Argandab River Valley, it was an area that the Russians never entered during their occupation of the country. I was surprised when I read the initial FRAGO; it was nothing I had seen in previous Orders during my tour. Essentially, we were to move into the valley with overwhelming force, in the shape of Warrior armoured fighting vehicles and Leopard tanks (from the Danish Army) and attempt to create disruption in the Nahr-e-Saraj (NES) facilitation chain, exploiting any successes where possible. This would be achieved over the course of four days by entering into

different Operation Boxes (Ops Box) along the valley and conducting compound searches and area rummages. It was fascinating to observe how all The Principles of War were apparent at some point during the operation, when they were adhered to or when they were forgotten.

I observed 'The Master Principle' - Selection and Maintenance of the Aim - acutely from the beginning. The Commanding Officer had a clear aim from the genesis of the operation, to conduct continuous disruption throughout the whole valley, for consecutive days and despite varying problems he maintained this throughout. Indeed before the operation

**'I believed Patrick Hennessey and The Junior Officers' Reading Club that much of conventional training was just punishment.'**



had even begun, the Intimate Resupply Group (IRG), which was meant to be the lifeline for the troops on the operation, were unable to move through the difficult terrain that the valley presented. The Commanding Officer was not to be deterred though and plans were altered in order to allow the aim to be achieved. This was also apparent at multiple level; on the second day of the operation it was The Prince of Wales's Company aim to clear through a series of Ops Boxes and rummage around Compounds of Interest (COI). At the first cordon position my multiple established, a high metal content was registered in a stack of poppies, a package was discovered and

the Counter-IED callsign (Brimstone) was called in. As an over-zealous platoon commander I believed this was mission success. However the truth was that the aim had still not been achieved. The rummages continued and therefore the maintenance of the selected aim achieved. The package turned out to be a metal container, with poppy harvesting items inside. Indeed there was not a moment during Op Daas 2C when The Master Principle was not at the forefront of every commander's mind. I had a clear aim from Orders and it was vital throughout the operation that I maintained it.

Maintenance of Morale was

once again vital and this was highly noticeable at multiple level. It is a difficult operation when you are expecting Guardsman to spend in excess of 13 hours a day moving over difficult terrain in the searing desert heat in the back of a Mastiff. However it was vital throughout to maintain the morale of the men. It was apparent that when morale dropped, so did their ability to operate. I found it vital to constantly update my Mastiff crew with situation reports (SITREPS) from the wider operation; when I forgot, due to other actions, morale quickly dipped. It was of course also important to put up with the fourth attempt at 'Eye of the Tiger', sung with the same

gusto as the national anthem at a rugby international at the Millennium Stadium. Indeed when morale was high it was clear the Guardsmen could achieve anything. This was apparent when, on day four, the Company found themselves in another IED strike. The Guardsmen were asked to get out and Barma a safe lane for the Mastiffs; the job was done to the highest standard, with most the Guardsmen only having half an hours sleep the night before. Maintenance of Morale will always be important, commanders rarely argue it otherwise; it is still a principle that has been forgotten in times of stress.

Offensive Action, rarely places itself as vitally important in a counter-insurgency. This is demonstrated when bases become comfortable within their Area of Operations (AO)

**“As an over-zealous platoon commander I believed this was mission success. However the truth was that the aim had still not been achieved.”**



and are not seeking ways to have an effect on the insurgent; instead they react to insurgent activity maintaining purely defensive, stability or - occasionally - enabling actions. During Op Daas 2c I was intently aware of Offensive Action; no more so than when I was conducting exploitation actions, attempting to detain or remove seven fighting aged males who had recently initiated an IED against our vehicle packet. Rather than becoming defensive after the IED strike, I was given Orders to use what troops I had available and look to offensively engage with the enemy. It was almost a jovial moment when I 'Cut the cake' with my lead Guardsman, turning around to find the man behind my multiple was the Commanding Officer (a more intimate DS-ing

than I ever desired). We continued on and sent a good message to the insurgent and they did not attempt further engagement against Coalition Forces for the rest of the day. Offensive Action can be easily forgotten in counter-insurgency yet it is as important now as ever and when an AO forgets this, it is quickly targeted.

Concentration of Force presented itself in the form of Warriors and Leopard tanks. They were not there presuming we would need to win a firefight, they were there to prevent a fire-fight. This allowed my dismounted callsign the freedom of movement to conduct thorough searches and local national engagements. Here I observed an alteration on conventional tactics as we

rapidly moved with an overwhelming and concentrated amount of firepower, not to destroy the enemy at one particular point in their defences but to dislocate the enemy, automatically giving the dismounted callsigns the initiative, and making it almost impossible for the insurgent to take it back off us. This was a clear example of how conventional doctrine is altered to achieve a similar effect in counter-insurgency. It is why throughout all our attacks in training, we are reminded that good fire support means better movement; the principle remains the same, we are just able to completely 'out-gun' the insurgency allowing us to conduct shuras and engage with local nationals - the real

target of counter-insurgency.

Flexibility, this is the concept that is always barked at you during training, that "No plan survives first contact with the enemy" and it is as prudent a statement in counter-insurgency as all warfare throughout history. Indeed, look no further than day one of Op Daas 2C where the initial plan was to spend a morning in an Ops Box before withdrawing back to the main base and awaiting further Orders. However after an IED belt, several cache finds and a small arms contact we ended up spending two days in the Ops Box. This demonstrates the importance of having flexibility. It is the reason that in training, the situation purposefully changes so often, not just for the enjoyment of the Directing Staff (although I can imagine there are a couple of sniggers when a platoon finds a log waiting for them at the end of a long, wet and exhausting exercise); and

**"It is a difficult operation when you are expecting Guardsman to spend in excess of 13 hours a day moving over difficult terrain in the searing desert heat in the back of a Mastiff."**



when a desert leaguer was being organised on a night when we were meant to have been back in a patrol base hours ago, this made perfect sense. Indeed with the Army looking forward to Army 2012 and a "more flexible force", this will be a vital principle to remember.

Security is an over-riding theme of modern warfare and I saw the benefits and negatives of this on Op Daas 2C; to the point that it was constricting. The Army is at a point now where security is taking too much of a priority. Not to be over-zealous, there are areas where this is fantastic: the stand-alone fact that the Company took four IED strikes with no casualties is remarkable and would not have been the case if the Army had not invested in Mastiff vehicles. However there are areas where manoeuvre and initiative are restricted as a direct consequence of the emphasis on security. The most obvious example being ECM. It is a life saving piece of

equipment, but it restricts the commander's ability to sustain, manoeuvre and give a multiple momentum. This was apparent when, on occasion, callsigns needed to be split. However due to the lack of flexibility on the matter, entire multiples were sent to do the task of four or five men, often meaning further C-IED measures were needed. For example when overwatch positions were left, due to force security measures, that entire area would have to be cleared again creating a complete loss of momentum. Indeed when ECM waivers were given, we were able to operate with much greater momentum. In warfare there is always a certain amount of risk and it was apparent that the balance between timidity and recklessness is not right at the moment.

Economy of Effort and Sustainability were two

principles that supported each other during Op Daas 2C. For example it was decided that the IRG did not need to meet up with the armoured infantry company as they were able to sustain themselves without the resupply. Therefore the IRG could desist with its attempts to move through the difficult terrain presented by the Argandab River Valley, hence demonstrating Economy of Effort. Indeed by the final day, due to lack of sleep, the sustainability of the multiple was beginning to waiver. This was recognised by the commanders and Economy of Effort was used in order to allow the Guardsmen rest where possible, allowing them the greatest sustainability if further taskings were given to us. Throughout the operation it was important to constantly assess the situation of the platoon and decide at what point we needed rest.

Economy of Effort and Sustainability are constant checks on commanders of what we expect our men to do, for that reason it is essential that they are constantly assessed throughout a battle.

However, despite all the principles I saw there were others that were absent and arguably these were the areas we left ourselves most vulnerable to. Most apparent from when we left the patrol base on day 1 was the principle of Surprise - we had none. On day one we drove in a column of 30 plus vehicles in the direction of the first Ops Box. It would have been overly apparent to any insurgent what our intent was. We allowed the insurgent to move out or hide any items they did not want us to find and replace with defences in the form of IEDs. On the fourth day the same was noticeable; we moved into a secure a crossing

**"It is why throughout all our attacks in training, we are reminded that good fire support means better movement."**



point and although it was 10km away from the patrol base, the insurgent understood our intent for the day and emplaced an IED belt down the exact route we intended to take. It was a remarkable bit of the Estimate's Question One from the insurgent, aided by our lack of deception. It reminded me why you spend hours in training trying to covertly move into position for attacks; when the enemy is aware of your intent you lose the initiative and there were a couple of times during Op Daas 2C when we lost the initiative because there was no Surprise in our actions. There were elements of our actions that lacked Cooperation. This was demonstrated in our operating with other Coalition Forces. When we co-operated and used the skills of each force, the operations ran

smoothly. For example there was a situation where a US Marine Scoundrel callsign towed our entire company's Mastiffs through an impassable wadi. However on occasion Cooperation was not present, as on the third day. Danish troops had a mine plough, which was exceptional at moving safely through IED seeded areas. It had been used on the second day to move the tanks into an overwatch position and at other points, with great success, during the operation. However on day three, when the lead Mastiff struck an IED destroying the choker, our Mastiffs still continued to lead. Due to the greater risk to the vehicle without a choker, it took

us longer to clear a route and momentum was lost immediately. An example can also be drawn from within British Forces, during a withdrawal of our Mastiffs. The vehicles could not traverse the ground as rapidly as the rest of the packet which left our Company isolated and without support for a long period of time. This not only left us vulnerable, but also meant the momentum of the entire withdrawal was lost, giving the insurgent the ability to further target our packet. It was apparent that as a Junior Commander it is vital for me to understand what assets I have at my disposal so cooperation is possible on the battlefield.

In conclusion Op Daas 2C was a successful operation and achieved the aim given to me in Orders. As a new platoon commander it was a discovery in the indispensable knowledge of British Army doctrine. What may seem unnecessary and outdated as you move through training is actually invaluable to a commander who has had little sleep and still needs to command a platoon. In the unlikely event that an Officer Cadet finds the time to read this article, I implore him/ her not just to be able to regurgitate doctrine but to understand it as there will be a time, bone-shiveringly soon, when it becomes vital he/ she understands it, in any form of warfare.

**"it was apparent that the balance between timidity and recklessness is not right at the moment."**



*Choker Mine Roller proves its worth*

## HEAVY PROTECTIVE MOBILITY INFANTRY IN HELMAND PROVINCE

Maj E N Lauanders

From April to October 2012 The Prince of Wales's Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, deployed to Helmand Province as the Combined Force Nahr-e-Saraj (South) (CF NES(S)) Operations Company. Largely uncommitted to ground holding responsibilities, the Company was the CF's primary second echelon force, and conducted a range of counter-insurgent operations in depth, both within and beyond CF boundaries.

In broad terms operations were focussed on keeping the insurgency in NES(S) at arms length, and ensuring that the hard won space and time within the protected communities was maintained to support the CF's principal activity: capacity building and progress towards transfer of

lead security responsibility to the Afghans.

In this role the Company was required to project force, and to conduct manoeuvre across a

**"Specifically, the Company gained a significant body of experience in the employment of the Mastiff and Husky fleet of vehicles."**

wide variety of terrain, and often at extended range. The full spectrum of manoeuvre options were employed, including aviation and, increasingly through the tour, using the Company's organic Protective Mobility (PM) fleet. It is on the utility of heavy Protective Mobility in Helmand that this article will focus upon. Specifically, the Company gained a significant body of experience in the employment of the Mastiff and Husky fleet of vehicles. Some of these observations may signpost some of the opportunities and challenges that will face Infantry Heavy PM battalions over the next decade.

### CONTEXT

To put the comments and observations made in this article into perspective, a few notes on context of the deployment must be made. Firstly the Company did not expect that PM (specifically Mastiff variants) would provide the primary form of manoeuvre. It was envisaged that most operations would be conducted within the complex terrain of the Canal Zone, where Heavy PM was restricted to well established routes, and largely unsuited beyond getting dismounted infantry to forward mounting bases. Aviation operations would be

the 'go-to' option for operations in less accessible areas. Both of these cases would see dismounted infantry operating without necessarily having vehicles in intimate support, or as a pivotal aspect of manoeuvre. This lack of foresight resulted in the Company training and deploying as a light role company, with the ability to crew PM vehicles. As the tour progressed and a greater understanding was gained both of ground, threat and crucially the exploitation advantages afforded, the Company became something akin to a Heavy PM company. By the end of the tour, PM had become the 'go-to' manoeuvre option above aviation.

#### MANOEUVRE, MOVEMENT AND EXPLOITING OPPORTUNITIES

*"Regardless of the way in which they deploy to battle, all infantry units strike with infantrymen on their feet in close combat with the enemy. The one exception is armoured infantry which can also generate combat power by integrating the Warrior's firepower and manoeuvre into both the infantry and combined arms battles."* (AFM Vol. 1, Part 2, Annex A to Chapter 3.)

Set in the context of a non-linear counter-insurgency fight, against a low-tech enemy, operating as a PM company proved to hold significant advantages at times during the tour. Whereas conventional doctrine correctly identifies the Warrior as the primary infantry fighting vehicle, in the HERRICK operating environment the Mastiff proved it shared some of the characteristics that enabled the Company to achieve overmatch, exploit



Dawn patrol

fleeting opportunities and gain the tactical initiative.

A surprise revelation during the deployment was that ground manoeuvre using PM often carried significant advantages over the use of aviation. For both reactive operations against time sensitive targets, and for deliberate operations, the additional flexibility and mobility provided by organic ground lift meant that the Company was more capable and dynamic when deployed in PM. Whilst Op MERCURY provided a responsive means of moving against high value targets, generally the domain of the BRF, at CF level ground movement always provided the quickest and most flexible means of reaching the target. In addition, once on the ground, a company deployed with organic lift was better able to shift axis and dynamically respond to the changing situation on the ground. The requirements to pre-designate

and soak HLS's days in advance, and the inability to incorporate ARF elements into planning significantly diluted the potential advantages of air manoeuvre. On at least four occasions, the Company was launched against opportunity targets using PM above aviation, leading to the successful recovery of lethal aid and detainees on three of those. One particular example highlights some key advantages of PM.

One afternoon in mid August 2012, CF base ISTAR (PGSS) had identified the potential movement of weapons amongst compound clusters within the Bowri Dashte area north of the NES(S) Canal Zone. The Operations Company was rapidly deployed in vehicles within 45 minutes to Cordon and Search potential weapons caches. It was clear that our movement towards the target would prompt the insurgents to try to move weapons out of the area. During the infiltration

phase, which took around an hour and a half, the CF Ops Room maintained eyes-on the target area and reported down as weapons continued to move. A Lynx strike asset was stood to conduct a dynamic strike under ROE 429a should the insurgents attempt to move the weapons away from the area. As the Company closed in on the target this is exactly what happened. An insurgent vehicle was struck by the Lynx, and by this stage the Company were well positioned to execute a rapid exploitation. This resulted in the successful seizure of two known insurgent detainees, and large quantities of lethal aid. Key to the success were the ability to rapidly deploy, and once deployed to dynamically switch axis and use the mobility offered by Mastiff to exploit an opportunity. In the circumstances, it is extremely unlikely that dismounted troops alone, deployed by support helicopter to a fixed

**"A surprise revelation during the deployment was that ground manoeuvre using PM often carried significant advantages over the use of aviation."**



*Disembarking from Mastiff is cumbersome and clumsy*

HLS, would have been in a position to both capture the detainees and secure the lethal aid.

*“Mechanised battalions fight in concert with armour and armoured infantry by providing a pivot around which the armoured force can manoeuvre. Saxon provides a measure of protected movement but is not a fighting vehicle and should not be involved in close combat.” (AFM Vol. 1, Part 2, Annex A to Chapter 3).*

The nature of both the type of operations that were conducted, and the nature of the ground and enemy threat, dictated that increasingly the Mastiff fleet was integrated in a manner much more akin to a mechanised infantry role and much more than merely a battle-field taxi or fire-support platform. The relative strengths and weaknesses can be revealed through an

investigation into three areas: protection, firepower and mobility.

There is no doubt, and countless experiences show that the current fleet of Heavy PM vehicles offer extremely good protection against the low-tech, but nonetheless potent, kinetic threats in Afghanistan. During the tour the Company experienced 10 IED strikes, resulting in M-Kills against four vehicles, and the destruction of four Choker mine rollers (CMR). In addition the vehicles suffered RPG and multiple small-arms strikes. All of these resulted in just two very minor casualties, neither requiring casevac from the battlefield. These vehicles clearly offer considerably greater capability than the Saxon of old, and therefore a greater scope for employment. It ensured that the vehicles could be used forward in the fight, in particular to provide

over-match and the ability to generate tempo in the exploitation of fleeting opportunities. Additionally, it enabled manageable risk to be taken, when combined with thorough IPB, to sacrifice route assurance for speed where the achievement of a tactical mission relied on it.

Heavy PM, and Mastiff in particular, was restricted by its mobility, but it was far from incapable. Environmental issues during the summer proved a significant advantage. With a bulk of operations being conducted outside the complex Green Zone, the hard baked and largely uncultivated land in the Bowri and Dashte areas enabled a good degree of freedom of movement. Two particular operations conducted alongside the AI Company illustrated conclusively the advantage of tracks over wheels, particularly

in terms of speed, shock action and terrain access. Mastiff was at times found wanting, particularly with CMR fitted, wherever ground became a little soft or wet, and could easily be undone by relatively small bund lines. The vehicle that was ultimately optimised to cope with graded tracks on the urban fringe, struggled to access much beyond relatively hard cross-country terrain. Vehicle crews became expert at self-recovery; during one operation the Company conducted 24 vehicle recoveries in a four day period. Drivers also became more and more adept at handling cross-country driving, having arrived in theatre (despite attendance at the crew training school), familiar but not expert at handling the vehicles.

#### GETTING STRUCTURES RIGHT

Although as expressed above, operating as a PM company carried many advantages, there were a number of frictions encountered that hampered the overall capability. Many of these frictions revolved around structures of both manpower and equipment. Neither the Company's ORBAT, nor equipment holdings served to optimise the capability, and it is submitted should be examined in the design of future infantry Heavy PM battalions.

Broadly two different types of ORBAT were experimented with. The first saw the establishment of a mobility section, as a separate entity to the rifle platoons, operating as a discrete manoeuvre element; the second saw the vehicles and crews being fully integrated into platoon structures. Both carried relative advantages for different missions, however both held a heavy bill on non-

**“There is no doubt, and countless experiences show that the current fleet of Heavy PM vehicles offer extremely good protection against the low-tech, but nonetheless potent, kinetic threats in Afghanistan.”**

## OPERATION HERRICK 16

commissioned officers to be fixed in vehicles. For a light role company ORBAT, this meant that routinely the dismounted multiples lacked junior leadership, with section commanders and platoon sergeants often finding themselves bound to the vehicles, rather than operating on the ground. Where the requirement was to fully integrate vehicles into manoeuvre, rather than purely use zulu musters, the balance was at times hard to strike.

It was also found that there is a key difference between having a light role company with the ability to move itself in PM, as opposed to a fully integrated PM company as a complete capability. Much of this hinged on the type and mix of vehicles. This affected two key areas: Command and Control (C2) and Combat Service Support (CSS). In terms of C2, at no stage was the Company equipped with a true command variant vehicle. None of the vehicles in the fleet (consisting of up to seven Mastiff 2, one Husky and one Wolfhound) were equipped with a dual radio fit; only one of the vehicles had the ability to transmit VHF above 16 watts, and most only at 5 watts. Heath Robinson solutions had to be put in place, involving plasti-cuffs and man-pack radios, to ensure that the company commander and Zic could monitor battle-group and company nets simultaneously; even then this involved speakers and handsets where proper harnesses would have been advantageous. Communication between vehicles generally had to be done on the company command net, causing undue clogging to the flow of vital information. In short, the



*Choker Mine Roller proves its worth*

ergonomics of the vehicle fleet hampered rather than enhanced C2 during fast flowing operations.

Company operations often suffered as a result of a lack of organic CSS. The inability to change CMR, change a tyre or at worst case recover a vehicle following an M-Kill hampered momentum and tempo on a number of occasions. Whereas, for example, an AI company deploys with these capabilities baked in, the Company never enjoyed that luxury. Notably Route Proving and Clearance troops (TALISMAN) possess the organic ability to do all of these things. Without it at times relatively small events, for

example a blown tyre, required battle-group assets to resolve. At worst this could fix the Company for up to 24 hours, and shift focus from the tactical task to recovery tasks.

### SUMMARY

The Prince of Wales's Company found, in some respects to their surprise, that Heavy PM was a significant force multiplier in the projection of force as an operations company on Op HERRICK 16. It has many limitations, but proved time and again when fully integrated into ground manoeuvre, that it offered at time decisive advantage. Whilst it cannot be considered an infantry fighting vehicle, it was

successfully used to achieve a number of tactical tasks and effects including fire support, psychological over-match, flank protection and pursuit. In the context of Op HERRICK it offered a dismounted infantry company commander with a range of options that would otherwise not be available; most notably an additional ability to exploit fleeting opportunities when they arise. The PM family of vehicles will make Heavy PM battalions of the future highly capable and widely employable. Close consideration must be given to structures, and to ensuring that equipment and doctrine optimise this capacity.



*The Prince of Wales's Company on the charge*



## THE BRIGADE OPERATIONS COMPANY

Maj H S Llewelyn-Usher

**N**umber Three Coy 1WG initially deployed to Afghanistan as a Ground Holding Sub Unit in Nad-e-Ali (NDA) based at PB Pimon on the shoulder of the NEB canal. Tasked with supporting the security of the already transitioned Canal Zone and the population centres of NDA and Lashkar Gah, our focus quickly became the disruption of insurgent freedom of movement (FoM) in the Western Dashte. Long range foot insertions behind a clearly identifiable FLET became focused company-level operations requiring a degree of planning and in turn support from higher.

We learnt within our first week that as ever, ones enemy is never to be underestimated and always respected – especially in this case for the accuracy of their shooting. Time spent refining basic soldiering skills that appeared to have waned during MST was to prove instrumental in the later success of the tour, and highlighted the simplicity of “doing the basics well”. Whilst our primary focus during MST

had been immersing ourselves in the pillars of COIN, and gaining an understanding of partnering, the Company found that throughout the tour we were rarely partnering a recognised force and for many instances were assigned elements of the ANSF to deliver the “Afghan face” onto targets; indeed we found more often that our operations were unpartnered which presented their own problems.

**“Time spent refining basic soldiering skills that appeared to have waned during MST was to prove instrumental in the later success of the tour.”**

Some two months into the tour we re-rolled as the Brigade Operations Company (BOC) moving our base to Camp Bastion (BSN), our command responsibility to the TFH ISTAR Group, and our operational focus to the wider TFH Battlespace. Whilst this was a significant upheaval with the ubiquitous demanding G4 requirements, the change in role, and indeed profile came at a significant moment in the tour and proved to be the ideal opportunity for many in the Company. Handing over to the NDA Ops Company, we moved to Bastion and spent a little over a week re-rolling with specific emphasis on the infantry basics of shooting, fitness and lifesaving drills, all of which were to become the core of our weekly training programmes and would stand us in good stead for the weeks and months ahead. The benefits of being in BSN were soon evident: access to excellent training areas, key

enablers and supporting units were a blessing, and as the summer unfolded enabled both short notice deployments and the ability to train hard in the lead up to an operation.

### Force Laydown

The size and structure of the Company became an evolving beast, affected by our previous force requirements and by operational demands and casualties sustained throughout the tour. By the end of the summer we had suffered 26% casualties of a varying nature and evolved as an amorphous entity. Key roles outside the immediate C2 positions and the core requirement of two platoons of 24 Guardsmen were the essential roles of: COIST/ J2 team, an independent roving Plans Officer, dedicated staff support in HQ TFH and the ISTAR Group J3/5, and links into the Brigade Troops Echelon (BTE) G4 support team.

Operating as a Rifle Company of two platoons, we were enhanced by an FST from XIX Regt RA, and an FSG from D Coy 1 R ANGLIAN, with the

overall BOC construct incorporating nine capbadges and at any given time over 150 men in direct support. With our focus now very much at the Bde level we continued to refine our deployable ORBAT as the summer unfolded, allowing specialists from EOD, MWD, RE and MAOTs to deploy on the ground with us, further increasing our reach and the effect we were able to deliver. As the generation of the BOC was in essence a new concept, we quickly found ourselves having to build, train and operate a new team in a role for which we had not prepared. Learning on the job and shaping TTPs as we went was very much the order of the day. Every man became familiar with the Principles of War, and in particular the requirement for flexibility at every level.

### Operational Design

Management of our operational activity sat central to Comd TFHs wider operational design and would see the BOC centrally commanded and controlled by CO ISTAR Group, yet routinely subordinated out to ground holding TSUs or CFs to enable a wider series of operational effects. Conceptually, the BOC was established to deliver effect against the Op DAAS (Defeat the resources) Line of Operations (LoO), thereby providing complementary activity to the BRFs Op STEN TAKAY (Defeat the individual) – both of which became the outer crust supporting and shaping ANSF-led Op QALB operations. Whilst essentially two distinct LoO in the clinical environment of HQ TFH, the reality was juxtaposed with obvious blurring between the two areas. The monthly formulation of the ubiquitous

sync matrices never proved quite as clear cut as we had first assumed. To deliver against the focused LoO required a number of core elements: dedicated enablers, specialist manpower and an enhanced intelligence team. Whilst we were ably supported throughout, there was a fundamental requirement for detailed intelligence which would have led to more focused operations being mounted against specific caches of materiel. The reality was somewhat different, but by no means less effective. In practice the BOC quickly became a surge element for TSUs/ CFs to utilise within their battlespace (BS) at the behest of the Bde Comd. The ability to force project into an area hitherto unvisited or uncontrolled by either ISAF or GiROA became our *raison d'être* and shaped planning and operating as we progressed through the tour. The pattern of projecting into a designated area and then remaining on the ground for days or weeks, not only had the desired DISRUPT effect but significantly improved the overall UNDERSTAND of the areas, their geography and most important of all, the population.

### Operational Effect

As a light role sub-unit our endearing feature very quickly became the ability to force project, at limited cost to platforms, either by Avn or Ground into specific BS thus enabling and improving manoeuvre in depth. Whilst in high-intensity COIN operations an overt demonstration of military capability and strength may go a long way, with the transition of both BS and responsibility to GiROA, it was less incumbent on us to be





seen to move into an area, especially as we were more often than not unpartnered. In tandem with this thought process the lessons we had learnt in the Western Dashte and collective experiences on other operations lent us towards operating more and more at night. The initial insertion of force elements onto a target or into an AO proved time and again to be successful if done under the cover of darkness. Operating well behind the FLET, the only way to gain and then maintain the initiative and element of surprise was to appear on target as the sun came up. The length of time spent deployed on the ground, allowed continuity of effort by already committed forces, whilst providing additional DISRUPT in depth over ground hitherto unvisited, thus improving and deepening operational effect against a pervasive and pernicious enemy.

**Operational Cycle**

Whilst conceptually the BOC was focusing upon DAAS LoO, and were “fighting on the flanks” to help ensure security in the population centres, the monthly operational forecast was shaped by a bidding process by TFH units for support by ISTAR Gp sub-units. Once confirmed, this established the more detailed tactical planning process conducted in conjunction with TSU/ CF staff and COs. Whilst the at times formulaic staff process paid dividends and allowed clarity of understanding from the plethora of units involved in certain operations, the BOCs link back into HQ TFH and a growing understanding of the situation on the ground combined with ever improving relationships with staff HQs

meant that more formal processes were often bypassed. With the increasing ability to react to Time Sensitive Targets (TST) and short notice Bde level operations, the BOC was held on three hours Notice to Move (NTM) for the duration of the tour. In reality this was significantly less, and short notice planning and deployment occurred on a number of occasions. We became a useful, if sadly under-used, foil for the BRF when they had deployed on Op MERCURY tasks. Fundamentally though, the tactical planning process was driven by the operational effect required and entirely managed at sub-unit level.

**Planning Process**

The critical requirement of joint planning, involving as many elements as soon as possible, especially the overburdened JHF(A) became a pre-requisite for the smooth delivery, support and extraction of the BOC into often heavily contested areas. On receipt of an initial warning order, the BOC became TACOM to the relevant TSU/CF. A surge of the BOC J5 Plans Officer to the relevant TSU/ CF HQ allowed improved oversight both from the OC of the BOC and also the CO to whom we had been subordinated. As always relationships were key and as a fighting force we had the pleasure of working with all but one of the H16 TSUs/CFs - no surprise then that an ever increasing understanding of both effect required and capability available flourished as the summer wound on. Whilst the unrelenting tempo of the high summer months often led to a slightly haphazard approach that would have had Staff College DS up in arms, the ability to



remain flexible and sanguine about the next forecast operation was essential. With clarity of thought, a clear plan and an essential CONPLAN, little the BOC was ever asked to undertake was too difficult. Whilst over zealous yet well intentioned staff officers, and of course the insurgents themselves, did their best to scupper often simple plans, the requirement at sub-unit level, to plan out the detail remained extant at all times.

#### Manoeuvre

Maximizing the effect of BOC operations and minimizing the ability of insurgents to disrupt wider operational activity required critical Force Projection, more often that not via Avn. Whilst the aircraft of choice was undoubtedly the CH47, the paucity of SH across theatre saw us deploy by both US and UKSH, both of whom significantly enhanced our

reach but both presenting very different planning and operating considerations. Once deployed, the utility of operating with the WARTHOG Group (WHG) proved essential on many occasions. Their reach and versatility far exceeded other PM options, and whilst limited at night, their ability to move in and provide an armoured outer cordon more than improved the situation on a number of occasions. Their reach, and independent sustainability often allowed complementary effect and offered multiple options for both sub-unit commanders to achieve increased results. The gold standard solution of insertion via Avn into a desert leaguer sponsored by the WHG enabled subsequent long range covert foot infill by the

BOC to target areas, affording the successful lock down of compounds before First Light. This plan, whilst never a template, worked on many occasions and enabled the maintenance of surprise and essential initiative in areas where our understanding of both the ground and insurgent activity was minimal. At dawn, the WHGs ability to tighten the net moving onto our now secured positions provided essential fire support, and blocking positions enabled a number of difficult targets to be successfully prosecuted.

#### Tactical Employment

Whilst the subject of tactical doctrine is best left debated elsewhere, the overarching ability to alter, refine and continually improve ones TTPs

is an enduring component to successful tactical level activity. Although there was no specific template to operations, it became apparent that either air delivered or ground delivered assaults onto opposed targets required detailed planning and the very highest levels of understanding of the overarching plan by all members of the deploying and supporting force. From junior Guardsmen to Loadmasters and Pilots in supporting Avn, all needed to be aware of the plan and the various contingencies in place. Deploying, Sustaining, and Recovering the force was never a simplistic process. HLS selection, ISTAR allocation and detailed soaks of the target and surrounding area remain manpower intensive essential elements of the pre deployment phase. The choosing of an HLS for example was never a quick choice – an understanding of the intelligence picture would allow decisions to be made for a land on assault or a more covert off-set infill – both of which would lead to further issues on the ground: the element of surprise lost by landing on the target could mitigate an almost impassable route to a target when landing 5km away in flooded irrigated terrain that ISTAR imagery hadn't picked up. Likewise for assaults into the Green Zone, crop heights, possible enemy dispositions and the position of targets were all factors that could only be managed by careful planning. In turn the follow on air support would need to be carefully assessed; there was often the requirement for sustained

**“It became apparent that either air delivered or ground delivered assaults onto opposed targets required detailed planning.”**



ensure engagements were accurate and proportionate was essential. Throughout the tour, whilst there was still a clear need for suppression weapons, there was a groundswell of approval for the need to have more sharpshooter rifles at the expense of GPMGs. Not only did it reduce loads, but the excellent scope and range allowed further observation followed by focused engagements onto clearly identified targets. It was clear from the start that precision wins firefights. The current demand to alter and amend training at our training establishments must not happen. Training for “A War” with the ability to shape and refine for a specific conflict must prevail. To do otherwise would lose sight of the very essence of infantry soldiering, which proved such a lifesaver during our summer in Afghanistan.

### Summary

Whilst the motto of the BOC became “Nothing is Impossible” we were often tested to the very limits of endurance and capability. The abundant increase in support and enabling assets allowed us to operate at the very highest tempo across TFH. And whilst the spectrum of issues and concerns encountered in the COE remain extant, the simple and proven infantry tactics were the factors that swung events into our favour. Doing the basics well and conducting a through planning process may well not appear “sexy” or fun, but they keep men alive and ensure that the requisite effect is delivered proportionally and in a timely fashion.

support during the most intense elements of ground operations. Force densities that enabled routine support from Avn and WHG were at times at the limit of acceptable levels when engaged on operations in the most densely contested areas. The usual deployment of a force of 60 was manageable; the development of a surge team and BCR team on standby at the FOB in BSN allowed us to maintain our status quo on the ground in spite of casualties and detainee handling parties – which were both areas that developed as the tour unfolded. Subsequent movement on the ground was

little different from the principles of patrolling and skills that the older members of the BOC had learnt as young Guardsmen in Northern Ireland. Above all else the one area that became apparent when deploying into all regions was a thorough understanding of the six Section Battle Drills. Although operating clearly in a COIN environment, at the tactical level on the ground the “Brecon Basics” and reaction to effective enemy fire was something that was routinely practiced by all ranks throughout the tour.

Whilst it would be easy to list every function that we worked

on, two key areas warrant examination: the use of snipers and the requirement for enhanced numbers of sharpshooter rifles over GPMGs. Deploying with only one dedicated sniper, but at times allocated a number of further pairs, was always a battle winner. Training up further sharpshooters enabled greater stand off capability and by mounting them on vehicles (JACKALS) we were able to comfortably out manoeuvre insurgent positions and precisely suppress them from distances well out to 1km. In turn, the ever growing requirement for precision weapons to mitigate CDE and



Lunch with Lt Col Khalil, CO 3 Kdk 5 Bde, ANCOF

## ADVISING AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL:

Support Company on Op HERRICK 16 and the Nad-e Ali Afghan National Police.

By Maj N R K Moukarzel

Between March and October 2012 Support Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, deployed to Nad-e Ali (NDA) as the District Advisory Team (DAT), part of the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group (PMAG). The premise of this article is that, with the increase in dedicated police advisors over Op HERRICK 16, the ANP in NDA were able to develop an ever-increasing independence and operational capability, supported by high quality and focused advising and mentoring.

Quantity was important, then; but so too was quality – especially the quality of pre-deployment training and in theatre coordination. One of the most salient observations from an ISAF point of view was that the daily and weekly priorities under which the DAT and Police Advisory Teams (PATs) operated were set through the Transition Support Unit (TSU) Commanding

Officer, as the ISAF officer with the most complete understanding of the local issues and dynamics, and not through a PMAG HQ that was rightly focused on a far wider spectrum of pan-TFH policing issues. At the same time, those priorities and the corresponding activity were informed by long-term institutional development goals, set and monitored by

the PMAG. This allowed the DAT and PATs to focus effort and call on support from both the TSU and PMAG when required.

Op HERRICK 16 is likely to be the high water mark in terms of numbers of police advisors at the district level. By the mid point of the deployment, we had gone from a HQ with four PATs working across the district, to having seven PATs in total. This meant that there was a full company entirely dedicated to Afghan National Police (ANP) development in NDA; the first time that this had occurred since UK forces had moved back into the area on Op HERRICK 9. In this article I seek to make some judgements on the quality and nature of our own preparation for the role and look at how the job might be taken forward with smaller numbers dedicated to it. I will also examine why it is that we must continue to have an effect on the ANP for as long as possible.

## PREPARATION

The conceptual and moral components of our pre-deployment training were valuable and contributed directly to our ability to perform on Op HERRICK 16. Nonetheless, 'soldier first' physical preparation and the values and standards of the British Army remain the key building block. Having served in NDA on Op HERRICK 10 as part of what was then Battle Group (Centre South), I noticed instantly the improvements in the physical preparation that we went through for Op HERRICK 16. Whilst MST felt like a long and often exhausting experience, it was thorough and the emphasis on 'soldier first' skills regardless of role was the right one. The PATs often operated in isolated corners of the AO, and they could not afford to be weak on their dismounted or mounted patrolling skills simply because their primary purpose was to



Members of the Afghan Local Police conducting searches supported by a Sp Coy PAT

support the development of the ANP.

However, to have the time and the space to consider what it meant to be advising and mentoring, to try to get ahead in our understanding of ANP institutions and the theory behind how they should be structured and function, was vital. Key commanders from across the Op HERRICK 16 PMAG deployed on a theatre immersion in July 2011 for three weeks. This period of time, not conducting a recce but shadowing the jobs we would be doing the following summer, gave us all the

opportunity to inform our teams of the sort of missions and tasks being undertaken. More importantly though, it allowed the command element at the battalion and company level to start to project forward and anticipate the key issues of ANP institutional development we would likely be focussing on. In the ever changing world of Security Force Assistance (SFA), having a single mentoring and advising group who were specifically focused on the ANP from day one of their training as a unified team under one command, meant that the best

advice and support could be provided to inform the decisions that would later be made by the TSU Commanding Officer in the district centre.

It would be remiss of me to omit the subject of cultural awareness and the training we underwent for it. A large percentage of the company completed the Enhanced Cultural Understanding Course and a few attended the ten-week Pashtu language training. This was supplemented, of course, by interaction with Afghan role players during PDT serials. Too often though such training focused on trivial details such as body language (how many times do we need to be told not to show a 'thumbs-up' or the soles of our feet?) etc. Greater efforts to explain the social conditions and survival mechanisms of 'real' Afghans would have been extremely valuable. The Afghans I encountered in support of PDT tended to be educated and articulate; they also seldom came from or had recently been living in Helmand. This instantly colours the version of Afghanistan and Afghans that gets transmitted during training, and can lead to some pretty stark confrontations with reality once deployed. I found myself often discussing the role of men and women in the family and society and frequently discussed religion with the ANP leaders I worked with, both subjects we had been told were best avoided. The relationships I saw develop between my most junior soldiers and the junior members of the ANP demonstrated that an emphasis on shared humanity,

the humility to listen and not assume the only point of view and finally the courage to be patient and not to take offence, were the characteristics that led to a positive working relationship between ourselves and the ANP in NDA. Because of these foundations and the time spent investing in them, when the situation became tense or the relationships strained for any reason, we were always able to recover a working routine together.

So while it was certainly important to develop our understanding of the problem early, and to be introduced to cultural considerations we would need to have when operating, I judge that the key to our preparation remained our robust physical preparation as infantry soldiers, relying on core patrolling skills to get us to the point of delivering effect, underpinned by the values and standards that are entrenched in the way the British Army is trained.

### THE CHALLENGE

Getting the ANP to a self-sustaining point of their development, where they do not require outside assistance, is likely to require a generational effort. The organisation we found in the NDA ANP is not easily defined. Indeed in reality the ANP in that district consists of three separate forces, each with their own characteristics, strengths and weaknesses: the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and the Afghan Local Police (ALP). In six months we mentored and advised three ANCOP Kandaks, all with very different commanders and skill levels. The ALP continued to grow

**"I judge that the key to our preparation remained our robust physical preparation as infantry soldiers."**



*The author and DCoP NDA on Operation SHAFUQ*

and change, and the issues around the terms and conditions of their employment remained a constant and evolving focus of our effort. The AUP themselves were probably the most consistent organisation to work with, and yet we had to contend with boundary changes between AUP districts, wholesale changes in force laydown and the distraction of Governor Led Poppy Eradication during our deployment. All of this was done with a sixth of the tour coinciding with Ramadan, a time when far more activity occurred within the ANP than the pre-deployment cultural training would have had us expect. The three organisations that fell under the banner of ANP in NDA therefore required often over-lapping, but

nevertheless separate approaches, and whilst the overall direction of travel remained constant, there were inevitably local adjustments required on a regular basis.

It is my assessment that true change will require at least another decade to allow for younger and better-educated leaders to emerge through the system, and for the process that they employ to stabilise and become self-perpetuating. No amount of literacy tutors placed around the current crop of officers in NDA will persuade these proud and often tired men to be seen to require education from someone they

see as below them. The District Chief of Police (DCoP) I mentored was at best semi-literate, often requiring a trusted man to accompany him to key meetings, in order to record what was being said and agreed. Often, however, even this was deemed too damaging to his pride to allow. The same could be said for the majority of the staff working at District HQ level, and also at the Precinct HQ level below it. With that in mind, many of the metrics that both the Afghans and we as their advisors were expected to be able to give an account of were extremely difficult to accurately report against. For example, a

logistical chain in the absence of a literate work force is very difficult to hold to account, as is a chain of command that cannot articulate end states or intents in a way that can readily be referred to. Developing these processes, and the free and accurate passage of information up and down the ANP's own staff branches, was the core business the DAT HQ were involved in. Relying on the Advisors at the Provincial Police HQ level to ensure we had correctly understood what the ANP leadership at the Provincial and National levels intended, in turn better allowed us to mentor the way

**“All of this was done with a sixth of the tour coinciding with Ramadan, a time when far more activity occurred within the ANP than the pre-deployment cultural training would have had us expect.”**

those at the District, Precinct and Check Point (CP) level conducted themselves within their own commander's intent.

This shadowing of the ANP chain of command with Advisors at every level meant that while the institutions were developing top-down, the grass roots of the organisation could be kept from falling in to disarray. It is crucial here to emphasise the importance of Advisors being there to offer advice and shadow the processes, but not to drive them too forcefully themselves. In NDA it was seldom clear how the logistical demand process for anything from ammunition to clothing was actually functioning, and yet the majority of the time the system worked and the men in the CPs had the minimum equipment they required in order to function. Our job was to observe and, whilst not necessarily pick up the ball before it got dropped, at least point out and encourage the Afghans to take action and try to improve the efficiency and accountability of the system for themselves. There were times when it felt as if we were failing because we could not accurately answer an auditing requirement from the ISAF chain, yet we could see in front of us that something was working and that perhaps the local work-a-round, whilst far from perfect, might be the appropriate solution for the environment in that moment in time. Eventually more literate and better educated staff will grow to fulfil the necessary bureaucratic functions required of any large organisation, and the only real threat to this that I saw at the district level and below was the pressure to leave the current crop of illiterate leaders in charge, with diminishing

support over the next few years.

**A NUMBERS GAME?**

Correct advisor to advised ratios are essential in achieving a meaningful effect, and in the mitigation of insider threat risk. During our pre-deployment training, heavy emphasis had been placed on developing our own empathy and rapport for the Afghans, and nowhere was this direction more pertinent than in police advising. It therefore followed that we had to invest time and effort in the building of relationships with the various commanders and patrolmen that we would be

found that we were in danger of not investing quality effort in focused CP visiting, and this in turn might slow down the relationship building that was central to being able to deliver our effect. In order to go into a CP and start to offer advice and comment it was vital that the Afghan policemen knew and trusted the members of the PAT as it was for the PAT to know them. Without their cooperation it would not be possible to mentor and advise the ANP.

Just as in ground sign awareness and traditional patrol skills we are taught to observe for the 'Absence of the

but also helped mitigate the Insider Threat.

The most pertinent example occurred in Char-e-Anjir during August 2012. The PAT arrived at the Precinct HQ following an independent AUP operation that had led to a detention and the discovery of two weapons caches. They were stopping by to see if any assistance was required, and to observe the AUP practices in handling both the evidence and the detainee. There was an unusually large crowd of AUP in the CP and within a few minutes of entering the PAT Commander felt that the atmospherics were wrong. As he was issuing discreet orders to withdraw, an AUP patrolman, who had a strong relationship with the PAT in question after a number of months of working together, approached and advised him to leave quickly, as people were tired and excited after the operation and did not want ISAF there. A tense situation, that might have quickly escalated, was thus easily defused through the PAT's understanding of what the atmospherics should have been, and their ability to rely on the positive relationship garnered with members of the AUP to warn them off. It should be noted that within 72 hours the PAT was able to go back to the same CP, re-establish their relationship and move forward.

It follows from this that, if we desire to continue our involvement in ANP development at the Precinct and CP level, we need to ensure sensible ratios of ISAF multiples to ANP CPs are maintained. This not only allows for better effect to be achieved in the work at hand, but goes a long way to mitigating the Insider Threat by

**"Our job was to observe and, whilst not necessarily pick up the ball before it got dropped, at least point out and encourage the Afghans to take action and try to improve the efficiency and accountability of the system for themselves."**

encountering on a regular basis, and this clearly was going to be easier with a more favourable ratio of PAT to ANP CPs. With over 90 different CPs, containing any one of the three types of ANP, it was certainly a challenge to get around and get to know the Afghans we were working with. Initially we only had around 80 men deployed, and there was a simple struggle to get to the various CPs, many of which could not be reached in the heavy vehicle platforms we were operating from. Added to this was a specified requirement to visit each ALP site on a daily basis. We quickly

normal or the presence of the abnormal', so through deploying PATs with responsibility for 12 to 15 CPs instead of the 20+ ratio we were initially dealing with, we were able to understand the environment we were working in and nuance our approach day by day. This more favourable situation allowed us to get to know the faces and personalities and understand straight away if there was a change, positive or negative, in the atmosphere of a CP. This not only meant that the advising or mentoring on a given day was able to be delivered to maximum effect,



*Visting the DCoP NDA at his home in Marjah*

giving the tactical commanders the best chance of developing knowledge and understanding of the physical and human environment that they are working in. Given that we know we are going to be reducing the numbers of troops committed to the task of police advising, and that these changes are due to commence within less than a year, it may be necessary to reassess whether we should be looking to have any effect at all at the CP level once ratios revert back to those encountered prior to Op HERRICK 16. This debate is particularly brought into focus given the recent upwards trend of Insider Attacks. Later in this article I will examine the question of whether or not positive evolution can be maintained in the ANP at the District level and below if we remove the lower levels of the advising and mentoring structure.

#### WHY DEVELOP THE ANP?

A correctly supported ANP, operating on solid moral, physical and conceptual foundations, is likely to remain a key ingredient to the future success or failure of GiRoA to control society at the District level. At the District Level the ANP are beginning to grasp their purpose and fulfil a role in society that is more than that of auxiliary light infantry guarding static CP. I judge that it would seriously stall the GiRoA led counter-insurgency campaign, that must continue in the coming years, if this vital civic institution was allowed to fall back in to disrepair or cease to exist.

The ANP have been historically neglected by ISAF in

comparison to the time and effort invested in setting the Afghan National Army (ANA) for success. In an area like NDA neither ISAF nor the people the ANP purported to represent trusted them. And yet at the same time as not being correctly equipped, trained, led or manned, they were being asked to man the most dangerous of out-posts and hold the line against a determined enemy who often knew them and their families at a personal level.

The ANP are now in a much better situation. Training has been improved and is increasingly being owned by the Afghans themselves, not simply in terms of the delivery of lessons, but crucially in designing and considering the

content of those lessons. In other words we see a slowly emerging understanding of the conceptual under-pinning of the organisation. During Op HERRICK 16 I saw first hand Afghan policemen, soldiers, intelligence officers and crucially government agents discussing amongst themselves where they all fitted into the running of the civil society around them. Joint inspection teams made of senior ANA and ANP officers, with representatives from the Provincial Governor's office, routinely visited the District Centre during our time. Whilst the questions they asked and the direction they issued often needed clarification and refinement in order to be meaningful, the very fact that it

**“At the District Level the ANP are beginning to grasp their purpose and fulfil a role in society that is more than that of auxiliary light infantry guarding static CP.”**

was happening at all, and was driven and led by them and not us, was a demonstration of progress. It was also enlightening to realise that they did not solely discuss the defeat of the insurgency, but were seeking to develop a wider cooperation and understanding of their civic roles and responsibilities. It is my judgement that we must continue to facilitate and advise in this conceptual development across Afghan government institutions. This happens at the top, but the clear cascading of the vision down to the lowest levels of the organisation needs to happen, and that is a role that ISAF advisors must continue to support in the short to mid term.

The physical conditions under which the ANP work are vastly improved, but there is still a great deal of work to be done. Pay issues in the ALP abound, and we saw the absurd situation whereby at the start of the new financial year nobody across the AUP or ANCOP was paid for a couple of months whilst the budgets were worked out and the money filtered down through the system. Situations like this inevitably lead to corruption at the lowest levels, as men in CPs struggle to eat without taking from the community they are supposed to be serving.

In NDA there were numerous AUP CPs that were in woeful disrepair and poorly manned. Whilst the AUP must be forced to own the responsibility for such issues, the larger part of my personal effort was focused on assisting the DCoP in consolidating his manpower, based on his assessment of the district, whilst identifying which CPs he should be investing in and which should be closed and disassembled. We should not forget that

many of these locations are only being manned by the ANP because they were once ISAF held locations, never built to last long into the future, and at the time it was right and expedient to move the ANP in to allow ISAF troops to step back. We cannot now expect to walk away from the problems of disintegrating walls and too thinly spread manpower without repercussions down the line, and so I believe we have an obligation to work with them at the lowest level to move into a consolidated and sustainable physical laydown. This is happening.

Inevitably the issues surrounding the conceptual and physical components also effect the moral component of ANP operations. A shabby, poorly trained or corrupt police force that does not understand its responsibilities to society is not one that is going to be welcomed with open arms by the community. More importantly it is not going to feel invested in or cared about and is therefore more likely to fall in to disrepair. In those areas where we saw active engagement between the ANP and other ANSF and GIRA actors, but most importantly with the local population and their needs, we saw the least amount of complaints against the police and the most effective security and community policing being delivered.

#### A WAY AHEAD?

The experiences of Op HERRICK 16 leave me with a conflicted view of what should be done next at the District level and below, in the realm of ANP development. I believe that

there are enough good men in the ANP, who have a solid basic understanding of what effect they ought to be delivering as policemen, and how that might be practically applied in the environment of a district like NDA. Too often in the past the ANP have been quickly dismissed as at best incompetent and at worst corrupt or in league with the insurgency. Afghan social dynamics are never that simple (are they anywhere?). The various flavours of the ANP have the ability to provide the locally nuanced and resourced security required for the counter-insurgency campaign to continue amongst the people, whilst the ANA look to move increasingly towards the deeper fight with the insurgent. To that end it makes sense to maintain an elevated level of advising for a longer period of time. It will be difficult to win the trust of the lower echelons of the ANP, and gain their co-operation in allowing us to support them through mentoring and advising, if we do not have sufficient manpower to build meaningful relationships. We also risk disproportionately increasing the risk of Insider Threats if we order ever-smaller numbers of Advisor Teams to try and maintain effect over the same large areas of responsibility.

At the same time a bold call to step back from CP interaction, and to focus advising at the District level and above, may well abandon the grass roots of the organisations at precisely the moment they need the greatest attention. The upper echelons of the ANP do not have the mental time

and space to improve themselves and drive through evolutionary change without our help, and that does not always come in the form of us shaping their higher-level thinking and activity. I think on balance a focus on PAT delivering effect at the Precinct HQ level (there are 10 Precincts in NDA and this task could be achieved easily with four properly resourced and supported PATs), and the continued work of the DAT at the District level will deliver success. PATs will still be able to patrol out to CPs in conjunction with the Precinct Commanders they are mentoring and advising. The ISAF chain of command may just need to get more comfortable with a more opaque understanding of what is happening at the lowest level.

The last 24 months has seen a turnaround in the amount of time and resources ISAF has committed to helping the ANP to develop. Real progress has been evident just in six months. The gap between what the ANP have historically had access to and that of the ANA is staggering, and yet the ANP are quickly developing in to an effective organisation. The ANP have learned a great deal – as we have too. In any vision of a future Afghanistan, after the ISAF drawdown, the ANP will be at the forefront of protecting communities and securing the population. It is on their capability to do so that ISAF's legacy (and our own) will be judged. We now have an opportunity to reinforce that legacy together. In view of the price that has been paid, it would be more than a shame if the opportunity were lost.

**“A shabby, poorly trained or corrupt police force that does not understand its responsibilities to society is not one that is going to be welcomed with open arms by the community.”**



*Op SHAFUQ SSgt Blant RMP (second from left)*

## OP SHAFUQ: TACTICAL LESSONS IN MENTORING THE AUP IN A JOINT ANSF OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

by Maj N R K Moukarzel

Op SHAFUQ was an Afghan National Army (ANA) led operation in the Nad-e Ali Dashte area of Helmand Province. It involved three ANA Kandaks (Battalions), with roughly 100 Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) in support, conducting a Clear and Search operation in order to deny insurgent freedom of movement and disrupt his ability to prepare for the anticipated post-harvest fighting season.

There was a heavy ISAF presence in 'wrapping' the operation, but in the centre it was an independent, Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) commanded and co-ordinated operation. The final part of Op SHAFUQ was the deployment of the Helmand Government Led Eradication (GLE) Force to conduct poppy eradication to the rear of the clearance.

The Police Mentoring Advisory Group (PMAG) were tasked with providing tactical support to the AUP part in the plan, and deployed as three Police Advisory Teams (PATs) comprising two teams of eight with key enablers from Military Stabilisation and Support Team and Military Police; and a Company Tac Group that also

had the ability to split into two teams and was bolstered with a USMC ANGLICO Team.

Following joint planning with both the ANA and the District Chief of Police (DCoP) for Nad-e Ali, Captain Haji Omar Jan, it was decided that the AUP would conduct their operations dismounted each day, but would not stay on the ground overnight, unlike their ANA counterparts who remained on the ground in order to hold the previously cleared areas. The Police Advisors thus followed suit and following preliminary moves, the four-day operation was launched, with the Advisors remaining on the ground each night and RVing with the AUP at pre-designated times and places each morning.

There are three key themes I will seek to explore in this article:

**1. AUP Command and Control (C2), and cross ANSF co-ordination.**

**2. Positioning and role of the Police Advisors in ANSF operations.**

**3. Areas for future improvement.**

The DCoP had a fairly good grasp of Brigadier Sherin Shar's (Comd 3/125 ANA Brigade) intent for the operation as a whole and, by being encouraged to co-locate his headquarters with the ANA Brigade HQ, was able to respond to incidents rapidly and exercise relatively effective C2, steering the Police within the wider advance. There were however significant issues with the AUP communications systems, largely due to the distances being covered. This meant that the DCoP was often reliant on the PMAG Advisors

to provide him, and therefore the ANA, with true situational awareness of his men's positions. At the same time the ANA and the AUP did not share a communications system and therefore the Advisor 'glue' was vital in keeping situational awareness across the operation.

The rate at which the ANA advanced was often surprisingly slow, and it took a great deal of effort to reign in the AUP as they searched compounds of interest behind the advance. The breadth of the ANA frontage meant that, with only a little under 100 AUP, it was not possible to conduct thorough searches without becoming isolated to the rear of the advance, and this then conversely led to far too speedy a move up behind. Again, the role of the PMAG Advisors became vital in giving control measures to the AUP commanders assigned to each task by the DCoP and in providing some level of scrutiny to the thoroughness of their searching.

The position of the Police Advisor Teams (PATs) became of vital importance. For the Coy Tac we positioned ourselves effectively in DCoP's back pocket and worked extremely hard to stay at his side throughout the operation. This was occasionally extremely difficult as he did end up bringing his vehicles and, with his attention very much focused on the GLE instead of the search, we found ourselves having to cover some fairly hefty distances once as he darted in and out from his position next to the ANA Brigade Tac. The necessity for DCoP to do this was almost entirely based around his inability to use AUP communications (radios) to

control the GLE, which was an unmentored and unpartnered activity i.e. not supported by ISAF. Much mentoring credit was gained over these days, with DCoP genuinely grateful for the support he was receiving at the tactical level. We held constant hasty estimates throughout the day where he would work through his plan and how he intended to shape the next phase of his operation. However it would be naïve to think that much of his appreciation was not based around the direct tactical support offered by the USMC ANGLICO Team, who were able to bring in fire support assets to assist us with an extraction from an IED ambush and during a SAF contact on some of the DCoP's men. The Nad-e-Ali AUP have not before previously experienced the level of direct tactical support from their PMAG Advisors that they experienced during Op SHAFUQ and I suspect that our simple presence in sharing the task with them and being constant throughout added a great deal to our empathy and rapport building with our AUP colleagues. If we did not already know it, being stood shoulder to shoulder with our Mentees created an environment where advice was not only listened to, but actively sought.

The experience of Op SHAFUQ was a positive one in cementing the relationship between the NDA AUP and the PMAG Advisors. Our own expectation management was key to ensuring that we did not over-burden our Mentees with unrealistic goals or measurements of performance. Within the constraints of their communications systems, and with very limited prior knowledge of the operation or

its purpose, DCoP Nad-e Ali, Capt Haji Omar Jan, deployed a large proportion of his manpower into the field and as part of an ANSF-planned and executed operation. Whilst there were inevitably lessons and points of frustration that

came to the fore, in the round it was a positive sign of what they are able to achieve together. The next challenge is to re-focus the Nad-e Ali Police on their internal policing and security tasks within the Nad-e Ali Canal Zone.

## MENTORING THE AFGHAN POLICE AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL

Maj J D Salusbury

**W**ith the air of a man at ease with life, Colonel Ismail, Deputy Chief of Police, beckoned me to join him outside the front gates of the Provincial Police Headquarters in Lashkar Gah. It was by now late morning and while not hot in early March, the sun shone brightly in a clear blue sky.

Since dawn, a dusty parking lot had been the venue for patrolmen to pile up bags of wet opium seized during the previous summer's poppy eradication programme. The mound of opium had grown to resemble a sort of bizarre Guy Fawkes celebration but without the guy – there was rumoured to be upwards of 20 tonnes of drugs ready for burning. After only a few days

in my new job, this is what Colonel Ismail was so keen for me to see. And what a sight. There was quite a crowd as the Provincial Governor set alight to petrol in the shallow trench running to the opium; it caught fire quickly and burnt fiercely. This was in large part due to the eye watering amounts of fuel that had been liberally doused on the heap. Amongst much cheering,



Col Ismail on Horse Guards Parade, London



*Approximately 20 tonnes of burning opium*

shouting and cameras, I paused and looked around; I was stood with a United States Marine Corps (USMC) Colonel, a French freelance journalist in a grubby Indiana Jones style leather jacket, a smart Afghan businessman in his forties with a Brummy accent and, of course, my new friend, Colonel Ismail. The American, Frenchman and I were the only Westerners at the party. At the time, and to some extent now, the event seemed remarkable but what it was, was an instructive insight into the brilliantly mad situations I would face as I took on my new appointment as a Police Advisor in Helmand's Provincial Police Headquarters.

I admit to being one of life's optimists and if someone likes me, I will try hard to like them back. Lucky really as I was tasked with mentoring the Deputy Chief of Police for Helmand's Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP). He was also the de facto director of the Provincial Operational Co-ordination Centre (OCC-P). My appointment was Officer Commanding the OCC-P and I

had with me my rifle Company headquarters with some of the Battalion staff bolted on as bespoke mentors for AUP administration (Regimental Administrative Officer), intelligence (Assistant Intelligence Officer), logistics (Quartermaster) and communications (Regimental Signals Officer). This brought my team to a total of 14. For seven months, we worked and lived in the Police HQ in a few rooms at the far end of a first floor corridor above the Provincial Chief of Police's (PCoP) office.

This article looks at mentoring at the Provincial level. I will talk about what it means to mentor a senior Afghan Police officer; explain the Operational Co-ordination Centre (OCC) concept and why it is of value to the Afghans and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF); discuss the interactions I had with the Regional Command HQ and, closely linked, working with the USMC. The aim is to capture the various and varied themes I encountered on my deployment on Op HERRICK 16.

I hope to give reference to those about to deploy and some understanding to those who are interested observers.

From the start, I noted that the label 'mentor' to Colonel Ismail was not quite correct. I was an advisor (I will use this term from now on) and the more I got to know Colonel Ismail, the more I realised that he wanted advice rather than mentoring. In fact, he had forgotten more about the delivery of security in Helmand than I would ever know. It was apparent that he had not survived for 30 years as a policeman without learning a few life skills. Colonel Ismail had studied under the Soviets and had even spent a large part of his formative years in his twenties at university in Moscow. This gave him a refreshing global understanding, unusual amongst his peers, but a frustratingly dogmatic Soviet approach to the provision of security. During the Taliban era, Colonel Ismail told me over a glass of wine in the Pizza Express just off London Bridge, that he had fled to Pakistan and lived in a refugee camp for two years. He also claimed that he was a farmer in Garmser during this period and still owned family land in the area. Whatever he had done, he was clearly somewhat of a celebrity in Helmand and whenever we visited police stations, he was mobbed by patrolmen. Unusually for Afghans, his speech was always measured and quiet but he spoke with conviction and people wanted to hear his views. Colonel Ismail never carried a pistol or wore body armour. In short, he was urbane, apparently brave and bright. We got on but I

suspect that he saw me as useful rather than as a long term friend – I was his window into ISAF and all the benefits that that brings. Senior Afghan officers see having a dedicated ISAF advisor as a status symbol. It means that they are important enough for ISAF to invest in them. This gives them both credibility with peers and, more importantly, the ability to reach into ISAF's assets. Equally, though, the advisor can influence the senior Afghan so that ISAF aims are met. In many ways, it is a fairly equal relationship with mutual benefit. I remained conscious that I was advising a Colonel, someone two ranks senior to me, and someone who knew the human and physical terrain far better than me. But with that in mind, I soon found that Colonel Ismail sought my advice and that I was able to shape his views to align with my higher HQs' design.

Along with advising Colonel Ismail, I was mandated to develop the OCC-P into a functioning, and useful, co-ordination centre. The OCC-P is the Provincial level co-ordination centre for Afghan security forces. It should have liaison officers from all strands of the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF); the OCC-P has desks for the AUP, Afghan National Army (ANA), National Directorate of Security (NDS), Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) and Afghan Border Police (ABP). Much of this work had been done by my predecessors – in March 2012 the OCC-P broadly functioned. However, it was insular and had little to no communications with Districts beyond Lashkar Gah. It also did not reliably communicate with the one up headquarters – the Regional OCC (OCC-R) or the Ministry of Interior in Kabul.

**“Colonel Ismail never carried a pistol or wore body armour. In short, he was urbane, apparently brave and bright.”**

What we had was a reasonably good co-ordination centre for incidents in and around the Lashkar Gah area but the OCC-P's remit was far greater than this.

Uniquely in Afghanistan, Helmand Province is developing OCCs at the District level. In a diverse and vast a province as Helmand, requiring the co-ordination of a number of ANSF elements, it makes sense to have a structure to apply such co-ordination at a more local level. Most OCC-Ds are based in District Police HQs but some are more ANA run, in or near Kandak HQs, (ANA Battalion). It does not matter which organisation is *prima inter pares* in the OCC-D so long as the OCC-D functions. As it stands, all but three of Helmand's Districts have the genesis of an OCC-D. I accept that not all Afghan (or, indeed, ISAF) officers understand the need for OCCs but their development has strong support from more senior officers in all of the ANSF organisations. The concept has been sold by ISAF and bought by the Afghans. And there are two reasons why OCCs are important: first, as ISAF draws down, ANSF access to ISAF assets will become harder. The OCC provides a vehicle for the ANSF to call for ISAF in extremis support. Second, much of ISAF's situational awareness is drawn from the numerous daily patrols and shuras conducted throughout the Province. These will decrease significantly as ISAF activity draws down and, therefore, generating a reliable understanding of the operating environment will have to come from the picture painted by the OCCs. The OCCs will become ISAF's biggest window into ANSF activity and



COM IJC General Terry (right) listens carefully to Colonel Ismail (centre) via his Interpreter (left)

development. Whether the OCC-Ds remain after ISAF has left is, at this stage, almost immaterial. If ISAF is going to withdraw with honour intact, then it must do so with a clear conscience. Providing a functioning system for ANSF co-ordination that allows for the provision of in extremis support is, to my mind, a positive step towards a dignified and successful withdrawal.

It became apparent that the OCC-Ds were barely functioning in some districts and in others they were simply a room that had a map (which no one could read). Colonel Ismail was very keen to improve the situation and, with a team of Afghan officers from every ANSF organisation, embarked on a whistle stop tour of all OCC-Ds. This, of course, was courtesy of the US

Marine Air Wing who dropped and picked up the group with precision and good humour. I accompanied the team and, over the few days, have never eaten quite so much goat, quite so often, using only my hands. It is tempting to dismiss the visits as nothing more than social events and the chance to get out of the office but what they did was demonstrate Colonel Ismail's commitment to the OCC concept (and he has significant influence) and highlight to District level commanders the interest that was being paid to the OCCs. The visits gave the concept a degree of credibility and also encouraged a common Province wide understanding of the concept. Even if slowly, progress was being made.

Before deployment, I had been led to believe that the Afghans

might listen to suggestions but not act upon them; the sense being that ISAF should do it all for them. This was not the case; I was struck by the predominately willing attitude of the Afghan officers I met. This, I think, is down to the significant strategic decision to set a withdrawal date. Far from having negative consequences, it has concentrated the Afghan's mind because if they do not start to take control of their destiny now, then they will have little chance of maintaining control come the end of 2014. Furthermore, space has been created to allow the ANSF to develop without unbearable pressure from insurgents. The Taliban might believe that they will be able to walk back into Helmand in 2015 and therefore do not need to attack regularly now. But what they must account for

**"I accompanied the team and, over the few days, have never eaten quite so much goat, quite so often, using only my hands."**



*A break for lunch*

is a better trained opposition in the form of the ANSF. Setting a withdrawal date has focussed everybody's mind – time is short and, as a result, I found that I was usually pushing at open doors.

For the majority of time, I suspect that I did not really know what was going on in the Police HQ. I had a feel for the big muscle moves but struggled to gain granularity on sub plots. I spent about an hour a day with Colonel Ismail and managed to do business over chai but we were constantly interrupted by visitors. To others, I was no more than a visitor myself although I had a special place in the office and was allowed to observe everything that

went on. I was fortunate that my interpreter, Dwari, was very capable and he not only translated the language, he also explained situations. Colonel Ismail appeared to talk freely in front of me (and Dwari) but there were a number of occasions when senior Afghan officers visited and I was never really sure why. One morning, I found Colonel Ismail's office full of ANSF deputies; they were gathered to plan an operation and had no intention of involving ISAF. I was invited to sit in and contribute. But what happened when I did not come across meetings by chance? I do not know but I am sure that many meetings and agreements take place

unbeknown to ISAF. I witnessed nothing to make me suspect that Colonel Ismail is corrupt. Quite the opposite – on several occasions I saw him be generous to the poor. But he did allude to other AUP officers who were corrupt. My sense is that senior Afghan officers know that we, ISAF, find corruption distasteful and have become apt at not flaunting exchanges of money in public. The key for an advisor is to be comfortable with a little uncertainty and lack of detail and to try to piece together the available narrative to form a plausible picture.

The threat of an insider attack was ever present. My Company, some of which I retained command of on

deployment, lost three soldiers at the hands of Afghans dressed in Police uniforms. I intend to discuss here the effect on the Provincial Police HQ rather than the effect on the guardsmen and the command challenge. Colonel Ismail and the PCoP were visibly upset when news reached them that UK soldiers had been shot and killed by suspected members of the AUP. They instantly understood the effect that this could have on relations and made it clear that they were deeply sorry and that they would do whatever was necessary to try to prevent further attacks. The PCoP attended the Vigil Service in Main Operating Base Lashkar Gah and I clearly remember looking up as I delivered the bible reading to see him looking suitably sombre, standing shoulder to shoulder with Commander

**“I witnessed nothing to make me suspect that Colonel Ismail is corrupt. Quite the opposite – on several occasions I saw him be generous to the poor.”**



Members of the OCC-P visiting the OCC-D at Marjah. Col Ismail in the centre

TFH. Colonel Ismail also attended the service. We all knew that the relationship had to be maintained if the advising mission was to continue. This incident was acutely personal to my team based in the Police HQ but damaging actions were not entirely one sided. While we were deployed, copies of the Qur'an were burnt in Kabul, a US Army soldier shot and killed several villagers in Kandahar and US soldiers urinated on the corpses of dead Taliban fighters. Every incident required delicate apologies, empathy and a commitment to maintain the relationship.

Throughout this article, I have alluded to, but not stated explicitly, that I was working beyond Task Force Helmand's (TFH) boundaries. Colonel Ismail understandably has a Provincial view and was blind to TFH and Task Force Leatherneck areas of operations. Also, the OCC-P, as

its name suggests, is a Provincial level organisation. My team and I therefore had to punch out of the TFH mindset and embrace working with the US Marine Corps (USMC). In the Police HQ, we were fortunate that the USMC mentoring team based there were a good bunch. They were led by a 'Bird' Colonel reservist, Colonel Colin McNease, who was the PCoP's mentor. My relationship with Colonel McNease was key terrain if I, and indeed Colonel Ismail, was to have the PCoP's support for the OCC concept. Moreover, through Colonel McNease, TFH could exert useful influence over the PCoP. It was all about the relationship; ensuring that the two of us had a common understanding of the situation and broad agreement on solutions therefore meant we

were in a position to present a united front to the Afghans and, also, to our superiors. Fortunately, Colonel McNease and I got on well and regularly shared a brew and scoff in my HQ's tiny welfare room. Talking through issues on a daily basis, I think, made for smooth, open and honest relations between coalition partners at the Provincial Police level. This relationship was technically on 'handshake control' – or 'handshake CON' – which has since been tidied so that Colonel McNease has tactical command of the Provincial Police mentoring space.

My chain of command was clear – I answered to the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group (PMAG) Commanding Officer who reported to Commander TFH. However, the reality was

more nuanced. Provincial level Police development attracted, understandably, the attention of the Regional Command (South West) (RC(SW)) (in effect, the Divisional HQ). This meant that I dealt directly with the C10 branch of RC(SW). C10 was the ANSF Development branch in the RC HQ. This had its frustrations. The RC HQ is based in Camp Leatherneck, a stone's throw from Camp Bastion, and it meant that the staff officers in the C10 struggled to understand what was needed because they simply did not have enough access to Afghans or the Subject Matter Experts on the ground. Perhaps like all counterinsurgencies, a disproportionate amount of information was fed up compared with useful direction sent down. In fact,

**“My team and I therefore had to punch out of the TFH mindset and embrace working with the US Marine Corps (USMC).”**

**“If it is not functioning usefully very soon, the OCC-R can be added to the list of disastrously expensive white elephants roaming the Afghan countryside.”**

the only really clear direction on the way forward for the OCC concept was delivered direct to me by COM RC(SW), Maj Gen Gurganus. There was a sense that staff officers in the HQ were peddling hard but simply did not have the grass routes understanding or enough direction to add any real value. The fact that one particular grade one staff officer admitted that all he ever did was read the AUP daily SITREP (provided by the OCC-P) to see what he needed to do highlights the lack of focussed AUP development direction in the HQ.

This paucity of vision manifested itself with the dithering over the establishment of the Regional

level OCC (OCC-R). Throughout Afghanistan, Provincial OCCs report to Regional OCCs and therefore it makes some sense for Helmand’s OCC-P to report to an OCC-R. This was done by creating an OCC-R to cover just Helmand and the usually quiet Province of Nimroz (surely both Provinces could have reported to the OCC-R at Kandahar). In effect, the OCC-R deals with just Helmand making for a somewhat unhelpful linear chain of command and muddying the role of the OCC-P. At considerable expense, the OCC-R was established in temporary accommodation just outside Lashkar Gah. The high HESCO walls and hot, dusty ground prompted the ANCOP commander to

comment on arrival, ‘Welcome to Guantanamo’. The fact is that despite the presence of a USMC mentoring team, well manned, equipped and comfortable offices and numerous senior Afghan officers, the OCC-R struggled to establish a fruitful role for itself or a command relationship with the OCC-P. Apparently it is in the wrong place and should be moved adjacent to the ANA Corps HQ (because the ANA are the lead security providers in the Region). Fine, but this needs to be done now so that the OCC concept can be practised before ISAF withdraw. If it is not functioning usefully very soon, the OCC-R can be added to the list of disastrously expensive

white elephants roaming the Afghan countryside. In short, there is not enough time to put off a decision – my advice, however, is to put a bullet in the OCC-R and concentrate on what is actually starting to work.

The AUP absorbed casualties on a daily basis and nowhere more so than in Musa Q’ala. The PCoP and his team took this situation extremely seriously. Colonel Ismail was dispatched north to assess the situation. Reinforcements were sent. A plan was made with the ANA to try to stabilise the situation. None of this was done with ISAF although the situation was carefully monitored. And the AUP started to have some success. They showed that they could fight the insurgents and win. At this time, the liaison officers in the OCC-P started to show more professionalism than before. Co-ordinating activity on the ground stopped being a remarkable occurrence and became a daily activity.

Situation reports were being received from outlying Districts and information was starting to flow, even if a little ad hoc. Information flow was significantly hampered by the lack of an OCC dedicated radio net. Because OCC-Ds are not funded by the Ministry of Interior (ie Tashkiel’d), the provision of men and equipment was found through re-allocation at a Provincial level. This meant that there was no Soviet style document mandating the proper establishment of OCC-Ds. Almost daily, and although fragile, there was a growing sense in the Provincial Police HQ that it all might just work.

Since returning to the UK the two questions most often asked are ‘was it all worth it?’



*One of the better OCC-Ds - Sangin*

and 'will it all be okay'. The first question I find easy to answer although less so when faced with bereaved families. The wisdom of the campaign will be judged by history, several years from now, but presently, Helmand was unbalanced by the coalition invasion and needs to be re-balanced if ordinary Helmandis are ever going to have a decent life. There is, I think, a moral obligation on our part – the British – to try to re-establish security in Helmand. But this is a huge task and far bigger than was ever imagined or understood. The start state in 2006 was inconceivably low. And it can be argued that the coalition excursion to Helmand in 2006 was a contributory factor to this low start point. The majority of Helmandis are illiterate and do not have a functioning idea of what 'the state' might look like. Furthermore, everything that the coalition has tried to do has been through interpreters; even when using the most capable, crucial meaning is lost. Trying to teach a difficult concept, without the use of literature of any sort, using an interpreter in an unfamiliar culture has meant that misunderstandings occur regularly. These not only take time to straighten out but also derail us from our goals. The fact that there is now a broadly capable Afghan Army and the genesis of a functioning Police Force in Helmand is no little achievement. But the sacrifice in blood and treasure will only be worth it if ordinary Helmandis have the necessary stability to go about their daily lives after ISAF has gone.

The situation in Helmand may

be stable after ISAF has left. However, the human terrain is unlikely to look like it does now. The AUP has shown real flashes of ability but, on occasion, also a worrying lack of aptitude. Their confidence and professionalism is improving. Helmand will never be comparable to Somerset but there is a possibility that a balance of power will be maintained. This will require accommodation with those whom ISAF term as insurgents – they might just be the local war lords who no doubt already have links with the current ANSF hierarchy. I think it likely that the ANSF and local big guns will try to accommodate each other and may unite to ensure that the Taliban cannot return to power. There is a possibility that accommodations unpalatable to ISAF will have to be made. But this is a Province preparing to take real control of its future.

It is the right time to draw back and allow – force – the Afghans to provide security themselves. If this is practised now then ISAF can remain as a safety net and continue to provide close air support, intelligence and CASVAC albeit on a decreasing scale. The end of 2014 must not be a cliff edge when all ISAF resources suddenly dry up – the glide path to this point is starting, and must start, now. And that is why it would be very wrong to simply withdraw now. Having spent seven months in the Provincial Police HQ, I am cautiously optimistic that it all might just work but it is unlikely to be how Western politicians currently envisage or understand it.

## Remembrance & Battlefield Tours with the Heroes Return 2 grant scheme



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# WELSH GUARDS AFGHANISTAN APPEAL

## THE WELSH GUARDS AFGHANISTAN APPEAL

Colonel (Retd) T CS Bonas, Regimental Adjutant

**W**ith the Battalion deployed on OP HERRICK 16 during the summer of 2012 the response to the Appeal and fund raising events have picked up and, notwithstanding money channelled through virginmoneygiving and Justgiving, I have 150 separate entries alone in 2012 of donations and cheques received in Regimental Headquarters – a hugely impressive number.

I would almost go as far as to say that the support to the Appeal remains extraordinary and people from all walks of life have been incredibly generous with donations, large and small. The Regimental Lieutenant Colonel has already mentioned that the Appeal has raised £1.2 million to date, a superb achievement and so much of it coming from within the Regiment as well as from families and friends of it. This includes fund raising events and donations from retired and serving Welsh Guardsmen, Association members and Branches, parents and families of serving officers and guardsmen, wives and girlfriends and even children as young as five have been involved. Our greatest thanks must go to all of them as well as to the many in the general public who have donated to the Appeal.

It would take me pages to list and describe the numerous events that have taken place this year but should you wish to know, I recommend you visit the Appeal website, [www.welshguardsappeal.com](http://www.welshguardsappeal.com). On this point I would like to say a big thank you to Harry Wynne Williams (a retired Welsh Guards officer and known to many) and Mrs Alison Elson (step mother of

Lance Corporal Dane Elson, who was killed in action in Afghanistan on the 2009 tour) for their continued voluntary support in running the Appeal website, a time consuming but critically important task and for their other work in support of the Appeal.

All will be aware that the Battalion lost three Welsh Guardsmen killed in action on the 2012 tour. WO2 Perrin Thomas, who although cap badged Royal Signals had served with the Welsh Guards for many years, was also killed in action serving along side fellow Welsh Guardsmen. The Battalion have also suffered eleven battle casualties, with some still undergoing treatment from either gunshot or IED blasts. £70,000 in 2012 has been paid directly to bereaved families or the wounded or in support of welfare for the Battalion for the Afghanistan tour. Further grants are also in the pipeline. Listed below is how the Appeal money has or is being spent :

- Paying for courses to allow our wounded to gain civilian qualifications to transition to civilian life after medical discharge from the Army.
- Support to housing costs as families move from Service Accommodation to the private sector.

- Allowing families to have respite holidays.
- Purchasing a specially adapted car so our wounded are able to be mobile and be independent.
- Support to Battalion Families and Events whilst the Battalion were on tour in order to enhance morale and sense of community.
- Supporting Funeral costs.
- Help pay for travelling costs for families visiting wounded and other events.
- Payments to allow structural alterations to private living accommodation for wounded who received life changing injuries.

The funds raised for the Appeal will continue to be directly used to support the families of Welsh Guardsmen Killed in Action on both tours and the many wounded, often in ways other charities cannot help. In addition, the evidence of past conflicts warns us that many stress related psychological injuries will not surface for 10 to 15 years. In this respect the Appeal will provide a fighting hand to ensure that when our boys need help in years to come we will be ready to respond quickly to their needs.

I have no doubt that the Appeal will continue to run very successfully in 2013. Indeed, some major Appeal fund raising events have already been planned such as a repeat of the very successful Drapers Company Appeal dinner which is being held in the Drapers Hall on 24 January. Walk on Wales, where I recommend all strongly to visit their website,

[www.walkonwales.org](http://www.walkonwales.org) and which the Regimental Lieutenant Colonel has mentioned in his Foreword, is going to be a great Regimental event and I am sure will be a very substantial fund raiser for the Appeal. And then of course we have Ryan Jones who has so kindly adopted us as his chosen charity and who has already engaged closely with the Regiment and the Appeal.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Appeal has bonded us even closer as a Regiment and I believe this will endure. It is almost impossible to describe how truly magnificent the response to the Appeal has been since its launch in September 2009; I am sure the hundreds of events that have taken place along with the thousands of photographs that have been taken would make a very good book! May I extend my most sincere thanks to the hundreds of you, whether in or out of the Regiment, who have given so much time to support the Appeal and for the funds that have been raised by your dedication and enthusiasm.

Finally, may I extend on the Regiments behalf, a really big thank you to Brigadier Peter Williams, Chairman of the Appeal. He has devoted considerable amounts of time and energy over-seeing the Appeal these last three years and his guidance and considerable enthusiasm has been second to none. We owe him a great deal for all that he has and continues to do for the Appeal. There can be no doubt that the Appeal's success has a great deal to do with his leadership.

[www.welshguardsappeal.com](http://www.welshguardsappeal.com)

# OTHER ARTICLES



*Crossing the finish line!*

## WaGs on Wheels BASTION TO BLIGHTY CHALLENGE 5-7 October 2012

On Friday 5 October 2012, a team of wives and girlfriends from 1WG set off on a 48 hour static cycle challenge at Wellington Barracks, to cover the distance from Bastion to London – some 3800 miles.

The idea was to raise money and awareness for the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal.

Before the Battalion had even deployed several wives and girlfriends were asking themselves what were they were going to do with themselves for the six or seven months their husbands or boyfriends were deployed to Afghanistan. With very few of us being able to hold a note, joining a choir was not an option and so in the spirit of

Olympic fever one bright spark suggested that we should get on our (static) bikes and cycle for our boys to raise money for the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal.

Wellington Barracks was chosen because of its central and very public location. The timing of the challenge was also important, as many of our potential teammates would have family commitments, particularly as it was to be undertaken with husbands/fathers away and so the additional challenge of people arranging childcare

was to be considered when recruiting cyclists. A weekend also meant that people who work could join in too and it also fitted in with Wellington Barracks. The aspiration was that the maximum number of those wives and girlfriends who wanted to take part were able to do so.

Eventually, the weekend of 5-7 October was settled upon with the time constraint of noon Friday to noon Sunday to complete the challenge. Now all we needed was to work out how many miles we needed to cover, how many bikes we would need and how many people this would require, bearing in mind none of the cyclists would be Victoria Pendleton!

It was agreed that we would require a minimum of 30 cyclists, ideally 38 to make the maths work for our target distance of 3,800 miles. This meant that people would be committed to cycling 100 miles each over the weekend. Many volunteers had already approached me and still more said they knew people who were keen to be a part of it.

The next challenge was to come up with some bikes that would measure the distance we travelled at the minimum possible cost – free would be good. Sadly the bikes in Wellington Barracks and at Cavalry Barracks Hounslow were no good as they were spinning ones with no means to measure distance. Quite a few phone calls were made and the date was getting closer, but still no bikes. I was rather nervous by this stage as we had a growing team of cyclists, T-shirts were printed and sponsorship money was coming in. RHQ and the Rear Party had done a tremendous amount of work organizing our logistics etc., but a fairly critical element was still missing! Fortunately, we were given a contact at Watt Bikes – supplier of training bikes to Team GB no less. With a bit of persuasion and promises of advertising, they agreed to lend us ten bikes for the weekend.

30 cyclists or so, it turns out are quite hard to find. We had a core of 25 with a few more

**“This meant that people would be committed to cycling 100 miles each over the weekend.”**



*Cycling at Night*

saying they could do bits and pieces here and there. I didn't dare tell those that had already signed up, they would be doing more than the original 100 miles they'd signed up for in case they got scared and backed out. Positive thinking and a belief that it would be all right in the end would simply have to work!

The training that people undertook varied considerably with some training at the gym each day, and others deciding to forgo the training and take the 'grin-and-bear-it-on-the-day' approach. Drawing up a rota was a scheduling nightmare as some of the cyclists would be there for the whole event, whilst some people were only available at certain times. At last it was done and each person would spend 1 – 2 hours at a time cycling amounting to a total of 10 – 14 hours each over the course of the weekend.

Promoting and recruiting for the event was mainly done through Facebook, email and by eye-balling people directly. A Facebook page was set up to keep supporters in touch through the lead up to the event and was then used during the event itself to do updates and allow people to track our progress along the route. All of this was a massive learning curve for us and we even joined the 'Twitteratti' with a few tentative 'Tweets'.

About a month before the event we were told that triple

Grand Slam Welsh rugby player Ryan Jones was going to be involved with the Battalion over the coming year to help with fundraising for the Appeal as part of the events surrounding his testimonial year. Would we like him to come and do some cycling with us on the Sunday as we closed in on the finish, we were asked? Absolutely! What a terrific opportunity this would be for some additional publicity for the Challenge and for the Appeal. Indeed, Ryan's involvement in this was to prove invaluable to the cause.

As anyone who has ever attempted to raise money before will know, it is extremely hard work, particularly as the country is gripped by a recession and an austerity climate. We used a combination of traditional sponsor forms – always handy in a handbag - and a Virgin Just Giving Page. In addition, RHQ set up a Just Giving text number so people could donate by text to the Appeal. We felt this would be useful during the Challenge so that it made it easy for people passing by Wellington Barracks to donate via their mobile, even if they had no change.

A couple of the cyclists approached the local newspaper in Aldershot to promote the event as well as writing to local businesses asking for sponsorship. It was great to see people across the Battalion so involved and keen

to help. Charlotte Hedges, Dawn Lawman and Leanne Peters also did an interview on the local radio station. Notwithstanding our efforts, the sponsor money came in very slowly at first and I think we were starting to think that our target of £25,000 was a little over-ambitious.

We were now as ready as we were going to be and amid much excitement from everyone, Friday 5 October arrived. It was raining and blowing a gale and as I arrived at Wellington Barracks, I was a little alarmed to see that one of tents that had been put up for us had blown across the parade square and needed some considerable TLC to make it useable. I hoped this wasn't a sign of things to come!

The Rear Party and RHQ soon

had it sorted out and had also done an amazing job of getting everything organized for us: camp cots in the gym, hot and cold drinks permanently on the go, snacks, lighting and collection buckets etc.

The team started to arrive and while everyone was certainly excited, we were all quite nervous too. Unfortunately, not everyone could be there for the start and so a few of us had a lot of cycling ahead of us that afternoon. Thankfully Colonel and Mrs. Bonas were there to help us out with a couple of hours each. Whilst the bikes were very smart and top of the range they also had very uncomfortable looking saddles. It looked like there might be a long (and possibly a painful) weekend ahead!

Under the eagle eye of Gen Sir Redmond Watt, late Welsh Guards, the Challenge was started by a fanfare from the Welsh Guards Band and a flourish from Mr. Huggins, late Grenadier Guards, from the Chelsea Hospital which gave it a suitably smart start. Thankfully, by this point, the sun had come out and



*GSM*



Ryan Jones & Pari Spencer-Smith

everyone was chatting away. We mapped our progress on a large map, which had been created by one of the cyclists for the event.

We were extremely fortunate enough to have a great support team throughout the weekend consisting of resting cyclists, family and the Battalion's Rear Party. They kept us all fuelled with drinks and snacks and also had the very important role of walking the pavement in front of the railings with the collection buckets to collect money from the general public. We were also lucky enough to have a visit from the Garrison Sergeant Major who donned one of our team t-shirts and cycled for an hour with us in his otherwise immaculate Barrack Dress.

As we moved into Friday evening, people had arrived from work and there was a great atmosphere. Progress charted so far was also showing that we were slightly ahead of schedule. As night fell on the first day, although tired, people were still very cheerful. An iPod was playing music through speakers to motivate and cyclists were keen to do as much cycling as possible. The cheerfulness continued throughout the night on the

bikes and people were able to get to know others they hadn't met before. Pleasingly, there was a distinct lack of headphones being worn despite most saying they had loaded up their iPods with audio books and favorite music to get them through the monotony of cycling on a static bike. You can't gossip effectively in headphones it would seem!

We had the gym to ourselves for the weekend – effectively a large dormitory – however it was very cold and noisy with people coming and going throughout the night and it was impossible to turn the lights off, so it was not the most restful of nights! I think that was the biggest and only complaint of the weekend – the sharp looking racing saddles on the bikes were a breeze after attempting sleep in the gym!

Saturday dawned and because of the cold, everyone was keen to start their shift on the bikes. Our map was now showing us slightly behind schedule, but we were confident we would make this up during the day.

There was to be a guard mount that morning which drew in the crowds and also provided some entertainment for us. Everyone had got into a rhythm with the cycling and on Saturday afternoon the Regimental Lieutenant Colonel also came along to do an hour or so of cycling for us.

A surprise visit from Ryan Jones late Saturday afternoon boosted morale and 8 or so lucky cyclists got to go out for a drink with him for an hour on strict condition that they were back in time for their next shift! By now, we had sped along our route and were far enough ahead of the schedule to be able to reduce the night cycling which was a real blessing as it enabled a lot of cyclists to get some much needed sleep. The light switch had also been identified at long last (in a locked cupboard?) and so darkness fell in the gym that night.

Sunday morning arrived and there was a lot of hair washing and make-up applying ready for the Ryan Jones and the media visit. We were now well ahead of our challenge target

of London and so rather than stopping and finishing early, we decided to cycle on to Cardiff. At one point all the wives and girlfriends of the men in Number 3 Company who were taking part were on the bikes at the same time and they took part together in a live radio interview with BFBS Radio in Bastion which involved a lot of emotional cheering – from both sides!

As it neared midday, we all cheered and crossed the (imaginary) line into the Millennium Stadium. We had done it and more. Brigadier Peter Williams, Chairman of the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal was there to round off the event and explain and remind everyone what the Appeal was about and its importance over the coming months and years to all the family, friends and media that had turned up to support us on the final stretch. There was a tremendous feeling of pride amongst all the cyclists for all they had achieved.

Having the support of the Regiment behind us was fantastic as well as meeting and getting to know new friends. The Welsh Guards prides itself on being a family regiment and occasions such as this are the proof that this is more than just an empty phrase.

We have all been amazed at the amount of money this event has raised. To date the event has raised well over £25,000. If this event has inspired you then please continue to donate to the Afghanistan Appeal at [www.welshguardsappeal.com](http://www.welshguardsappeal.com)

**“The Welsh Guards prides itself on being a family regiment and occasions such as this are the proof that this is more than just an empty phrase.”**



*Mrs Sam Bossi and son Freddie with Ryan Jones*



*Lt Wright on the top row, furthest right*

## P COMPANY

by Lt FJ Wright

**A**t the beginning of 2012 I was offered the opportunity to become the Guards Parachute Platoon Commander following OP HERRICK 16. The Guards Para Platoon is permanently based with 3 PARA and is due to support the Airborne Task Force (ABTF) in May 2013.

Fortunate to be in the right place at the right time, I seized the opportunity. I then realised that the future job prospect was subject to successfully negotiating the All Arms Pre Parachute Selection (AAPS) course. Furthermore, only being available during one of the courses in 2012, due to other commitments allowed little scope for injury or failure.

The AAPS course ordinarily is preceded by a preparation course in Pirbright. I, unfortunately, did not have the opportunity to attend the preparation course due to being on tour in Afghanistan. However, in Afghanistan I felt that I had an excellent chance to prepare myself for the rigours of the course. On what was nearly a daily basis we patrolled the area carrying between 50-60lbs each, in the searing heat of the Afghan sun and high altitude, which soon burnt off any excess puppy fat. Whilst it was difficult to do a great deal of running,

the exercise bikes in the gym allowed for regular training. And of course, I have no doubt that five months without alcohol allowed my body to be in the best condition to attend the course.

After returning from Afghanistan, a short break, and a lot of last minute running later I made the long and wet drive north to Catterick. During this long journey I questioned my decision to do the course. I was not entirely sure what I had let myself in for.

The course started with 76 students; little did I know that less than 50% would pass. It was broken up into three different stages: Phase One is a day of screening to assess whether you have the basic fitness to attend the course. It consisted of an eight mile loaded march to be completed in 1hr 50min with 37lbs, the Trinasium (a confidence course, high above the ground), and

finally a mile and half 'best effort' in under 9min 30sec. On successful completion of the tests, Phase Two began. Phase Two is a two-week period of increasingly quick runs or loaded marches with elements of basic infantry soldiering. The course is run for All Arms thus basic soldiering is included; some students may not have done a section attack since their basic training, which could have been many years before. It was during this phase of the course that the majority of the people unable to complete the course, fall by the wayside, mainly due to injury or an inability to keep up with the increasing pace of the course. The third and final phase is Test Week, which is made up of eight events. These include: a 20 mile march carrying 37lbs in 4hr 20min, a 10 mile march carrying 37lbs in 1hr 50min, a two mile best effort carrying 37lbs in under 18min, the Stretcher Race, the Log Race, the Steeple Chase, the Trinasium and Milling (one min). Each of the events is marked out of 10, with the exception of the Trinasium which is a pass or fail event. To pass the course you must attain more than 46 points.

The second phase of the course is a period of two weeks that

are physically and mentally very demanding. One day in particular will stay with me, as physically, it was intensely challenging. The day is aptly named "Marathon Tuesday" which starts with a reasonably fast paced 10 mile run, followed by a 20 mile navigation exercise conducted with full kit, and finishing up in a harbour location for the evening. Naively, believing that covering 30 miles in one day would be all the exercise that we would do that day, I collapsed into my sleeping bag. The next thing I knew thunder flashes were going off around me disturbing me from my deep and much required rest. I woke only to find out that we were to hurry out onto the road, ready, and lined up for a night stretcher race (also conducted in full kit for a further three miles). It felt like a bad dream but now, far behind me, I have buried it in the



*Lt Wright wearing his well earned maroon beret*

recesses of my memory. Fortunately whilst other parts of the course were gruelling, none compared to "Marathon Tuesday".

On completing the second phase of the course, you begin Test Week. At this stage, you have already done all of the events in the required times to pass the course. If you get to Test Week you have a very good chance of passing the course. AAPPs course is a much about being fit as it is about looking after your body as best you can; because the course is so intense if you pick up an injury you do not have time to recover to participate in the next event. If I were to do the course again I think that I would change very

little in my preparation for it. The course is so demanding on the lower part of your body you need to ensure that you have not over-trained. By not over-training you ensure that you are not carrying any injuries before the course. My advice would be; if you wish to do the course, prepare yourself by doing hill sprints, long runs and interval training on an exercise bike.

The course is physically very demanding but if you are able to complete the basic events during the screening day then the course is 90 percent about having the mental robustness to believe that you are going to achieve the three phases and earn your maroon beret.

The Battalion was formed to undertake Public Duties during the Second World War and continued to do so until 1946. It was a mixed Battalion, when I was in it we did King's Guards with the Coldstream, in battledress. When the article was written there was talk of Wellington Barracks being demolished, hence the reason for reviving memories of days spent there. The abridged version that follows is of a time when the 1st Battalion was in Palestine and the Training Battalion had moved from Sandown Park Racecourse to Pirbright much to our dismay. I headed it "We Called It Home."

"One day the demolishers will bring their bull-dozers and assorted machinery along Birdcage Walk, give Wellington Barracks a big whack and send the lot crashing to the ground. The hallowed square will be a mass of bricks, mortar and pin-ups from two wars.

"We hope RHQ staff will be given adequate notice to allow

them to remove their television sets, wardrobes, cocktail cabinets etc., to safety, but it will be a sad day for many. The Superintending Clerk will be the last to leave, the staff will conveniently lose the files containing their personal records and the RQMS will discover kit he wrote off years ago.

"If souvenirs are taken I would like to stake a claim to an iron grating just under the windows of the RHQ block. It reminds me of a Company Sergeant Major who like all his clan looked after us like a father, albeit a firm one, in a formation that was the nearest London District had been to the Foreign Legion.

"I only upset the CSM once and that was on the day we left for Pirbright. He asked me to hold his rifle while he put his kit on and I dropped it down the grating into a consolidated mess of rubbish surreptitiously dumped by countless barrack sweepers on fatigues. Recovering

## WE CALLED IT HOME

by Roy Lewis

Before the Regimental Magazine became as expansive as it now is we had an Association Annual Report which was much smaller but nevertheless full of articles by serving and non-serving Welsh Guardsmen. While searching for information on Westminster Garrison Battalion I came across an article of mine in the 1966 edition which recalled the Wellington Barracks of twenty years before.

**"I only upset the CSM once and that was on the day we left for Pirbright."**



Westminster Garrison Battalion, October 1946. The Old Guard, Welsh and Coldstream Guards slow march out of Buckingham Palace

the weapon I scraped the highly polished butt and all the way to Waterloo he muttered under his breath promising me a fate worse than death. He forgot when we got to Pirbright but I never did.

“One day in Wellington he called for volunteers who were musical. Never did so many move so quickly to the Gents but twelve of us didn’t make it which turned out to be a bit of luck. When told to put on our best battle-dress our hopes were raised and were fulfilled because we had a rip-roaring night and all on the house – Broadcasting House. The new cultural radio channel, the Third Programme, was recording a programme on ancient Rome and they wanted “mob” noises. That was us.

“We warmed up in a pub, at no cost to ourselves, and were taken to the Maida Vale studios where we marched around under a cluster of microphones banging tins and saucepans and shouting “Down with Caesar” with Welsh overtones. Then back to the pub and the problem of getting into barracks, but a former Coldstreamer working on the programme came with us and explained to the Sergeant of the Guard that we were young and had been led onto the paths of unrighteousness by none other than the BBC. That did the trick and we kept our names.

“Our Regimental Sergeant Major was Snowy Baker a giant in every way who looked after his own in a mixed Battalion. One day while Guard Mounting I was bagged by an officer of another Regiment for being

untidy on parade, i.e. three strands of boot-lace showing under one gaiter and four under the other. Even the great man himself had never heard anything like it in his life and the unity of the Brigade was threatened when he later expressed himself on the subject. Coming off guard and expecting Memoranda and at least an Extra Drill, his magic words, “Fall out boy and forget it” saved me and I thought highly of him ever after, partly because he was higher than me although I was 6’2”.

“During my stay at Wellington I was never fussy on inspections before Public Duties, extra drills in view of the public in Birdcage Walk, the food generally and leaving there for Pirbright. I liked the walking out, marching up the Mall to Jimmies behind the Mick pipers, the Nuffield Centre, various pubs, late night tea and wads at the Westminster YM, the macaroni pudding which we had with every meal and the triumphant feeling of coming off guard unscathed.

“Going back to Wellington brings back memories of an experience a lad from a small town will never forget. I can still hear Snowy shouting “Get On Parade – Get Off Again” and remember being on stag on the pavement outside Buckingham Palace and listening to the chimes of Big Ben in the middle of a fog bound London night.

“As for the CSM whose butt I scraped, I saw him the day before he stepped off and wished him well. As time passed I realised that thanks to men like him I became a Guardsman for ever.”

## COMPANY COMMANDING OUTSIDE THE WELSH GUARDS

*Maj M L Lewis*

**W**ithin the wider Foot Guards community there are rumours of a Welsh Guards take over. We currently have Company Commanders serving in all five Foot Guards Battalions.

Major Chris Sergeant is commanding Number 2 Company, Grenadier Guards, and has recently returned from Op HERRICK 16. I am commanding Number 2 Company, Coldstream Guards. Major Tom Smith has embraced armoured infantry and is commanding C Company, Scots Guards, which has seen him deploy to BATUS before his company deployed on Op HERRICK 17. In the Olympic year, Major Tom Eastman took command of Number 3 Company, Irish Guards, and was the security and screening manager at Dorney Lake during the Olympics.

While one would always prefer to serve with one’s own battalion, it is a privilege to command Guardsmen no matter which battalion they are from. With no Welsh Guards rifle companies available, I was offered a two and a half year company command with the Coldstream Guards which will see me complete the full training progression through Hybrid Foundation Training and Mission Specific Training and culminate in a deployment on Op HERRICK 19. I took over my company during an arms plot to Windsor which saw the battalion resubordinate to Headquarters London District. It has been extremely busy

year combining green training with state ceremonial events during the Diamond Jubilee year as well as the Olympics all of which have delivered their own challenges. While we pride ourselves on our ability in the field as well as well on the drill square, it is only when you have to try and fit one alongside the other that you realise quite how much time each needs to deliver the results we expect.

The greatest challenge one faces when with a new battalion is getting to know your men and the characters within the Regiment. Fortunately, I am not the first Welsh Guardsman to serve with the Coldstream Guards in recent times. I follow a line of illustrious officers including Lieutenant Colonel Bartle-Jones, who was Battalion Second in Command and more recently Major Tom Charles who commanded Number 3 Company. Both are held in high regard in the battalion which has meant there was a certain expectation of competence and professionalism when I arrived and is something I continue to try and aspire to. This familiarity with Welsh Guardsmen and having served with the Coldstream Guards in Londonderry on 2002 as one of three Welsh Guards platoon commanders certainly made

**“The greatest challenge one faces when with a new battalion is getting to know your men and the characters within the Regiment.”**



*Her Majesty accompanied by Maj Lewis, The Commanding Officer 1 CG and The Regimental Colonel CG meeting members of Number 2 Company*

my integration easier. It has also meant I knew a number of the characters who are now either senior members of the Sergeants Mess or LEs. While this made the introduction to battalion life easier, there are still practical considerations such as understanding the Geordie and Mackem dynamic. What is clear is that all Guardsmen have similar strengths and weaknesses which means no matter who you are serving with the command challenges remain the same. No matter where they come from they will continue to amaze with their unique abilities.

Having been immediately welcomed into Battalion I was fortunate not to have to get to grips with too many complicated regimental traditions. The Coldstream Guards are remarkably similar

to us although they do like to remind me of their extensive regimental history and use it to justify some of their more lengthy procedures. Having settled in there was initially a presentational challenge with a Welsh Guardsmen commanding Coldstreamers on State Ceremonial occasions. Fortunately this was quickly overcome and I commanded the Battalion's first Guard of Honour for the President of Turkey. The Welsh Guards have been well represented on Guards of Honour this year with Major Tom Eastman commanding both of the Irish Guards led Guards of Honour this year. I have also been privileged enough to be lead

my company on the Presentation of New Colours and was asked to step up as the second in command of the Queen's Birthday parade. This was my third Troop and third as a mounted officer. Now the summer has concluded our attention has turned to TESEX.

Exposure to different battalions, their traditions and working practises as well as our experiences will have certainly developed each of us giving each of us a new outlook on life in battalion. I would hope that we have brought alternative views to some aspects of our adopted battalion's life and possibly brought with it one or two improvements. As I prepare for

Ex WESSEX THUNDER and the right of passage into MST; Majors Tom Smith and Chris Sergeant are preparing for their next jobs and Major Tom Eastman prepares for his deployment to the Falklands. It is likely this will be the last time, for the foreseeable future, that the Welsh Guards will be in a similar position of influence over the other Foot Guards Battalions. It will be interesting to see if the future brings greater cross pollination of Foot Guards officers. Clearly, the challenge to justify each Regiment's independence will remain while at the same time we will continue to prove that we are flexible and relevant as an organisation.

**“Exposure to different battalions, their traditions and working practises as well as our experiences will have certainly developed each of us giving each of us a new outlook on life in battalion.”**



*Dave Evans 23877267 and David Burton 23877270*

## FRIENDS WHO MET BY CHANCE IN CREWE MARK 50 YEAR FRIENDSHIP

*Nov 23 2011 by Ellie Cullen, Crewe Chronicle*

**T**WO friends who first met by chance at Crewe Railway Station have returned there to celebrate 50 years of friendship.

Dave Evans (23877267) and David Burton (23877270) were both setting off to join the Welsh Guards at Pirbright in Surrey when they bumped into each other in the station cafe on November 16, 1961.

They have remained firm friends ever since, and last Thursday the pair met at the same station cafe to celebrate their milestone.

In April 1962, the two men arrived at the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, having finished their basic training, but after

three years David left to join the police at the Crewe Constabulary, while Dave stayed in the Army until 1974.

They still meet regularly and are both members of the Stockport branch of the Welsh Guards Association. But the pair's nostalgic trip to Crewe was particularly special, bringing back many emotional memories from their friendship over the years.

Dave said: "David travels from North Wales and I travel from Stoke-on-Trent for our monthly meetings.

Most people have a large number of comrades, associates, mates, pals – call them what you like – but one's true friends can be counted on one hand.

Couple with this the fact that we have been friends for 50 years, we thought this was something special, and it was.

We both found our visit to Crewe Station an emotional experience, which is very

difficult to put into words.

We were both delighted we'd made that special effort to shake each other's hand again on the platform where we met. We're nothing special, but we're just proud that we're still Welsh Guardsmen at heart and still the best of friends after 50 years.

We finished our day out with an excellent meal at a nearby Italian restaurant with our wives."



*Dave Evans 23877267 and David Burton 23877270*



# Remembrance Sunday in Pictures





# ASSOCIATION EVENTS

## Darts and Shooting Competition 2012

By Brian Keane

Saturday 20th October saw Association members at Maindy Barracks Cardiff to participate in the 2012 Darts and Shooting competition. Due to the unfortunate cancellation of last year's event, participation was eagerly awaited, and in some cases, revenge from previous years.

It came a shock to the system that by 10.30 am only some 30 people were present, but on investigation I found that 3 Branches – no name no pact drill – were ensconced in the NAFFI having tea and toast – oblivious to the fact they should have already played at least one game in the tournament !!!!!

Nevertheless it turned out to be a really good 'fun day' rather than a competition and I

appreciate and thank all Branches that made the effort to attend, although on one occasion it resembled 'Dad's Army' when the first Darts' match took 66 minutes and 65 attempts at a 'double' to finish!

Prizes this year seemed to be equally divided between the Branches present, and Cups were presented by Capt Dai Davies, who kindly drove from Chepstow to be with us, and we thank him for the effort made.

### Results

#### Shooting

<i>Leatham trophy:</i>	<b>Welsh Guards Reunited</b>
<i>Runners-up</i>	<b>East Glamorgan</b>
<i>Aberdare Cup Champion Shot:</i>	<b>Andrew Brown, Llanelli</b>
<i>Gerry Greenstock (over 70):</i>	<b>Mike Jones (01), Ogmore</b>

#### Darts

<i>Welsh Guards Association Cup:</i>	<b>East Glamorgan A</b>
<i>Abertawe Shields (Runner-up)</i>	<b>Monmouth</b>
<i>Highest Individual Score</i>	<b>Terry Gordon, Monmouth</b>



Shooting Runners-up, East Glamorgan Branch



Winner of the Aberdare Cup Champion Shot, Andrew Brown, Llanelli Branch



Winner of the Gerry Greenstock Cup, Mike 01 Jones, Ogmore Branch



Winners of the Association Cup (Darts), East Glamorgan Branch



The prizes



Abertawe Shield Runners up, Monmouth Branch



Members of Welsh Guards Reunited, enjoying the cheap beer



Winner of the Highest Individual Score, Terry Gordon, Monmouth Branch



Ken Haines buying the first round



01 giving the odds on the shooting



Winners of the Leatham Trophy (shooting), Welsh Guards Reunited



Mike Knowles and Jeff Heenan, Menin Gate, 11th April 2012

## East Glamorgan Branch visit to Flanders and Belgium 2012

By Robert Kennelly (Associate member)

Following several of gloriously dry weather we awoke on our Battlefield Tour departure day to heavy rain on the early morning of April 9th. Nevertheless it was a jolly coach load that left the Gelliwasted Club at Pontypridd to travel to Belgium and Flanders for a four day three night stay at the Royal Astor Hotel Ostend. This trip was generously subsidised by the 'Lottery Fund Awards for all -Wales' to the amount of £5000 pounds.

Members and associate members were then asked to pay the remainder to cover the balance - a personal donation of about £100 pounds, and at that price they were plenty of takers! The coach was provided by Majestic coaches and our driver was Stewart, who became a friend and companion for the four day trip. Amongst our group were 2 veterans of World War Two, former Guardsmen Lionel Gowen 1944 - 47 and Glan Hughes 1944 - 47. Lionel had already made this trip as a replacement infantryman landing at Ostend in December of '44 and after the war ended moved with the Regiment to Palestine. On our way we were scheduled to

rendezvous with a member of the London Branch, Jeff Heenan.

Our intention was to drive to our hotel in Ostend that first day and then early next morning to visit the military cemetery at Lissjenthoeck where two of our members, former Guardsmen Mike Knowles and his younger brother Dennis (more widely known as Knocker who served 24 year veteran of the Regiment and a Falklands campaign veteran) were to lay a wreath at their great uncle's grave who was buried at Lissjenthoeck, namely

Guardsman William Edward Knowles, killed 26 July 1916 aged 37 years. Sadly over the years the grave had never been visited - this was now to be rectified and a small ceremony was to be held at the site of the gravestone.

The figures are not definitive but about one million men of the British and Commonwealth armies were killed in The Great War, and many were buried in Belgium. It's a short journey from Ostend to Lissjenthoeck and the morning was grey and wet when we arrived at the cemetery. It only took a few moments to locate the gravestone, and then the Standards of the East Glamorgan and the London Branch were paraded to lend the occasion a solemn exhibition of homage and respect. All the members that could be accommodated around the site were assembled and a short ceremony was conducted by our Chairman Howard Main. The ode of memoriam was intoned and with due solemnity we remembered

one 'not forgotten' Welsh Guardsman in Flanders who answered the call and did not return. Not a dry eye was to be seen around the gravestone, the only colour was the slash of the Branch Standards in an otherwise oyster grey day. We had completed our homage to our erstwhile comrade.

As we assembled later for a group photograph the heavens opened and it really brought home the conditions that our young soldiers had to endure in the sodden ground of West Flanders. We boarded our coach and a thankful if greatly subdued party travelled to Ypres for lunch and some free time there. Unhappily it was brought home to us the disparity of the cost of living in the Euro zone and our own, with the cost of a coffee reaching 5 Euros. Ypres itself was of course the crossroads for the Armies in France and Belgium, and the signposts are evocative of the awful carnage that occurred near and indeed in the town itself, and also Poperinghe, Messines Ridge,

*"It was also gratifying to know that Canadians are well aware of Wales in contrast to Americans, who assume we are a part of England!"*



*Ken Haines, Jeff Heenan, Dr. Brendan Nelson (Australian ambassador to the E.U.), Mike Knowles and Dennis 'Knocker' Knowles at Menin Gate*

Albert, Armntieres, Passchendale, Gheluvelte and so many more.

That afternoon we set out for Tyne Cot cemetery, and again the weather was inclement as we wandered around the gravestones to look and grieve at the young ages of the lads buried beneath. A large Canadian contingent of school children were at Tyne Cot and it was rewarding to see how respectful they were of the occasion, and were very happy to talk to us. It was also gratifying to know that Canadians are well aware of Wales in contrast to Americans, who assume we are a part of England!

From the cemetery we returned to our hotel to freshen up for supper. It is quite incredible, but the cost of our four days trip included a free bar and it was here that the

'Knowles brothers' came into their own as both lads have very good singing voices.

Day three found us bound for Bruges for some free time there and a most pretty town it is: even on a cold day in April it abounds with tourists. Bruges itself avoided the destruction that came very close but did not actually touch the town: it would have been heart rending if this beautiful place had been destroyed. Two of our associate members, both in their eighties, unhappily dining not wisely (but too well) led us to panic as they failed to return to the coach for the return journey to our hotel, and some anxious moments were endured until with some

relief they finally appeared apologising profusely and looking very sheepish. At this time our driver Stewart conveyed to us plans for those of us who wished to attend to visit the Menin Gate for the eight o'clock ceremony. As some of our people are of mature years we gave everyone the option to attend or otherwise. I am very glad to say that many took the view they could not visit such hallowed ground without experiencing this very emotive occasion. We travelled to Ypres an hour or so before the ceremony and our two stalwart Standard Bearers were able to get to grips with the procedures under the eye

of the Belgium Parade Marshall. Also attending were a large group of Australian students who were touring Europe, and as we were near Anzac Day in date, they were very keen to attend the ceremony. This group were accompanied by the Australian Ambassador to the EU, Dr Brendan Nelson, who showed great interest in our little Welsh gathering, and extended an open invitation to visit him in Brussels: of course this was impossible, but it was a splendid gesture. At exactly 8 o'clock the Last Post was sounded by the buglers, all formed from the local Fire Station, and played every evening of the year since 1921,

There are fifty eight thousand names of British soldiers inscribed on the Gate of which there is no known grave, and we and many others stood in homage



Members and Associate members at Lissjentoer Cemetery



Members on our return, at the Gelliwasted club Pontypridd. WWII veteran Lionel Gowen, center front



The ladies of our group, plus some members, Lissjentoer Cemetery



Mike Knowles (left), WWII veteran Lionel Gowen at Menin Gate

the only exception being the years of German occupation.

There are fifty eight thousand names of British soldiers inscribed on the Gate of which there is no known grave, and we and many others stood in homage. Once again, with sad feelings we returned to our hotel in Ostend and soon joined our friends for our last night. Next morning we set off for home, but of course not without a visit to the Chocolate factory to purchase wines etc. From there it was straight on to the ferry, and without any

further problems returned to Pontypridd. This turned out to be a very good holiday with great company. Any Branch who would like to pursue a grant from 'Awards For All', and would like some guidance on how to present their case should contact me and I will be pleased to oblige with some pointers.

For and on behalf of the East Glamorgan Branch of the Welsh Guards Association.

*Robert Kennelly  
(Associate member)*

## THE MONMOUTHSHIRE BRANCH TROPHY

The Monmouthshire Branch Trophy is awarded to the Welsh Guards Sportsman of the Year and was first presented in 1967. Not surprisingly it went to a rugby player, prop David Bowen who played for The Army in the Inter-Services Tournament.

Forty six Welsh Guardsmen have been awarded the trophy, the majority of them rugby players but others excelled in martial arts, boxing, football and athletics. In 1972 Guardsman FS Robins a member of the Regimental skiing team was the winner.

25163525 Lance Sergeant John

Sanigar from Penygraig has won the trophy twice in 2010 and 2012 for his achievements in both codes of rugby and was presented with the award again at the Monmouthshire Branch Annual Reunion Dinner in October 2012 by the Branch Chairman Alan Mountjoy accompanied by Branch Secretary Steve Liversage.



Branch Chairman Alan Mountjoy and Welsh Guards Sportsman of the Year, David Bowen



*Welsh Guards Association Standard Bearers*

## Falklands War Service of Remembrance and Reunion Wrexham 2012

*Captain (Retired) Chris Hopkins*

Over 400 comrades, families and friends attended the annual Service of Remembrance in Wrexham on 23 June 2012. Being the 30th anniversary of the conflict it was decided to make it a regimental day in honour of those who took part in 1982.

The veterans were well supported by the Regimental Association and serving members of the Welsh Guards. It was a pleasure to welcome so many officers from 1982, some of whom were attending for the first time. Also in attendance were the Regimental Lieutenant Colonel, Regimental Adjutant, High Sheriff of Clwyd and the Mayor and Mayoress of Wrexham. As always, our commanding officer from 1982, Brigadier JF Rickett CBE was there to lead the way.

The very moving service in the Parish Church of Saint Giles was conducted by the Reverend Canon Professor Mike West who is becoming an old hand at military services. The regimental band, as always, performed magnificently accompanying the hymns and we were honoured by the presence of the Rhos Male Voice Choir who sang two very moving songs. You could hear a pin drop when Ceri Jones (sister of Guardsman Gareth Hughes 58)

sang the second verse of Gwahoddiad.

Following the service we were formed up by Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant Lee Scholes and marched behind the band and a marching party from the regiment to the Falklands War Memorial at Bodhyfryd. We passed through throngs of people lining the streets, cheering and clapping. The feedback about our high standards from the people of Wrexham has been truly inspiring.

A short service of dedication was held at the memorial followed by wreath laying and private contemplation by family, friends and comrades.

Only three days before, Ian Hughes 13 (brother of Guardsman Neil Hughes 11) and Chris Hopkins (Ian's crow for the day!) were busy building the new plinth at the base of the memorial on a very wet day. Being rained off was

not an option so we beavered on, sustained by tea and wads from Mrs H.

The remainder of the day was spent at the War Memorial Club where we have been looked after so well for many years. They provided a magnificent buffet and the staff as always were on hand to ensure we had a memorable day. An auction of a painting of the RFA Sir Galahad which was painted by Mel Edwards 61 and a supporting raffle raised £1000 for the Afghanistan Appeal

Entertainment was laid on in the evening and most people stayed to the bitter end, dancing and singing. Even after the bar closed we were serenaded by Henry Vaughan-Jones (VJ), Knocker Knowles and others until out of respect for the club staff we moved on to pastures anew.

The reunion next year will take place on Saturday 22 June.



Brigadier JF Rickett leads the Association to the Falkland Islands Memorial



Falkland Islands Memorial



Preparing the Memorial



Left to right: Bill Malcolm, Jim Haycock, John Williams (300), Brigadier Peter Williams, Captain Dai Davies

## Welsh Guards Rugby Club Reunion

Chris Beynon, Honorary Secretary

***“Now that the Appeal is to continue for at least another year, might it not be a good idea to create a Vice Presidents Club for Welsh Guards Rugby? VP ties, scarves, lapel pins etc.***

***£50 a year membership fee, seeking to create a database of 1,000. It’s a start! I think I’ll put the idea to the Committee, tomorrow.”***

*Rugby Secretary’s report, Regimental Magazine 2011, page 94.*

What had started as merely an idea last year is now very much a reality!

We are an official body, a club, and what is more, we have a Vice Presidents membership of almost 100. Welsh Guardsmen past and present, civilian friends (Friends of the Regiment) have all given £100 for their office over a two year tenure. Vice Presidents are the very life blood of rugby clubs the world over and without these most generous patrons, clubs could never be successful entities. Our benefactors have enabled our rugby Committee to lay a monetary cornerstone

upon which we can build for the future, bringing together ideas and turning them into realities. These current and former players all share the same objective as the Committee; the greater good of the Regiment and the support of those within the ‘family’ that is Welsh Guards.

Currently all WG websites are abuzz with news of ‘WOW’, thanks a million! This is the ‘brainchild’ of Dai Graham, an erstwhile, co-opted member of Welsh Guards Rugby Committee. Both he and Captain Jan Koops have set the wheels in motion for WG

veterans to walk the 870 miles of coastal pathway of our Principality, hence our name ‘WOW’ being Walk on Wales, with the intention of raising £1 million for the two charities we are supporting; WG Afghanistan Appeal and ‘Combat Stress’, the latter ‘headed up’ by our own, General Sir Redmond Watt.

Welsh Guards Rugby have commissioned a sterling silver baton with the names of all Welsh Guardsmen who have been killed-in-action since WWII engraved upon it and it will be blessed by the Bishop of Llandaff Cathedral before the onset of the walk – 25th August 2013 and upon the walk’s completion, November 3rd it will, after a service of thanksgiving, be laid-up in the Cathedral. We fervently hope that our Colonel of the Regiment, His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales will join us sometime en-route and at the laying-up service as he has agreed to be our Patron!

The idea is for 8 teams of 5 men to walk 16 miles a day, 6 days a week ably assisted along the way by

schoolchildren and rugby juniors who are members of our ‘Arm and a Leg’ Club – the foot soldiers armed with buckets! For more details, log onto our website.

If November 3rd sees the end of ‘WOW’, the presentation of both cheques will be made at our 6th biennial rugby dinner which will be held at the 4 star Stradey Park Hotel, Llanelli, our spiritual home, Friday November 15th 2013.

After a sumptuous 4 course dinner, with wine, we have Mr Phil Steele as after-dinner speaker. Phil is best known as a commentator for rugby’s ‘Scrum V’ programme, BBC2s ‘must see’ Friday night game. He is, like Rick O’Shea, magnificent! Again, as a ‘fundraiser’, we will have a raffle and auction. In 2011 we raised £15,000.00 on the night so that is the figure to beat.

Tickets for 2013 have been reduced from £35.00 (in 2011) to £25.00 this year. All Welsh Guardsmen will have the subsidy paid for out of rugby committee funds. Room prices for overnight accommodation



*LSgt Mike Prosser presented with a sports bag from Delme Thomas*



*Left to right: Captain Dale Loveridge MBE MM, Dai Graham, Uncle John, Lt Col Charlie Antelme DSO*

are £62.50 for single, £75.00 for twin or double and £95.00 for 3 sharing.

Whilst still an all-male preserve, friends and guests will pay the normal £35.00 per head.

The year generally has proved to be a revelation!

To date, Welsh Guards Rugby Reunion Club has raised £85,000.00 for our Afghanistan Appeal and as a means of thanking us, Brigadier Robert (Talbot-Rice) and Colonel Tom (Bonas) invited the Committee en-bloc, with wives, to attend St. Davids Day celebrations at Cavalry Barracks, Hounslow where we would be presented to HRH the Prince of Wales. It was a wonderful gesture from 'my two favourite rugby Vice Presidents', one that we will always treasure. Our other highlight was seeing the newly set up rugby museum which before leaving for Afghanistan, Major Alun Bowen had ensured that, RSM Andy Campbell, the Battalion coach, looked after our every need. Andy escorted us into the Corporals Mess 'Sports Bar', giving us a guided tour through a superb portrait gallery of our players from yesteryear.

What had begun as merely a conversation between 'Rugby Officer', then Captain Bowen

and myself when he intimated that "What would be nice would be a couple of rugby jerseys to hang somewhere in the battalion." Within 12 months he had in excess of 40 jerseys, along with assorted Army and Welsh International caps, medals and other rugby bric-a-brac. It is a museum/sports bar which would do credit to any rugby club in the world. Alun gave us a substantial amount of cash to get on with it but I had not considered the generosity of former players and also their families – not to mention rugby clubs our boys had represented over the years. It is a permanent reminder of our prowess on the rugby field of play and what Welsh Guardsmen are capable of, when not distracted by side issues such as war! 'Panthers Claw' had brought home to all of us former 'track suit brigade of the sixties', that today's Welsh Guardsman cannot even comprehend the phrase, 'struck-off'; and that fighting in a theatre of conflict is the considered norm. Rugby today is a pastime to savour rather than a permanent job which once ridiculed the status of amateur. Of course we could create a museum for our boys. It is no more than they deserve

Putting ourselves forward as defenders of the Army Cup in

season 2011/12 was, after much soul searching by Major Bowen and RSM Campbell deemed both impractical and unviable, for after just 18 months 'home', Afghanistan 'called' again. It wasn't just the unavailability while serving in-theatre; there was the pre-deployment training and the dissemination of the Regiment, pre and post Afghanistan. The decision taken was correct, despite the bitterness of the pill the entire squad chose to swallow.

With the advent of General, The Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank being promoted to Field Marshal, it meant we had to order new letterheadings and stationery! Whilst we were in the throes of change we thought we would promote him too. He agreed to become Patron of WG RRUC. In his place as President steps Brigadier P.R.G., Williams with Major

Barney Cockcroft joining His Honour, Judge Ray Singh as Vice President. Now, whoever receives a letter from Welsh Guards Rugby Reunion Club may gasp with awe – but I remember them as Lieutenants! Nuff said!! And Ray Singh as a taxi driver!!!

So with 'WOW', the Rugby dinner and sponsorship, your Committee have enough to be getting on with, this year. Notwithstanding this, should anyone wish to know more about our Medal of Honour, our 'Arm and a Leg' Club or the office of Vice President of Welsh Guards Rugby Reunion Club, feel free to ring, write or email me.

Chris Beynon, Hon. Sec. Rugby Mayfield Lodge Clochryrie Llanelli Carmarthen SA14 8EZ

Tel: 01554 752801 email: beynonmags@aol.com



*Delme Thomas (Llanelli, Wales, British Lions), Phil Bennett OBE (Llanelli, Wales, British Lions), His Honour Judge Ray Singh CBEVS and Field Marshal The Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank GCB LVO OBE DL*



Creating a legacy today for the veterans of tomorrow



## 870 MILES, 11 TEAMS, £1 MILLION

Since World War II, 50 Welsh Guards have been killed in action; that represents a loss of one person for every 17 miles of Welsh coastline. Many others have been dramatically affected by their involvement in active service. On 25 August 2013 the first of 11 *Walk on Wales, thanks a million* relay teams will set off to walk the Welsh Coast Path in order to raise £1 million for Combat Stress and the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal. Carrying a specially commissioned baton, inscribed with those 50 names, the baton will be passed from team to team, finally being laid to rest inside Llandaff Cathedral. *WoW, thanks a million* has been conceived specifically to raise money for Combat Stress and the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal as these two charities play a vital role in supporting soldiers and their families.

To find out more about how you can join in please visit  
[www.walkonwales.org](http://www.walkonwales.org)

Patron:  
HRH The Prince of Wales KG KT GCB OM  
President:  
Field Marshall The Rt Hon the Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank GCB LVO OBE DL



Registered charity no. 1073109



Registered charity no. 206002

# NOTICE BOARD



## OPERATION WOW-TAM - WALK ON WALES. THANKS! A MILLION?

### WANTED:

Fit, strong Welsh Guards Veterans, (preferably rugby players – but we will take soccer ‘girls’ as a last resort!) to walk the 870 miles of Wales’ coastal pathways from August 25th 2013 until November 3rd 2013.

As the logo above suggests, **Walk on Wales – W.O.W. Thanks! A Million?** is an attempt to raise £1 million, to be equally shared between Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal and ‘Combat Stress’, an organisation ‘headed up’ by our own, General Sir ‘Reddy’ Watt.

Walking just 16 miles a day – Tuesday to Sunday, we require 6 men each week, (Mondays are rest days for our two heroes, Captain Jan Koops and Rod ‘punchy’ Morgan who are going for the full 870 miles) for 10 weeks. There will be support vehicles, roofed accommodation – not tents, and wet weather kit, provided, but bring your own footwear.

We will carry the entire route, a newly struck sterling silver baton upon which will be engraved the names of all Welsh Guardsmen killed-in-action since the end of WWII. Fifty men. We propose to honour them by naming each day of the walk after each name and wherever possible, as close to the village, town or city where they were born/raised/lived, as we progress.

Upon completion of the walk, a Service of Remembrance will be held at Llandaff Cathedral after which the baton will be blessed and laid-up.

Our patron, HRH The Prince of Wales will Join us on the walk as well as personalities from the world of sport and entertainment. Juniors from schools and rugby clubs throughout the principality will act as our bucket collectors.

Can you walk 96 miles in 6 days? When reduced to the ridiculous, of course you can! 9am – noon is 3 hours. One hour lunch. 1pm – 4pm is 3 hours. So, – 6 hours walking at 2.67 miles an hour. Anyone over 90 years of age need not apply.

Please give your kindest consideration to this request – in the name of fifty of our brave boys, who we must never forget!

Ten teams x 6 = 60 men needed + ‘reserves’, unlimited.

See our new website:

### Points of Contact:

Major Glyn White MBE: **01639 731141**

Major John Warburton-Lee: **01948 780725**

Captain Jan Koops: **01323 832442**

Dai Graham: **01443 841001**

Captain Chris Hopkins: **01978 310498**

Chris Beynon: **01554 752801**

Rob Nichols

David Price

## Welsh Guards Archive

The Archive is located within RHQ Welsh Guards at Wellington Barracks, and contains 40,000 documents and items, dating from 1915 and up to the present day. These include Welsh Guards Service Records, First World War and Second World War Orders, UK and overseas WG operational documents, personal diaries, journals, photos, drawings and paintings.

The Archive's core objective is to preserve the documents and artifacts held within it, and to ensure that they are available for research both now and in the future. The Archive contains Welsh Guards materials that are unique and irreplaceable. It also contains documentary material that - due to its age - is both fragile and vulnerable to decay. The Archive room is therefore climate controlled, with excess airborne water removed by a dehumidifier.

Priority documents have been digitised to create electronic versions of some of the unique paper materials, and on-line research can now be undertaken at RHQ. In the (very unlikely) event of physical damage to materials by fire or flood, the digitised documents will provide exact electronic copies of the originals.

The Archive receives numerous enquiries each year from the relatives and descendants of WG personnel, and also from researchers, writers and academics. These enquiries are

managed and answered by the RHQ Welsh Guards staff.

The Archive is currently focused on building a combined database Inventory of all WG materials that are held within the Archive area. When completed, the Archive Inventory will assist with the administration of enquiries, and with the on-going management of the increasing range of Archive materials.

The Archive area will shortly be refurbished, and it will then be possible to accept new Welsh Guards materials for inclusion into the Archive. I would be pleased therefore to hear from anyone who has any documents, diaries, journals, photos, films, etc, that might be appropriate for inclusion into the Archive. Please could you send details of these to me by email at: [archivist.welshguards@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:archivist.welshguards@hotmail.co.uk) or by post via

**Mr M. Whitehouse**  
**Regimental Archivist**  
**RHQ Welsh Guards**  
**Wellington Barracks**  
**Birdcage Walk**  
**London SW1E 6HQ**

Many thanks.  
*Mark Whitehouse*  
*Regimental Archivist*

## Update to Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Club WO2 (RQMS) LT Scholes

The aim of the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Club is to establish a means by which past and present Warrant Officers and Sergeants of the Regiment may keep in touch with each other by the organisation of social events. In addition it is to assist charitable funds in the form of an annual donation, the amount to be decided by the committee.

Our Committee voted in on Saturday 10th November 2012, the inclusion of the rank of Lance Sergeant to the Club. This will bring us in line with the other Guards Regiments and increase the membership of the Club.

The Drill Sergeant will deal with all serving members in the Battalion but those former serving Lance Sergeants and serving members at ERE are requested to contact RQMS Brown (my replacement as of November 2012) at [DINF-FtGds-WG-RQMS@mod.uk](mailto:DINF-FtGds-WG-RQMS@mod.uk) or at RHQ for an application form.

Annual subscriptions to the Club are just £10 per year and we hold an Annual Reunion Dinner usually on the night before Remembrance Sunday in London. This enables members to support the Club in addition to both the Cenotaph Remembrance Parade and Welsh Guards Remembrance Parade at the Guards Memorial the following day if desired, allowing a busy but enjoyable couple of days in London achieving maximum benefit for the price of a return trip and one night in a hotel.

This will also be passed onto the Association Branch Secretaries but please take time to inform former Lance Sergeants that you may know who you feel will not receive this magazine.

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## Centenary Book Contract Signing



The Regimental Lieutenant Colonel marks the signing of the contract for our centenary book with Michael Leventhal of Front Line books (Pen and Sword) (left) and the author, Trevor Royle (centre) on 12th December 2012.

# THE WELSH GUARDS COLLECTION

## THE WELSH GUARDS COLLECTION

### Established 1995

President: Brigadier J F Rickett CBE  
 Chairman: Colonel T CS Bonas  
 Treasurer: Mr J O Williams  
 Secretary: RQMS LT Scholes  
 Curator: Mr ST Evans, Cartref ni, 44 Crossfield Avenue,  
 Over, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 1EG  
 Telephone: 01606 593953  
 E mail: stanevans67@hotmail.com

At last years AGM the main topic of discussion was the lack of space we had for the reserve collection or stores as we refer to it. Several remedies were discussed including such things as sea containers etc. The Director of Park Hall Mr Martyn Hughes said he was prepared to let us use the loft space area above the Victorian school. A vast space but that's all it was "a space" No floor no walls no ceiling an empty void.

The first step was access which meant a flight of stairs then the floor itself etc, etc. Our building services manager Graham Binnie upgraded all the electrics including new lights, plugs emergency lights and so on. My neighbour Keith Watson loaned us his planning and building skills for a layout and so it was now heads down, you know the rest, with every spare man and moment we could muster we got stuck in.

Now almost twelve months along the line the job is not totally finished but it did let us move all our stock over to the new facility in time for my biennial stock take by RQMS Lee Scholes in October. Everyone did as much as they possibly could and I know I shouldn't pick out any one individual but in this case I will.

Considering his age and the fact that he was still undergoing treatment at the hospital for a fused hip Brian John 70 was the perfect example of a man giving his all for our Regiment. I take my hat off to you Brian, Thank you.

During the last twelve months we have had so many donations of artefacts and photographs from people too many to mention but I will pick out a few examples to show the diversity of circumstances that brings these treasures to us.

I was contacted by BBC Northern Ireland who were making a documentary about "Bloody Friday" July 21<sup>st</sup> 1972 to commemorate the loss of two servicemen and countless civilians who were killed by some of the 22 bombs that



were planted by the IRA that day. One of those servicemen was 23523406 Sgt Philip John Price MID, Intelligence Platoon 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Welsh Guards. Or as he was more lovingly known to all those who were privileged enough to have

known him as a comrade and friend "Punchy" At that disastrous time beside Sgt Price was his driver Stephen Cooper of the RCT (The Royal Corps of Transport) Driver Cooper would have been 19 years of age the following day.





Sgt Price's Widow Madalene bestowed on us the honour and privilege to display his medal at the Museum. Drv, Cooper was one of eight siblings with four Sisters and three Brothers. They had agreed that the most fitting place to keep Stephens medal was beside Sergeant Prices' Which I, on behalf of the Regiment accepted with full humility. Three of his Sisters Wendy, Mandy and Jeanette (see photo) Installed the medal on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. July 21<sup>st</sup> 2012.

A dear friend of mine and may I say the Museums' is L/Sgt Kelvin Jenkins who spent 32 years in the Welsh Guards band knew I was the very last man to play a tenor drum on parade in the Corps of Drums Welsh Guards, **(because I banged on about it so much)** Well actually there were two of us that day in Gort barracks Dusseldorf Germany on "spring drills" 1962, the other being 23523537 Eddie Parry from Wrexham. Being the junior Drummers in the Corps at the time our side drums had been taken from us and boarded to

be replaced by the then new rod tensioned side drums. The only two drums with a regimental crest on them were these two old tenor drums sitting in the drum stores since the 2<sup>nd</sup> WW. Kelvin found one of these drums and at his own expense had it refurbished to its former glory before presenting it to the Museum thanks old friend. Kelvin who leaves the Army next year after 34 years is shown in the photograph along with C/Sgt Duncan McDonald BQMS of the Welsh Guards and Powys Cadet bands.

Lastly a Lady moved into her house recently in Caterham and in the attic the previous owners had left some silverware including a silver serving dish and cover, some sporting cups and tankards. Some were Regimentally encrested others to athletics particularly hammer throwing and one inscription that read thank for three great years from Captain P.R.Leuchars. 1944.

The new owner a Mrs M.Berry took them to her new

neighbours across the road who just happened to be the son of a past Director of Music Scots Guards. Recognising the crest being Welsh Guards he emailed me to see if we wanted them. Can you guess who they had belonged to? None other than RSM. A.Rees MBE. later Major Quartermaster. They now take pride of place in the sporting section of the Museum. Mrs Berry who sent them to us wouldn't even accept my offer to pay for the postage. Thank you on behalf of all Welsh Guardsmen Mrs Berry.

Just three of the many donations we received this year. I could go on about 1<sup>st</sup> WW medals from the Swansea branch, Money and artefacts from the London Branch, And so on and on. Every branch in the Association seems to find time and treasures to add to our wonderful display of our illustrious history. Please forgive me for not mentioning all who have helped you know who you are.

Just when we think we are running out of volunteers an

absolute gem appears and in this case it was 24141839 Alan Loose from Wrexham who served from 1969 until 1986 Alan is a favourite with our visitors for his down to earth banter and charm. Alan is the standard bearer for the Welsh Guards Reunited branch who again has been tremendously helpful to us. Welcome aboard Alan you are a breath of fresh air.

Having volunteers to run the Museum is always going to be a problem, we knew that from the start and to combat that shortage 83 John Williams on our behalf has signed up to the Qube Forum in Oswestry, an organisation aimed to supply local organisations with volunteers. So hopefully his efforts will be fruitful. On that subject, we will always be in need of volunteers so if there is anyone out there would like to give the odd day during the week or at weekends and think they would like to join us please just give me a call. Thank you.

My very best regards  
Stan 67

# BRANCH REPORTS

## WELSH GUARDS ASSOCIATION

**President:** Colonel T C C Bonas  
**Vice President:** Brigadier J F C Rickett CBE  
**Vice President:** R Lewis Esq.  
**Treasurer:** Major K Oultram  
**Secretary General:** B Keane Esq.  
Maindy Barracks, Whitchurch Road,  
Cardiff CF4 3YE  
**Telephone:** 029 2078 1342  
**E-mail:** welshguardsassociation@live.co.uk

**B**y the time this magazine goes to press, the Regiment should be safely ensconced back in the UK after their second tour of Afghanistan. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of those who died or got injured, and we feel immense pride in the bravery of every Welsh Guardsman. We pray that this is the last time our men have to suffer such atrocities at the hands of the Taliban.

In our last AGM held in June, the Association was accused of being a 'dinosaur', even though we have embraced the internet and incorporated 'Welsh Guards Reunited' into the family, making them the seventeenth Branch of the Association.

Times change, and Guardsmen are no longer just soldiers, but highly trained and professional people. When they leave the Regiment their time is taken up with work commitments and families, leaving very little time for attending meetings and social gatherings. The easiest way to 'keep in touch' is by the internet. It does not mean that the Association is falling by the wayside, but just communicating in different ways. We must all learn to adapt to change, and I personally think we are fully

embracing that change.

The Darts and Shoot at Maindy Barracks, Cardiff on Saturday 20th October was highly successful, and it was good to see so many members present. Most Branches were represented, and prizes appeared to be well distributed. Many thanks go to the Liaison Team for taking control of the DCCT.

We all enjoyed St David's Day in 2012 with the Battalion at Hounslow, and I am informed that this is going to be the same venue in 2013. Work on the Parade Ground has now been completed, making 'more room for manoeuvrability.' It would be good to see as many of you there as possible so that we can show our appreciation to the Battalion for their tremendous work in Afghanistan.

The Association Biennial Dinner is being held on 13th April 2013 at the Rhydydar Leisure Centre in Merthyr Tydfil. Let us all make a special effort to have a great 'get together' as a prelude to the 100th celebrations in 2015. There is ample accommodation close by, and an excellent road network from all directions!

We also look forward to the Race Day at Ludlow, where again the Association supports in force. Knowledge of horses is not needed to enjoy this day, and even if the weather is slightly inclement, there is always space in our own special marquee for a drink or two!

Branch Secretaries continue to work extremely hard in arranging local events such as Lunches and Dinners throughout the year for their members, and in keeping the Association alive and active, so please try to support them as much as possible. They are always open to advice and suggestions in order to strengthen and increase membership and we are all indebted to them.

I wish you and your families' good health in the coming year and sincerely hope we will meet at Association events in 2013

**Brian Keane** Secretary General  
*E-mail: briankeane39@gmail.com*

## CARDIFF BRANCH

(Founded 1919)

**President:** Colonel C J Dawnay  
**Chairman:** David W Parry (22831847)  
**Treasurer:** Alex Webb (22370877)  
**Secretary:** Terry O'Shea (24047142)  
43 Pwll Evan Ddu  
Coity  
Bridgend, CF35 6AY  
**Telephone:** 01656 655889  
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**T**he year started off well with the Ladies Night Dinner/Dance being held in January, an event much enjoyed by all.

A trip to Hounslow was arranged in March to celebrate St. David's Day with the opportunity to meet up with members of other Branches. Association members were guests of the Battalion, as they combined the formal military event with their 'families day'

making for the best of both worlds, and enjoyed by all who attended the event. This was a special day since they were about due to deploy to Afghanistan.

Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations at Llandaff Cathedral were



*Bill Morris being presented with a silver plate in thanks for many years service to the Cardiff Branch*

attended by representatives of the Branch.

Mr. Bill Morris, one of the most loyal of the long serving members of the Branch, stood down as Branch Secretary, having given twenty five years of outstanding service to the Branch in that office, and the following Annual General Meeting saw the election of myself as the new Secretary.

The Cardiff Branch Annual Dinner took place at the end of September, and for the first time, was open to all in order to give everyone the opportunity to show their thanks to Bill Morris and his wife Maureen, for all they had done for the last twenty five years. The Branch President, Colonel Charles Dawnay presented gifts to Bill and Maureen on behalf of the Branch. This was a night for all of us to remember and a fitting tribute to Bill and Maureen.

The Darts and Shooting competition at Maindy Barracks in October saw the Branch being unable to field a team due to ill health and other unforeseen circumstances. Nevertheless, for those who attended

enjoyed an excellent day in great company.

During the year we had 'time to remember' when our comrades from the Battalion, who made the ultimate sacrifice, were met by members of the Branch, as well as those from other Branches in the Association as they were repatriated to the U.K, and at the funerals that followed.

The national Remembrance Services and events saw us at St. David's Hall with the Royal British Legion, the Falklands Memorial, and National Service of Remembrance for Wales. The Branch Standard Bearer, Mr. Terry Evans represented us throughout the year, as our principle representative at official events.

The end of November gave the Cardiff Branch the opportunity to welcome the Battalion, on their 'Homecoming Parade' in the city, and join them at their celebrations. This was a most fitting way to end 2012.

The Branch Chairman, Mr. Dave Parry, Committee and Members send to Welsh Guardsmen everywhere best wishes for 2013.

## EAST GLAMORGAN BRANCH

(Formed 1920)

**President:** Lt. Col. D C Macdonald-Milner  
**Chairman:** Howard Main (23577106)  
**Treasurer:** W John Hooper  
**Secretary:** Ken Haines (23523287)  
 Trevone, Duffryn Road  
 Rhydfelin  
 Pontypridd CF39 5RU  
**Telephone:** 01443 492316

I am glad to be in a position to report that attendance at monthly Branch meetings are getting bigger, which is no mean feat in this day and age. Our meetings continue to be held at the Institute Club on Gelliwasted Road, Pontypridd, (which is approximately 50 yards from the Recruiting Office, and 100 yards from the Bus Station) on the second Wednesday of every month at 7.30 – 8pm. All welcome.

The highlight of the past year was our tour of the War Graves in Belgium, where we based ourselves in a hotel in Ostend with a 'free bar' in the evenings – and of course, being Welsh Guardsmen, we didn't take advantage! After a few drinks, some hidden talent was revealed from various members, and we were entertained with excellent singing.

A full report of this tour can be found in the magazine, which was written by Bob Kennely, an Associate member, who did a tremendous amount of work in organising this tour. On behalf of all who attended, I would like to take this opportunity in thanking Bob.

At the beginning of the year, Bob Kennely's son, Jeff, kept us amused for an hour and a half with a talk on the General Electric Plant at Nantgarw, following up with examples of various minute components that go into the building of aeroplanes, costing many thousands of pounds per item such as screws etc. He later organized a visit to the Plant,

which was well received by Branch members, particularly me since I worked there for 25 years – it was an eye opener to see the changes made over such a short period of time.

On May 7th a buffet was arranged at the Club, but the turnout was a bit of a disappointment. Nevertheless, those present had a good night, and our thanks go to Howard Main, our Branch Chairman, and Terry Thomas for their magnificent work and organization.

A commemoration of 30 years of the Falklands Conflict was held in the Park on June 8th, and was well attended by the Branch, even though the weather was diabolical. This was followed by a meal at the Institute, which again was of an excellent standard.

Once again I am pleased to report that Branch members supported the trip to Imber Court in June, which was followed by a visit to Sandhurst. This seems to have taken on an annual event by the East Glamorgan Branch, and we all look forward to 2013.



*Grave of family member of Mike and Dennis (Knocker) Knowles in Belgium. Lt - Rt: Howard Main, 'Knocker' Knowles with Branch Standard, Dennis Knowles, Ken Haines*

At the time of writing, we have just returned from the Darts and Shooting Competition at Maindy Barracks. We had another good turnout and a brilliant time, especially since the Branch won the Welsh Guards Association Cup in the Darts. Roll on next year !!!!!

Sadly we lost two members in the past year, namely Sydney George Billen, age 84, who died 22nd June 2012 and Graham Pugh, age 74. Our thought go out to their families and friends.

Sadly this year like every other, we have lost dedicated officers and Members, namely our Chairman Major E Pridham M.B.E. and also another stalwart, Lance Benson. The Officers and Branch members thank the families of the

Deceased for sharing their loved ones with us, and promise you "WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"

We look forward to 2013, and wish everyone good health and prosperity.

**LONDON BRANCH**

(Formed 1926)

- President:** Lieutenant Colonel C F B Stephens
- Chairman:** A H Doughty BEM (2741552)
- Treasurer:** Douglas Wilcox (2739697)
- Secretary:** Jeff Heenan (23523251)  
27 Mount Gardens  
Harrogate  
N Yorkshire HG2 8BS
- Telephone:** 01423 879326
- E-mail:** jeffheenan-wgalb@hotmail.co.uk



*85th Year Celebration Lunch, L-R: GSM Billy Mott, Vince Jones, Doug Wilcox, Jeff Heenan, Lady Kate Guthrie, Lord Guthrie, Richard Doughty, Bob Burman, Lt-Col Stephens, Malcolm Smith Keith Mordeca*

**L.LANELLI BRANCH**

(Formed 1974)

- President:** Mr John Harding
- Chairman:** Keith Horrell((24838137)
- Treasurer:** Vernon Jones (22217890)
- Secretary:** Alan Cunningham (24125105)  
197 Cockett Road  
Cockett  
Swansea SA2 0FH
- Telephone:** 01792 554151 (Home) (Work: 07976971336)
- E-mail:** alan.Cunningham1@ntlworld.com

**L**ike all Branches the last twelve months seemed to have flown by, and in the last few months we have through manning difficulties at our meeting place (Royal Naval Club), a drop in numbers attending.

This has changed the Branch so to speak, in as much as we have had to cancel our usual monthly meetings and meet every two months instead but ensuring we carry on with our Sunday Lunches. The feedback we are receiving at present is very encouraging, so can only hope things will begin to pick up again.

On that word encouraging, the Branch would like to thank the Secretary General for his hard work at the Darts & Shoot. It was a great day and good to see so many old mates and friends present.

Congratulations to Andrew Brown as 'Best Shot' in the Shooting event.

**W**e had an excellent Celebration Lunch for our 85th year in Dec.2011. A total of 90 attended, including, Mrs Gill Leuchars, Mrs JMH Roberts, Major Roberts IG and many more.

A visit to the House of Lords and House of Commons took place in 2012, by the courtesy of Lord and Lady Guthrie. Members had the opportunity to stand at the Despatch Box in the House of Commons, (fortunately the House was not sitting at the time!)

Again our thanks to all our Committee Members, and of

course our Chairman and Treasurer Richard Doughty and Doug Wilcox, for all their hard work.

The Commemoration service was again held at Imber Court Metropolitan Sports Club in June 2012, and our thanks to RQMS Lee Scholes for organising the event. Members of East Glamorgan Branch also



Lady Kate Guthrie, presenting GSM Billy Mott with The London Branch 85th Anniversary Whisky Glass

attended, who then went on to visit the Royal Hospital at Sandhurst on their return journey. Our thanks to Major Bevan for arranging the tour.

Following the Queen's Birthday Honours List, the Hon Secretary wrote congratulating Lord Guthrie who was promoted to Field Marshal by HM The Queen. Lt/Colonel Sir Andrew Ford was awarded the LVO, and Major Alan Denham awarded the MVO, all of whom replied thanking the Members of London Branch for their good wishes.

The Regiment's Remembrance Day Parade in 2012 again had Army Cadets on parade consisting of 16 Members of the Welsh Guards Company Army Cadet Force led by Lieutenant Dan Priddy ACF. We also had the pleasure of 6 Army Cadets from Schools, led by John Lewes, nephew of Jock Lewes, Co-Founder of the SAS.

Following the Remembrance Sunday Parade, we again

visited the Tower of London, thanks to Yeoman Warder (Ex RQMS) Idwal Bellis, and watched with great interest the Ceremony of the Keys. Another fantastic evening

We continue to encourage more retired Welsh Guards to support the Association, whether at our meetings in London or the various events that take place around the country. We do need younger members in London Branch, but appreciate the difficulties and the costs of attending the meetings. The Association in general is looking at ways to encourage people to attend meetings throughout the country. If we have not heard from you for some time, drop us a line/email address so that we can keep you up to-date.

A visit to West Cappel is, hopefully, being arranged for 2013, arrangements are still being looked at time of writing, if you are interested, please contact the Hon. Secretary.

**OUR MEETINGS IN 2013 WILL BE:**

**Friday 1st February 2013:** meet at 4pm Garrison Sgt. Mess then (6 pm Annual General Meeting London Branch)

**1st March 2013:** St. David's Day Details from RHQ.

**First Friday 5th April 2013:** First Friday Meeting Garrison Sgts Mess

**Friday 3rd May 2013:** First Friday Meeting Garrison Sgts Mess

**Friday 14th June 2013:** noon AGM Association/Troop meeting (London Branch First Friday - Meeting 4pm onwards)

**Saturday 15th June 2013:** Trooping of The Colour. (Date to be confirmed by RHQ)

**Imber Court Meeting Sunday 23rd June 2013:** (To be confirmed by RHQ - note change of day to Sunday)

**Friday 6th September 2013:** First Friday meeting

**Friday 4th October 2013:** First Friday Meeting

**Sunday 10th November 2013:** Remembrance Sunday Details from RHQ

**Saturday 7th December 2013:** Lunctime Christmas Party

\*Please note that our meetings now start at 3pm Lunches at 12 pm.

Our meetings continue to be held at London District WO's & Sgt's Mess Wellington Barracks, by kind permission of the Garrison Sergeant Major W D G Mott, OBE. Welsh Guards.

Sadly during 2011/ 12 some members have passed away, our thoughts and condolences go to their loved ones, their names are entered in the Memoriam section of the Magazine.

Our yearly thanks to Brian Keane and Major Keith Oultram at Maindy Barracks, L/Sgt

Shane Brandon and Yvonne Mitchell at RHQ and RQMS Lee Scholes, (Lee is leaving the Regiment for civilian life, and we wish him all the very best for the future and for all the help and assistance during the year.) We welcome RQMS Derrin Brown to RHQ who is taking over from Lee.



London Branch House of Lords/Commons visit



*Merthyr Tydfil Branch Members at one of their meetings*

## MERTHYR TYDFIL BRANCH

(Formed 1953)

**President:** Captain Harry Legge-Bourke

**Chairman:** Grant Harper (2734772)

**Treasurer/**

**Secretary:** Errold Jones (24581438)  
18 Marshall Crescent  
Penydarren

Merthyr Tydfil CF47 9JA

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This has been yet another quiet year at the Merthyr Tydfil Branch. Some members of the Branch attended the Remembrance Parade in London in 2011, and I was told that a good weekend was had by all. Our Colonel, HRH Prince Charles attended the Mess at Wellington Barracks and was introduced to everyone present. This was obviously a very prestigious honour especially when photographs were taken to remember the occasion by.

A big thank you goes out to Mr Jeff Heenan for his assistance with obtaining tickets for The Tower of London in the evening to watch the 'Ceremony of the Keys', therefore keeping our members busy and out of mischief!

The Branch turned out in quite a force for St David's Day at Hounslow Barracks. I believe that over fifty Association members marched, I myself was glad that there was work going on at the Parade Square as our shorter version was long

enough for me. It was a good family day with plenty of stalls and side shows to entertain the children, and the Battalion seemed in fine form. The welcome we received from everyone could not be faulted and it was great to catch up with old mates.

In early June a few attended Falklands Anniversary Parades around the principality, and again it was good to catch up with old mates and gossip.

Mr Grant Harper (Chairman of the Branch) and I attended the

AGM at Wellington Barracks. I returned home that day but our Grant stayed in London for over a month. (Some say he was confused and others say the bright lights captured him like a moth!!) Anyhow I am pleased to report that Grant finally arrived back home safe and sound, so the same is planned for next year.

The Veterans Parade in Merthyr was well attended, with a service at St David's Church followed by refreshments at the Civic Centre with some old Barrack room gossip - as is getting the "norm". The evening continued with other Associations present and old yarns coming to the forefront of many conversations.

It was with deep heart that we could not field a team for Darts and Shoot competition at Cardiff this year. This is the first time that we been unable to do so, and hopefully the last. We always have a great day but there we are, this year it was not to be. Be warned, other Branches - we will be baying

for blood in 2013!

We as a Branch are looking forward to St David's Day with the Battalion in Hounslow next year, hopefully with a good turn-out, and perhaps the same shortened March-Past.

Then on to April 13th, and Bi-annual Dinner at Rhydycar Leisure Centre, Merthyr Tydfil. This is a great venue with plenty of accommodation and just a short walk to the town centre. It will again be good to catch up with Comrades old and new.

Sadly this year we have lost a few Stalwarts of the Branch. Our thoughts and condolences go out to their families and friends. We also give our best wishes to those who are not in the best of health.

Meetings are still being held on the first Monday of the month at the Ex-Servicemen's Club, Lower High Street, Merthyr Tydfil commencing at 20-00hrs. New and old members are made more than welcome.

## MIDLANDS BRANCH

(Formed 1953)

**President:** Captain T Macdonald Milner

**Chairman:** R C Jaynes (2739272)

**Treasurer/**

**Secretary:** Jonathan Bayliss (23523208)

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Long Compton

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Again it has been a quiet year for the Midlands Branch. A few members turned out for St David's Day at Hounslow. It was an excellent day, and good meeting up with old friends and to spend some time with the Battalion and their families. The added bonus was that our Colonel, HRH Prince Charles managed to attend, and joined in the 'fun of the fair' afterwards, to the delight of the children.



Midlands Branch 2012. L-R Mrs MacDonald Milner, Col. H Boddington, Capt. T MacDonald Milner, Mrs Gausson, Mrs & Col. MacDonald Milner.

We held our Annual Lunch on the 15th of April at the White house Hotel in Worcester. It was quite well attended with some members from other Branches and also some Grenadiers. It was at this Lunch we welcomed our new President, Capt T Macdonald Milner and his wife. Also in attendance were his parents Col & Mrs Macdonald Milner along with the Hon Mrs B Gausson and Col Hugh Boddington. Once again we were extremely well looked after by the staff of the Hotel and enjoyed an excellent meal.

On the 9th of September I attended the Household Division Memorial Day at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, and laid a wreath on behalf of the Branch. It was a pity that only about 6 Welsh Guards attended, two of them being in Household Division Corps of Drums. (the Drum Major being one of them.) All in all though it was a good day and hopefully will become an annual event.

Thanks once again to Brian Keane and all the team at Cardiff for all the work that they do for the Association.

## MONMOUTHSHIRE BRANCH

(Formed 1920)

**President:** Captain D M Davies  
**Chairman:** Alan Mountjoy (239297747)  
**Treasurer/Secretary:** Steve Liversage BEM (24141822)  
 7 Shaw Close, Ebbw Vale , NP23 6QQ  
**Telephone:** 01495 302567  
**E mail:** Vicar54@live.co.uk

The 30th Anniversary of the Falklands War was marked by a special Memorial Service at St. Mary's Church, Abergavenny, a great occasion involving Welsh Guardsmen, members of the South Atlantic Medal Association (SAMA) and many dignitaries of town and County. It was planned by the Reverend Mark Soady of St. Mary's and we owe him a debt of gratitude. He is closely associated with the Branch and was introduced to us by Colonel Eric Sturdy who in 1952 was Medical Officer to the Battalion in Berlin.



Len Brooks and Gilbert Pruddy of the Monmouthshire Branch

He played rugby for the Battalion and after retiring from a very senior position in the Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport has become a novelist of repute. As his "practice" took him into Spandau Prison where the major war criminals were detained he has a fund of material for his stories.

Like all Branches we represent the Regiment in our area and attempt to set high standards, particularly at our Annual Reunion Dinner which has been held at our headquarters, The Angel Hotel in Abergavenny since 1980. It is an ideal venue, the setting is impressive and over the years many have made a week-end of it and enjoyed the town and countryside. It is always held on the last Saturday in October and in 2012 was well supported yet again.

Our links with the Ancient Borough of Abergavenny get stronger each year and we enjoy the privilege of holding our Annual Meeting in February in the Town Hall, a few minutes walk from The Angel and the Mayor of the Borough always attends the Reunion. We have a big catchment area and a loyal band of exiles who never fail to come to the Reunion. Brigadier

Rickett who attended his first Monmouthshire Branch Dinner in the 1970s when Assistant Regimental Adjutant was one of several welcome guests and the Adjutant of the Battalion, Captain Spencer Smith who responded to the toast to The Regiment gave us first hand news of the Battalion's activities in Afghanistan. He is a Monmouthshire man, and we were very pleased to welcome him home. We have worked hard for many years to maintain relations with serving Welsh Guardsmen and enjoyed hosting Captain Spencer Smith and Lance Sergeants Brandon and Sanigar at the Dinner. With the Battalion in the UK next year we look forward to seeing more.

The Monmouthshire Branch Trophy awarded to the Welsh Guards Sportsman of the Year has become an important and highly regarded prize by the serving men who compete for it. Two years ago it was won by Lance Corporal John Sanigar for his achievements in both codes of rugby football. In 2012 he won it again and now as a Lance Sergeant was presented with the trophy at the Annual Reunion Dinner. A former winner, Warren Williams looked fitter than ever and that great Regimental and London Welsh forward of the

past, Major Glyn White with the ever present Bryn Pennock again travelled to Monmouthshire from Swansea as did Ian McPherson from Camberley. They all contributed to what one visitor described as "a very happy occasion."

A week before the Dinner our sportsmen entered the Darts and Shooting competitions in Maindy Barracks and fulfilled the Olympic tradition that winning does not matter, it's the taking part. Not even the Darts team, with many years of training in various hostels behind them, could win the gold but they were pleased with silver and put down their success to the call-up from the "bench" of our President whose last encounter with a dart board was too long ago to remember. The object of this Association Day is to get together and have a good time and thanks to Brian Keane who organised it was just that. He was another welcome guest at the Reunion and we appreciate all he does for us.

We get full houses for our two main Sunday lunches at Ebbw Vale Rugby Club in December and the Maes Manor, Blackwood in May. The next is at Blackwood on Sunday May 12th and bookings are already being taken. These are family gatherings and very popular. Members who have not been to them have missed a typical Welsh Guards family occasion with good food and very good company.

Our monthly meetings need more support. They are enjoyable and mini-reunions with business being conducted efficiently and quickly. The Branch Officers need no encouragement to do their work for us, but they would appreciate it if members made

efforts to attend. We have exiled members who would love to attend but live too far away so there is no excuse for those living within easy reach of The Angel Hotel in Abergavenny and the Capel Hotel, Bargoed. Apart from the AGM mentioned earlier we are at The Angel every second Thursday except May and October when we gather at the Capel Hotel.

In 1961 the Branch proposed to the AGM of the Association that we should have a Biennial Association Dinner. There were a few objections but the majority were in favour and we have had some outstanding nights ever since. The biggest attendance was at Merthyr in 1997 and it is there that the next will be held, on Saturday 13th April. This will be a night to remember and is the greatest of all gatherings of Welsh Guardsmen.

At the Reunion we were again pleased to welcome men of the three wartime Battalions, Gilbert Priddy (Bristol), Ray Cumbley (Cornwall), Bill Powell (Cwmbran), Eric Jones (Merthyr) and Grant Harper (Merthyr) as well as several who served thirty years ago in the South Atlantic. We missed Len Brooks of Bristol who died aged 99 last year and also John Williams 54 who as RQMS at Regimental Headquarters was most helpful and regularly came to our Dinner.

The funding of the Branch is provided by its members through raffles at meetings and functions. Those who cannot attend such events can of course help the Branch to carry on by considering donations which will be gratefully received.

An enjoyable year lies ahead, our 93rd as a Branch in the

Association which is busier than ever and is administered by its Secretary General Brian Keane. To him and all at Maindy Barracks and Regimental Headquarters we offer our thanks. Once again we have been fortunate to have such hard working

Branch officers and to all connected with the Branch, the Association and the Regiment we send greetings and best wishes for a peaceful, healthy and happy 2013, just two years away from the greatest event since the Olympic Games – the Centenary of the Regiment.

**MONTGOMERY/SHROPSHIRE BRANCH**

(Formed 1950)

**President:** Mr R G P Plowden  
**Chairman:** J O Williams (23860183)  
**Treasurer/Secretary:** Captain R J D Parry  
 10 Grangefields  
 Shrewsbury  
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**Telephone:** 01743 244189

**A**s the notes for another magazine are prepared we must firstly welcome home and congratulate the Battalion on completion of Op HERRICK 16 operational tour and we are sure they are looking forward to a spell of Post Operational Leave.

Our thoughts are with the families of the ones who were killed and also with the casualties who are still suffering from injuries received during this tour, we wish them a speedy recovery and return to their loved ones.

May I on behalf of the Branch also thank the Staff of Regimental Headquarters at both London and Cardiff for their timely and detailed "Updates" which we have been regularly receiving during this Tour; we are most grateful, thank you very much.

Events which have taken place within the Branch are mainly the normal run of functions, which started with a St David's Day lunch held at the regular venue of the Hellan which is near to Welshpool. I can report that this was very well attended, and a most

enjoyable meal was had by all.

The main Summer Lunch was held once again at the Wroxeter Hotel. Our Guest of Honour was Colonel and Mrs Antelme, with the Colonel giving a very interesting and entertaining 'after lunch' speech of his life in the Army.

During the summer, a project which had been masterminded by amateur military historian Philip Morris (ex Light Infantry) and the Chairman of the Shropshire War Memorials Association Clive Blakeway (ex Coldstream Guards) came to fruition. This involved a soldier from the Castlefields area of Shrewsbury by the name of Private Percy Titley, Welsh Guards.

He served on the front line in France during 1917 where he suffered "trench fever" and was sent home. Discharged



Mont/Shrop 2012. Standing at the restored graveside of Shropshire's 'war hero' Private Percy Titley, Welsh Guards, are: Branch members – Capt R Parry, Norman Shuker, Bill Jones, accompanied by – Vice Lord Lt of Shropshire, with family and friends of Pte Titley



Members of the North of England Branch at their Annual Dinner

from the Army and no longer fit to serve War Service, he died from Tuberculosis and war related illness (believed to be the effect of mustard gas) on 13 May 1918, aged 26.

When the historians uncovered the overgrown and crumbling grave in the cemetery in Shrewsbury, a campaign started to restore the headstone and locate any relatives of Pte Titley.

The grave has been cleaned up and a new military plaque

placed on it after the Commonwealth War Graves Commission stepped in to help.

A service was held, attended by Col Edmund Thewles OBE (ex Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters) Vice Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, and Pte Titley's niece and nephew along with Branch members. After paying their respects, a bugler played Last Post and a minute's silence was held.

## NORTH AMERICA BRANCH

(Formed 1986)

Treasurer/  
Secretary:

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Unfortunately, due to Hurricane Sandy that hit the east coast of North America, the Branch Secretary was unable to format a report in time for the magazine. Andy works for the Red Cross and is the main man in Jersey, coordinating logistics and security of essential property and personnel etc. I am sure we will get a full resume in the next edition. Our thoughts and prayers are sent to those who suffered terrible losses.

## NORTH OF ENGLAND BRANCH

(Formed 1946)

President:

Major K Oultram

Chairman:

Trevor Davies (22831186)

Treasurer/

Secretary:

Keith Bonehill (22831043)

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The year 2011 ended with the Annual Christmas Lunch, held at the Mercure Hotel, Christleton, Chester. The Scots Guards Association Band played a selection of music for us, which was very well received. The lunch was a buffet, and since members and guests passed favourable comments on the meal, it was decided we continue with this venue in future.

During the January meeting, a proposal was entered concerning a review of future meetings. The decision was: January, April, July, November (AGM) would be 'chairman led' meetings, and the remainder, 'social gatherings' for hotpots, buffets, raffles and lunches etc. (The Branch does not meet during August or December).

We celebrated St David's Day with a Hotpot, which was well attended and enjoyed by everyone, and in June, a Jubilee Lunch was arranged at the Mercure Hotel.

July saw us at the Memorial Gardens, Hamilton Square, Birkenhead, to unveil a plaque of polished granite, purchased and organized by Mr Arnold Brassey on behalf of the Branch, to commemorate all those who have served in the Welsh Guards in the past, present and future. It is not a memorial for those who have fallen in service as they are recorded in numerous memorials throughout the country, but to the General Service of Welsh Guardsmen, and in particular those from Birkenhead and the Wirral. Our

Chairman Trevor Davies unveiled the plaque, and on completion of the service, members and Ladies repaired to the local hostelry for the purpose of refreshments. This was no mean feat since a 'stalwart member' directed us with the directions of "just down there, turn left and it is at the bottom of the street". Needless to say, by the time we reached our destination we all needed new legs, oxygen, and dying of thirst! (I am sure he meant well) I would like to thank everyone who attended, including members of Branches near and far, not forgetting members of our Brigade Branches: the weather was excellent and 'the sun shone on the righteous'.

A 'social' meeting was held in September and 'hotpot' in October. Members prefer lunch time meetings on the last Sunday of every month, and an excellent buffet is provided by Mrs Harding, Mrs Monteith and Mrs Davies. The cost of these buffets is covered by monthly raffles, hence, free to members. The credit for all this goes to Mr Barry Monteith, our Social Secretary, and we thank him for his unfaltering work.

Like all Branches, we have had our sad losses during the year, namely, 22586036 Frederick Roberts (served 1951- 54),

21010022 Hugh Griffiths, Royal Hospital Chelsea (his ashes were interned at the Bodelwyddan Church, St Asaph, and attended by members from the North Wales and North of England Branches) and 2741410 Douglas Hayue (served 1945-1948), a previous Secretary of our Branch during the 1970's.

Finally I wish to thank RHQ, The Secretary General Brian Keane and Major Keith Oultram, our President, for their help and assistance throughout the year. The North of England Branch also wishes members of the Battalion and the Association the very best, and hope you all keep well and safe in 2013.

Last but not least, I would like to thank everyone who continually supports the Branch at meetings and special occasions. I am aware that age and sickness sometimes restricts attendance, but if you can support us at any function then we would be more than happy to see you.

On your behalf, we strive to continue the good work.

The Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal and Marie Curie. Our other functions - Annual Dinner/Dance, a Curry evening and a Hot Pot Supper were all well supported. In fact I am amazed how many people support us when our membership is so small.

Membership, as with all Branches, remains a problem and we are still seeking a recipe to increase it. I must

thank all our members for their support and also the Dragons (our wives), but in particular, Dave Evans (67), Dave Burton, Mel Ackroyd and our Davenport Park Hotel host John Fernandes.

Once again our thoughts go out to all those serving in Afghanistan. We send them all our good wishes for a safe return.

## NORTH WALES BRANCH

(Formed 1936)

*President:* Captain A.C. Hopkins  
*Chairman:* G. Binnie (24060777)  
*Treasurer:* H .Mears (2740728)  
*Secretary:* D. Webb (235223061)  
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**H**ere goes with the 2012 Branch Report. I have agreed to carry on as Secretary to try and stabilize the Branch for the time being, and Mal Jones 92 has agreed to take over the Bangor Section as Secretary. He will be a real asset to the Branch and hopefully in the near future slide into the North Wales Branch seat as Secretary!

Over 200 of you took the time to fill out the form which came with the Summer newsletter. I was inspired by the response, and of the 143 of you who served between the 80s to 2012, only 23 have E-Mail addresses, which will add fuel to the reinstatement of 2 newsletters a year. The names I have now will be the base of the Branch membership.

Eight Branch members attended St. David's Day held at Hounslow to support the Battalion before they deployed to Afghanistan. John Hughes, to his surprise, found that 3 recruits he took through the depot as squad Instructor ended up as Warrant Officers, namely, Regimental Sergeant Major Jed Monaghan,

RQMS Lee Scholes and WO1 (RSM) HAC Andy Campbell - to say he was chuffed is an understatement.

Hugh Griffith from Abergele left the area to join the Ranks as a Chelsea Pensioner. A surprise farewell party was arranged at the Golf Club by the Autumn Club, Abergele, and 60 plus people attended. Tom Homan gave a small speech and presented him with a small gift off the Branch. I took him to London on 15th April, and would like to thank RQMSScholes for arranging accommodation for us in Wellington Barracks to be on time on the 16th for his enlistment. The Governor, Sir Reddy Watt (W.G.) was over the moon to have an ex Welsh

## NORTH OF ENGLAND BRANCH

### Stockport Sub-Branch

*Chairman:* Ken Davies (22831499)  
*Treasurer:* Mel Ackroyd (22831953)  
*Secretary:* Dave Evans (2387726)

### 2012 Chairman's report.

**I** am happy to report yet another successful year. Our St David's Day Luncheon at the Davenport Park Hotel was as popular as ever with support from Stockport's Mayor, Councillor Les Jones (the son of a Welsh Guardsman) and other well wishers.

Entertainment was led by our favourite harpist - Elfair Grug Dyer, from Manchester's Royal

College of Music. Yet again we were able to give generous donations to the Mayoral Fund,



*Hugh Griffith, Spider and Brian Trask*



*Standard Bearers*



*Brian Trask, John Conteh and Hugh Griffith*



*Cass Butler, Doc Doughty, LSgt Brandon, RQMS Scholes, Carl, Spider, Sgt Jenkins and WO2 Shield*



*Brian Trask on left and Hugh Griffith seated*



*Hugh Griffith with GSM Billy Mott*



Guard Independent Para member in his fold, and invited Hugh to have lunch with him with the President of Guards Para Association, Sir Patrick Beresford. Sadly after a month Hugh was diagnosed with Cancer, which was terminal. He made a lot of friends during his short stay and this is the E-Mail I received off the RSM P Lally, Royal Hospital:

"Morning Spider, Thanks for the reply and understanding things here at the Hospital. Hugh was without doubt a real gentleman and even in his short time here made a real impression to all the pensioners and staff alike. I was with Hugh in his room on the Friday before he passed away and he was chatting about you and all the guys in Wales. I can tell you that he was in great form and had very fond memories of his time in the Welsh Guards. He also knew his time was coming to an end but he said that he felt totally at ease and ready to move to another place. Regards and best wishes. Pearse."

The Funeral was well attended by the Regiment & Association, also over 60 turned up for the Memorial Service at the Marble Church, Bodelwyddan, led by our ex President John Harrop M.B.E., where his ashes were buried with his Wife and Granddaughter. Guardsman Harris (on sick leave from Afghanistan) placed a cross on behalf of the Branch. During the year we also lost 22831260 Glyn Owen (Ollly) and 2739365 Cliff Barnes. Condolences go to all their family and friends. RIP

The 8th of June was marked here in North Wales by laying a wreath on behalf of the Branch at selected Towns. A special thanks to Mal (92) for doing Holyhead with Sgt A. Williams, Les Peake for covering Ruthin and Llandyrnog, and I did

Bodelwyddan & Rhyl. The wreath at Wrexham was done at the Falklands Parade on 23rd June. It was planned that a wreath would be laid at Llanfairfechan & Connahs Quay on Remembrance Sunday, November 11th but instead, Andy Roberts and Steve Jones (who are in the Falklands Remembrance Day) will lay a Wreath on behalf of the Branch. We think this will be a more fitting tribute, and it is hoped that Andy Roberts will take the Standard.

Stuart Harris was on RRR from Afghanistan and attended the funeral of L/Cpl Roderick (they were both in 2 Coy and were on patrol when the incident happened). We represented the Branch with the Standard in Cardiff. C.S.M. Paul Dunn (2 Coy), a North Walien and for his sins - and an Aston Villa supporter! thanked the Branch for our support. I would also like to thank Les Peake, Wendy, Suzanne Harris, Rhi and members and staff of the Esplanade Club Rhyl for their devotion in sending the Boys shoe boxes DA IAWN CHII!

We held our AGM on 6th September at Bod Erw, St Asaph. Branch officers are as follows: President, Captain A C Hopkins, Hon. Vice President, Howell Hughes, Chairman Graham Binnie Vice Chairman, Dai Morgan, Secretary D. Webb, Assistant Secretary, Mal Jones 92, Treasurer, H. Mears, Vice Treasurer, Captain A C Hopkins. As you can see we have doubled up on Officials so we are not caught out again should anything occur beyond our control. Next AGM will be May 9 2013 Bod Erw, St Asaph, 1930hrs

Thanks to all the Staff at RHQ London and Cardiff for the support to the Branch. Season's Greetings to you all. CYMRU AM BYTH.

## OGMORE BRANCH

(Formed 1982)

**President:** Major T M Wakefield  
**Hon Chairman:** Mr Ray Gorringe (23585533)  
**Hon Treasurer/ Secretary**

Mr Mike Jones (23523201)  
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Instead of the December Meeting, we ended the year 2011 by having a meal, followed by an entertainer. The evening was a great success and we have the Manager and staff of the Caefatri Public House to thank for it. (This is now an annual occurrence.)

The New Year started with our AGM where we once again re-elected our Committee en-bloc, nice to have stability! Our President, Major Tim Wakefield was unfortunately not able to attend so Mr Albert Burd (2741097) our Vice President, was invited to sit in the Chair for the re-election of the Committee for the current year. We thank Albert for accepting the position and officiating at the meeting.

On 7th February the Secretary attended the Branch Secretaries Meeting in Maindy Barracks which once again proved very informative and a good exchange of ideas took place between the various Branches. Brian Keane and staff provided a good meal afterwards so many thanks to them.

March 1st saw us off in some strength to Hounslow to celebrate St. David's Day with the Battalion. This year the catering and seating arrangements were excellent and it was another good day to remember especially for those who were introduced to HRH The Prince of Wales. With the exception of Bi-Annual Dinners, it is probably the only time for some years when

members of all Branches can meet up to chat about old times. We look forward to visiting the Battalion again next year after completing its latest Afghanistan tour.

On 21st April 2012 we held our Annual Dinner Dance at the Masonic Hall, Bridgend in the presence of our President, the Bridgend Borough Mayor and his Consort, Captain J.M.Young from the Battalion and our Secretary General Mr Brian Keane and Mrs Sandra Keane. There was a healthy attendance sitting down to Dinner and we have to thank the Ladies Section for their help and attention to detail in the table layouts etc, and our Vice Chairman for producing the tickets - a job he has done for many years. As usual our Musician performed brilliantly with music to suit all tastes. For those who have not yet attended one of our Dinner Dances I can assure them of a warm welcome.

On Thursday 17th May, members of the Branch were at Brize Norton for the repatriation of the three members of the Battalion who had lost their lives in Afghanistan. There was a large contingent of Fijian soldiers

and families from all over the Army present and their singing was really something to hear, a truly poignant occasion.

On the weekend 1st to 3rd June we had the pleasure of co-hosting, with the Bridgend Town Twinning Committee, the Mayor of Hechtel, Mr RAF Tyens and two Town Councillors plus Mr Bob Vranken, the idea being to forge a 'Friendship Link' between the towns of Bridgend and Hechtel. The visitors are well known to the Branch due to our biennial visits to Hechtel and Bob Vranken being our guide on each trip. They expressed disappointment that there were not pilgrimages to their town this year, and we hope we might make further arrangements in the near future.

A Falklands Memorial Service was held at the Cenotaph in Maesteg on 14th June to commemorate the 30th Anniversary, which we were invited to attend with Branch Standard: we of course obliged and a good turnout was there to witness it. This was followed on 25th June by a 'Raising the Flag' Ceremony for the Bridgend and District Veterans Association where once again our Standard was prominent.

We celebrated Veterans Day in Bridgend on Saturday 30th June. Ray Gorringe (23585533) our Chairman was once again Parade Marshall and our Branch Standard was on parade. The weather was blustery but fine and the Corps of Drums and a detachment of The Welsh Transport Regiment. RLC (V) led the Veterans, our two MPs and Councillors as they marched through the town to the Recreation Centre where a fine buffet and concert was laid on. A good day!

On Saturday 22nd September in keeping with our tradition in visiting somewhere every year we went to Worcester. The weather was brilliant and despite some problems getting into the town due to traffic going to the Three Counties Show (which happened to be on that weekend) and our driver having difficulties with finding his gears in the right sequence, a good day was had by all. The trip up the river provided a welcome break and was enjoyed by all who ventured on the water.

On Sunday 23rd September we attended the Civic Service for the newly installed Mayor of Bridgend in Nolton Church. We were invited to attend with our Standard which during the Service was laid at the Altar, the only one from the Borough!

We had a good turnout for the Annual Darts and Shooting Competition in Maindy Barracks on the 22nd October with thirteen playing and non playing members attending.

We didn't manage to get past the first round in the Darts but we were successful in one event in the Shooting. Our Secretary (23523201) Mike Jones won the Gerry Greenstock Cup for Competitors over 70 years old - he put it down to having just had a brand new pair of glasses the month before! It was brilliant to see so many old friends and colleagues this year and the atmosphere was brilliant, as was the banter of memories of days gone by. We must thank Brian Keane for all the hard work he did to make the day such a success and also the Liaison Team for running the Range. It is to be hoped that the large turnout will be repeated next year.

Our Branch Annual Remembrance Service took place in Nolton Church, Bridgend on Sunday 28th October when we once again paid homage to the fallen Welsh Guardsmen from the Borough. We were honoured by the attendance of the Town Mayor who on hearing of our Service asked if he could formally attend, we of course said yes.

Remembrance Sunday will once again see the Branch well represented in Bridgend and Maesteg. Poppy wreaths from the Regiment and the Branch will be laid on the War Memorials as usual.

We will finish off our year again having an evening meal in the Caefatri Public House on the evening of our December Meeting.

Sadly we have lost the following members during the year: 2739083 V G (Rocky) Knight aged 87: 2736112 Tudor Rowlands, aged 92: 27352480 Bryn James aged 93. As would be expected, the Branch turned out in some numbers at their farewells at the Cemetery / Crematoriums. Branch members have also attended

funerals/cremations at Cardigan, Swansea, Margam, Cardiff and Bath in support of our neighbouring Branches. Inevitably we have members and their spouses who are not in good health and wish them all the best.

Branch Meetings are still held in the Caefatri Public House, Bridgend on the 2nd Monday of the month and once again may I say you are guaranteed a warm welcome.

Our AGM will be on Monday 11th February 2013, so if you are able please do come along.

Our Annual Dinner Dance 2013 will again be held at the Masonic Hall, Tremains Road, Bridgend on Saturday 20th April 2013 and a warm welcome is extended to all.

The Chairman, Secretary and Committee would like to thank all the members for their support throughout the year and especially the Ladies Section at all our meetings and functions.

We wish everyone a very Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year and send our thanks and Best Wishes to all at RHQ and the Cardiff HQ.

## PEMBROKESHIRE BRANCH

(Formed 1957)

**President :** Major I B Ramsden MBE  
**Chairman:** Arthur Ealres (2741413)  
**Treasurer:** Trevor Warr (2740352)  
**Secretary:** Rob Davies (24753414)  
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Another year has passed with not a lot happening in the Branch. We are still struggling to get younger members interested, and also struggling to get older members to turn up at our meetings which are now every 2 months. Please contact me for further details if you wish to attend – everyone welcome.

In April 2012 Jim Hanson sadly passed away, he was one of the founder members of the Branch. Jim had been very active on the Committee since 1957 when the Branch was formed, and had served in France and Palestine. He is, and always will be sorely missed, and our thoughts and condolences go to his family and friends.

Due to the lack of attendance at the Xmas Draw last year, it was decided by the committee not to hold one this year. However, in the past many members have been very kind in sending donations, and I ask you to be so kind as to do the same this year as we still need money to run the Branch.

The Branch Annual Luncheon was held at the Plas Hyfrydd Hotel in Narberth on Tuesday 9th October 2012. 38 sat down to dine and a very enjoyable afternoon was had by everyone present. A big 'thank you' goes to Colonel Bonas who gave an in depth speech about what the Battalion have been doing - including their tour of Afghanistan - and what they will be doing in the near future. There was also a very amusing speech by the Branch President Major Ramsden. The Committee

would like to thank everyone for attending and making the afternoon such a success, including Brian and Sandra Keane, Roy Lewis and the 3 members of Llanelli Branch. Thanks also go to the Branch Chairman Harry Lovering, for organising such a successful raffle as usual. A special thanks goes to Trevor and Pam Warr for once again organising this annual event.

Unfortunately the Pembrokeshire Branch were not able to get a team together for the Darts and Shoot competition this year, but will try and get one together for 2013.

Hopefully we will be able to get a few members together for the Biennial Dinner at Rhydyar Leisure Centre in April 2013. It will be good to catch up with old and new friends.

I wish good health to all our members, and hope many of you will make the effort in attending some of our meetings in the coming year.

I now have a new phone number: 01348 841056, and it even has a 'fancy answering machine', so if anyone rings and I am not at home you can leave me a message.



*Roy Bennet & wife Olive with Lord Mayor of Swansea, Councillor Richard Lewis*

The war goes on in Afghanistan and it is a tragedy that so many fine men are injured and those who have paid the ultimate price and have given their lives for their country, and on behalf of us all our sincere condolences.

As a branch we are trying to move with the times and our President Major C Carty RTD MBETD has put us on the internet with our very own website. Through a lot of hard work we are now established and we are also going to have a Facebook page so that all Welsh Guards old and new can now be in contact with us. And with a bit of luck it will bring new members into our branch. I would like to commend all the Officers and members for all their hard work and effort to make it such a success, and furthermore all the help and advice they give to me.

This year I must pay tribute to one of our Longest serving branch members Mr Roy Bennett, who has been a member since he left the Battalion in the early 1950's. Roy was on the Coronation of Her Majesty the Queen and since then has held every office in the branch, now being a Life Vice President. Roy has put so much work and effort into the branch and without members like him we would not have such a vibrant branch. He is always on hand to help and advise us all and his knowledge of the Welsh Guards Association is second to none. He is a very proud man and branch member, wherever Roy goes whether it is on holidays, branch parades or functions he is always flying the flag for the Swansea Branch. On behalf of us all Roy we thank you for the sterling

**SWANSEA & WEST GLAMORGAN BRANCH**

(Formed 1927)

- President:* Major Charles Carty MBETD
- Chairman:* Bryn Pennock (23877288)
- Treasurer/Secretary:* Peter Williams (23877300)  
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It is that time of year once again when we look forward to Christmas and reflect on the past year: it has been a happy year for some and very sad for others, our hearts go out to all the families who have lost loved ones.



*Phil Jones 56 laying a wreath at the Menin Gate at Ypres*



March past at the re-dedication of the Falklands Memorial

work you have put in over the last six decades.

Our oldest serving member of the branch is Bill Cleary, who is 89 this year and still going strong, and not only that, still likes a pint and a cigarette and is a staunch branch member who's stories should be made into a book.

We wish to thank our President Major Charles Carty (RTD) M.B.E TD, our chairman Mr Bryn Pennock and our Life Vice President Major G White (RTD) M.B.ETD for all the work they put into the Branch.

Our chairman Mr Bryn Pennock and Life Vice President Major G White (RTD) M.B.E , also support the Welsh Guards Golf and Rugby Association and many other things that have raised substantial amounts of money for the Welsh Guards

Lieutenant Colonel's Afghanistan's Appeal.

We as a branch are looking forward to 2014 Hectel 70th Anniversary and 2015 when the Regiment Celebrates 100 years.

Branch wise we have had a quiet year except for our functions such as Sunday Lunches, Christmas Dinners etc etc and I would like to thank our members for making these such a success.

I would also like to thank Rob Nichols for the commendable work and effort he and his team put in for the Re-Dedication of the Falklands Memorial in Cardiff on Veterans & Armed Forces Day, it was a true Joy to see so many Welsh Guards in attendance.

The photographs are as follows Mr Roy Bennett and his lovely



Colin Jones and his lovely wife Rhona

Wife Olive with the Lord Mayor of Swansea Mr Richard Lewis, Phil Jones 56 laying a wreath at the Menim Gate at Ypres on behalf of the branch, March past at the Re-Dedication of the Falklands Memorial, Myself my wonderful Wife Pauline and Derek Williams at the Armed Forces Day in Cardiff, Colin Jones and his lovely wife Rhona at the Armed Forces Day in Cardiff and also thanks to Spider for the Pint he bought me at the A.G.M – that's got to be a first!!!!

Last but not least our thanks to our Standard Bearer Mr Derek Williams for his great support to the branch on all occasions, and also for the help I have been given by all members of the association and my family.

I would like to thank everyone for supporting me through another year to the challenges ahead

On behalf of the Swansea Branch all the best to all the Welsh Guardsman and their Families!

### WELSH GUARDS REUNITED

(Formed 2006)

**Webmaster:** Allan Rogers (24220048) - England  
**President:** Major (Retd) David Woods - France  
**Chairman:** Major (Retd) Martin Browne BEM - Spain  
**Treasurer & Secretary:** Paul Morgan – England

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**Telephone:** 01708 531511  
**Technical Support:** Mike Cummins (24472964) - Wales

Welsh Guards Reunited (WGR) has continued much the same as previously; attracting new members (we now have over 3,070 registered members), providing a rapid means of communication for our members (with over 146,000 total posts) and enabling a massive photo gallery (with over 12,000 images) to be accessible to our members 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. But recognising the need to attract younger members, who have, traditionally needed just that little bit more of a nudge to join in with anything to do with the Welsh Guards Association,



My wonderful wife Pauline, myself and Derek Williams



Household Division representation at the 'Scattering of the Ashes' of Captain (Retired) John Powell, President Welsh Guards Reunited Branch of the Welsh Guards Association. Seated, L-R; Pat Armstong, Mary Tsikouris (John's daughter), Pam Williams. Standing, L-R; Bob Belson WG, Malcolm Williams WG, Gerald Armstrong GREN GDS, Peter Wade COLDM GDS.



John Poweall, 1943

**We now have a Facebook Page and Twitter Account also. Join us and keep up to date at;**  
 WGR website: [www.welshguardsreunited.co.uk](http://www.welshguardsreunited.co.uk)  
 WGR Facebook Page:  
[www.facebook.com/groups/welshguardsreunited](https://www.facebook.com/groups/welshguardsreunited)  
 WGR Twitter: Follow us at; @WelshGuardsWGR

Early in the New Year we received the devastating news of the sudden death of our Branch President, Captain (Retd) John Powell on 17th January 2012 in his adopted and much loved Australia. Our branch secretary wasted no time in organising a WG wreath to be sent to Australia for the attention of another superb WGR Member (Robert "Bob" Belson (22217754)) who had met John on a few occasions and had immediately volunteered to be the WGR representative in Australia for John's funeral. John was a superb member of WGR, a regular contributor and was the obvious choice to become the first Branch President. He deemed it a huge honour and had agreed to remain in the appointment for a further year to enable WGR to find its way in the Association. He was an on-line friend to many of us and although most of us had never met him, he

was a real "pal" who threw a great deal of Aussie common sense at things and helped steer WGR into what it is today. Rest in Peace John – you will remain missed and remembered by many. Fortunately WGR has such strength in depth that the Regimental Adjutant was able to appoint a new Branch President within a few weeks of the sad death of John Powell. Major (Retired) David Woods (see photo), who served in the Regiment from 1963 to 1977 before transferring to the Army Air Corps and taking a commission in 1980 had agreed to take up the baton at very short notice. David, who retired from the Army in 2003 and now lives in France with his wife, was quick to appreciate the benefit of belonging to an on-line branch of the WGA whilst living abroad and takes a keen and active

interest in all that the Regiment, Branch and Branch members undertake.

Many people find their way to WGR whilst searching for details of a relative on-line who may (or may not) have served in WG at some stage. Fortunately we have an Associate Member who we are all justifiably proud of who contributes a great deal to the site in the way of historical research (to say nothing of the tremendous support he gives to all regimental fund raising events). Nick Farr's interest in the Regiment started some 45 years ago when his Grandmother gave him her brothers WW1 medals and death plaque.

He was 1038 Cpl. Stanley Kiernan and he was KIA 1st July 1916. His Grandmother had believed for numerous years that he was killed on the 1st day of the battle of the Somme. Nick researched his death and was able to inform her just before her 100th birthday that he died during a large WG trench raid at Mortaldje near Ypres, where the WG suffered 95 casualties. She was not convinced and he searched for further evidence!

From this, in the following 12 years he expanded his

research and now has a database containing details of all the Officers and men who died during the Great War and a WW2 database of those WG who died up to 1947. He has also compiled a database listing all those WG who were POW in WW2.

Nick really is the most conscientious individual you could hope to deal with and his knowledge of WG history is immense. He has helped bring many queries received on the site to a successful outcome and his help, guidance and friendship is much appreciated by us all. Nick has a good working relationship with RHQ WG and is honoured to be one of the few people with access to the RHQ WG Archives, that said, he is always at pains to explain to individuals that the



Major (Retired) David Woods



1038 Cpl Stanley Kiernan

only information and details he can provide them with is that which is held in the public domain. WGR has a link to the correct procedures for individuals wishing to obtain information from a relatives service records held at RHQ WG and these can be found at; <http://army.mod.uk/infantry/regiments/16693.aspx>.

This picture depicting the WG Signal Platoon in Trans Jordan

1947 (with Harold Graham Williams (47) second from right back row on the left) is just one of thousands held in our galleries.

Our photo galleries really are becoming a huge WG resource. We rely solely on individuals to upload their own WG pictures into our galleries and as such we have a mass of pictures which have seldom been seen elsewhere other than the



Signal Plt. In Transjordan 1947



Mike Wakely (24076183) visits Cefn Primary School in Glyncoch Pontypridd

owner's personal photo album. Unfortunately many of the photographs do not contain the names of the subjects in them, we therefore urge anyone reading this article to visit the WGR galleries and where they can name the individuals in the photographs – it would mean a tremendous amount to family members in the future as it makes searching so much easier and quicker.

As readers may recall from the last Regimental Magazine, our very own Paul "Flicker" Morgan (24570871) set himself the difficult task of sending shoeboxes to 1WG personnel during their 2012 Afghanistan operational tour. With the help of the power of the internet (WGR and its members) he achieved a massive amount. Our branch Secretary, Mike

Wakely (24076183) visited Cefn Primary School in Glyncoch Pontypridd to collect items that the children had collected to go into boxes for the lads in Afghanistan. Arranged by another WGR member (Jeff Bishop (24446491)) through his sister Mrs Pam Lewis who works at the school, he arrived to find that he was not alone as two Guardsmen (LCpl (25184667) Geraint Hillard and Dmr (25187495) Dale Leach) from the 2009 Afghanistan tour were there also. Both had been seriously injured in Afghan together in the same vehicle and had wanted to show their thanks, support and respect to the school.

Once again the WGR reunion held at the Seabank Hotel, Porthcawl held on 24/25 Feb 2012 proved a sell out and as popular as ever. The main



Crimewatch UK group photo outside the Seabank Hotel, Porthcawl



## MINUTES OF THE 84TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WELSH GUARDS ASSOCIATION

Held at Wellington Barracks London at 1130 hrs Friday  
15th June 2012

*President:* Colonel TS Bonas  
*Vice President:* Brigadier J F Rickett CBE  
*Vice President:* R E Lewis Esq  
*Treasurer:* Major K Oultram  
*Secretary General:* B Keane Esq

### Present:

Col C J Dawnay, President Cardiff Branch; Lt Col D C Macdonald-Milner, President East Glamorgan Branch; J Harding Esq., President Llanelli Branch; Capt C Hopkins, President North Wales Branch; Mr T O'Shea, Secretary Cardiff Branch; Mr K Haines, Secretary East Glamorgan Branch; Mr A Cunningham, Secretary Llanelli Branch; Mr J Heenan, Secretary London Branch; Mr E Jones, Secretary Merthyr Tydfil Branch; Mr J Bayliss, Secretary Midlands Branch; Mr S Liversage, Secretary Monmouthshire Branch; Mr J Williams, representing Montgomery/Shropshire Branch; Mr D Webb, Secretary North Wales Branch; Mr M Jones, Secretary Ogmere Branch; Mr R Davies, Secretary Pembrokeshire Branch; Mr P Williams, Secretary Swansea & West Glamorgan Branch; Mr M Wakely, Secretary Welsh Guards Reunited.

There were 14 other Association members present.

### In Attendance:

GSM London District, WO1 WDG Mott OBE; WO2 Lee Scholes, Headquarters Welsh Guards; Apologies for Absence; Brigadier J F Rickett CBE, Vice President WGA; S Rhodes Esq., President Aberdare Branch; Lt. Col C F B Stephens, President London Branch; R G P Plowden Esq., President Montgomery/Shropshire Branch; Mr M

Williams, Secretary Aberdare Branch; Capt. R J D Parry, Secretary Montgomery & Shropshire Branch; Mr K Bonehill, Secretary North of England Branch;

### Item 1 – President's Address

In his address the President began by welcoming everyone, and thanked the Branch Secretaries for all the hard work they put in to make the Association the success story that it is and was delighted with the excellent response from the Association in purchasing ten kneelers for the Guards Chapel. Stan Evans and his volunteers at the Welsh Guards Collection at Park Hall must also be recognized and congratulated for the fantastic work they continue to do.

He then began by updating the meeting on a conference held the previous week, discussing the future of the British Army. It was thought that the Household Division would remain intact, which is good news.

The Regiment was now 2 months into their deployment to Afghanistan, and things were going extremely well, although sadly they have received some casualties and one death.

He praised Association members for their massive support at repatriations and funerals, which is tremendously appreciated by the families.

Details of Homecoming Parades will be announced later in the year.

A committee is to be formed next year to plan the Regiment's centenary year in 2015, when they will also receive and Troop their New Colours. The '100 year book' is also progressing, with at least one third completed.

He updated the meeting on the Appeal and thanked everyone for their continued support. To date, the fund stood at £1,125,000. There were new bracelets available for sale depicting a Welsh dragon, with a suggested charge of £1, and invited those present to take some to their Branches.

### Item 2 – Minutes of previous meeting

Confirmation of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 14th June 2011 was proposed by Mr Jeff Heenan (Secretary London Branch) and seconded by Mr Rob Davies (Secretary Pembrokeshire Branch). This was carried and the minutes signed. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### Item 3 – Association Events 2012

#### a) Imber Court

The commemorations at Imber Court take place on Sunday 24th June 2012 with members of the East Glamorgan Branch again attending in force.

#### b) Falklands Commemorations

A service of commemoration took place on Thursday 14th June at St Mary's Church, Swansea.

On June 23rd a service of commemoration will take place in Wrexham, with the Welsh Guards Band in attendance.

On June 30th SAMA Wales will hold a service of commemoration in Cardiff – the Welsh Guards Band will again be in attendance. This coincides with Armed Forces Day.

#### c) Darts & Shooting Competition

This will take place at Maindy Barracks, Cardiff on Saturday October 20th 2012. Unfortunately, due to extenuating circumstances overnight accommodation will not be available, although there is ample B/B and hotel accommodation close by. This has been an excellent venue in the past, with a DCCT automatic range, so please encourage members to attend. M Wakely (WGR) asked whether there would be a problem inviting injured soldiers from the Battalion, and the President did not think this would be a problem. Further details will be sent to the Secretaries at a later date.

#### d) Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Day takes place on Sunday November 11th. Unfortunately HRH The Prince of Wales will not be in attendance this year. Further details will be sent out by RHQ nearer the date. J Heenan (London Branch) pointed out that non-badged cadets, who have attended in the past, would like to attend again, and stated there would be no problem about insurance since they have their own for such functions. The President thought this should be a Regimental Day, but asked those present to decide. At a show of hands, it was agreed that the cadets be allowed to attend.

T O'Shea (Cardiff) asked if there would be Welsh Guards participation at the Festival of Remembrance in St David's Hall on Sunday November 3rd. The President admitted he did not know anything about this event and asked the Sec Gen to check. (The Sec Gen has checked and this is the British Legion Festival of Remembrance with participation from the Regimental Band of the Royal Welsh hence Welsh Guards not invited)

Before item 4, D Webb (North Wales) pointed out that

Battlefield Tours are no longer on the agenda under 'Association Events'. The President explained that these have been shelved due to poor response, but if any individual wished to organize such an event, he would be happy to discuss financial help. There is also Lottery Funding available for such tours, and some Branches are already utilizing this. The Sec Gen pointed out that the Association tours as they stood were no longer viable since there were now very few veterans. On the last Battlefield Tour by the Association, there were only 6 Association members present, resulting in the Trustees paying out an excessive amount of money for non Association members to attend.

#### Item 4 – St David's Day

This will be celebrated with the Regiment in Hounslow on Friday 1st March 2013. J Heenan (London) complained that last year, those wishing to attend but did not want a meal were still charged for a ticket. B Keane (Sec Gen) explained that this was the only way to be able to monitor costs because two years ago the Association was charged for an excessive amount of meals that were not originally paid for since tickets were not collected. It was suggested that a new system be in place by next year, and all tickets accounted for. A question was asked whether transport would be made available from Cardiff to attend Hounslow, and this was agreed to.

#### Item 5 – Biennial Dinner

Rhydycar Leisure Centre has been agreed as the venue for the 2013 Biennial Dinner, taking place on Saturday 13th April. The cost of tickets has not been finalized, but should be approximately £15. There is ample parking space with a Travel Lodge on site. Further accommodation such as B/B and hotels are also within

walking distance. Access from north and south is extremely easy, with the venue situated just off the A470. We have used the Leisure Centre in the past and it was found to be very popular. It is hoped that the Association will support this venture and make it a successful occasion. It is a great chance to meet up with old mates.

#### Item 6 – Christmas card

The Christmas card for 2012 has been changed from the original due to 'reasons beyond our control', but is available as a print which can be purchased at a cost of £5. There are a limited number of 200 available from the office at Maindy Barracks, which has been individually signed and numbered by the artist, Sean Bolan.

A copy of the new 2012 Christmas card will be sent out with the Summer Newsletter, with the cost printed in the updated PRI list for 2012.

#### Item 7 – Newsletters/Magazines

Many complaints have been received regarding cessation of the Summer and Winter Newsletters, since not everyone is able to access email. It has therefore been agreed to continue with the Summer newsletter, which will contain all relevant information regarding Association events, PRI and a copy of the Christmas card, but stopping the Winter newsletter. By doing this, the money saved from postage etc will enable the Regimental magazine to be free of charge – although postage must be paid for by the recipient. Most magazines are delivered in bulk to Branch Secretaries when pre-ordered, which eliminates postage for many members of the Association.

#### Item 8 – Accounts

The ARA (Major Oultram) produced records of the accounts, and announced;

Income	- £24,760
Expenditure	- £26,633
Loss	- £ 1,873

The accounts were made available for scrutiny for members to peruse.

#### Item 9 – New Rules

Suggested amendments to update the Association Rules were circulated to Branches for comment, and London Branch had a few queries. The new rules have now been amended as and where necessary, and will be re-issued in due course.

#### Item 10 – Future of Association

Before the actual discussion took place, the President reminded everyone that five years ago a questionnaire was sent to all Branches of the Association and a paper written on the results. It showed that even taking into account that some Branches are stronger than others, the Association, compared to others in the Household Division was doing well. The Sec Gen revealed that when he took over his role 12 years ago, there were just over 4000 names on the database, and to date, the numbers stood at 3674, which was pretty good considering changing lifestyles.

Colonel Dawnay (President of the Cardiff Branch) blamed the Association for being a dinosaur, operating in the same way for the last 30 years - perhaps forgetting that we are doing our best to move with the times, such as incorporating Welsh Guards Reunited into the Association which allows members to keep in touch via the internet. He also commented on the lack of affiliated Officers not attending Branch functions as in the past, but was reminded that due to their extremely busy schedules, this is sometimes no longer possible. We all appreciate that the way we live our lives have changed, and the younger

Guardsman, when leaving the Regiment has different priorities.

The Association President pointed out that the Commanding Officer is planning to brief Guardsmen on the Association, and also plan to organize an Association / Battalion Day where both sides can get together, but in this day and age, young Guardsmen's time is precious, and they need to spend all free time with their family and friends.

Lt/Col D C Macdonald Milner (President East Glam Branch) suggested that Branch Secretaries should send a welcome letter to Guardsmen on leaving the Regiment (this has already been done in the past), and encourage physical contact between the older and younger generations.

J Harding Esq. (President Llanelli Branch) thought there appeared to be a lack of communication between the Association and the Regiment, and perhaps Dinners could be made more appealing such as inviting VIPs etc. Participation in joint Branch events is another way of keeping the members together.

After prolonged discussions, the President (Col Bonas) suggested that the Secretary General form a small working party with a cross section of some Association Branch officers, to look in detail of the best way forward, with a time line of the Secretaries meeting in February 2013.

#### Item 11 – Date of next AGM

The President announced the date of the next AGM as Friday 14th June 2013, and informed the meeting that the Welsh Guards will also be trooping their Colour then.

He thanked everyone present for attending, especially GSM Bill Mott OBE, who, besides being extremely busy, always finds time to spend with the Association – this is greatly appreciated by everyone.

## FORECAST OF EVENTS 2013

### JANUARY

16	Battalion Homecoming Parade, Carmarthen
17	Battalion Homecoming Parade, Swansea
23	Battalion Homecoming Parade, Bangor
24	Battalion Homecoming Parade, Caernarfon
30	Battalion Homecoming Parade, Aberystwyth
31	Battalion Homecoming Parade, Powys

### FEBRUARY

### MARCH

1	<b>ASSOCIATION ST DAVID'S DAY HOUNSLOW</b>
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### APRIL

13	<b>ASSOCIATION BIENNIAL DINNER MERTHYR TYDFIL</b>
20	Ogmore Branch Dinner / Dance, Masonic Hall, Bridgend
27	Falklands Family Association Service, Guards Chapel

### MAY

15	Grant of Freedom of County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf
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### JUNE

1	Trooping The Colour – Major General's Review
8	Trooping The Colour – Colonel's Review
12	Beating Retreat, Horse Guards
13	Beating Retreat, Horse Guards
14	<b>ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b>
15	<b>THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY PARADE</b>
30	Montgomery/Shropshire Luncheon, Wroxeter Hotel, Nr Atcham

### JULY

### AUGUST

<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>DARTS AND SHOOTING COMPETITION - TBA</b>
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### OCTOBER

26	Monmouthshire Branch Reunion Dinner, The Angel Hotel, Abergavenny
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### NOVEMBER

10	Remembrance Day
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### DECEMBER

# IN MEMORIAM - ÊR CÔF

We regret to announce that notification has been received of the deaths of the following

**27411345 Gdsm J Arnold**

Died: 25th November 2011 Aged: 82  
Served: 1945 - 1955

**2741086 Gdsm D Uzzell**

Died: 27th December 2011 Aged: 83  
Served: 1945 - 1948

**417701 Lt WOL Fox-Pitt**

Died: 9th January 2012 Aged: 79  
Served: 1951 - 1956

**186941 Maj R Hedley- Dent**

Died: 23rd January 2012 Aged: 90  
Served: 1941 - 1962

**349190 Maj J Powell**

Died: 17th January 2012 Aged: 86  
Served: 1944 - 1947

**23523248 Gdsm G Ricketts**

Died: 12th January 2012 Aged: 71  
Served: 1958 - 1964

**23523436 Gdsm D Evans**

Died: December 2011 Aged: 72  
Served: 1957 - 1959

**22217579 Gdsm B Grove**

Died: December 2011 Aged: 77  
Served: 1952 - 1954

**22217376 Sgt S Tomkins**

Died: 3rd October 2011 Aged: 78  
Served: 1951 - 1960

**2739543 Sgt S H Williams**

Died: 15th December 2011 Aged: 85  
Served: 1942 - 1948

**22831260 Sgt G Owen**

Died: 25th March 2012 Aged: 75  
Served: 1955 - 1974

**436242 Lt PH Rees OBE MD FRCP**

Died: 13th March 2012 Aged: 76  
Served: 1954 - 1959

**511152 Major E L Pridham MBE**

Died: 13th March 2012 Aged: 73  
Served: 1958 - 1990

**22695664 Gdsm M Williams**

Died: 15th March 2012 Aged: 88  
Served: 1952 - 1954

**2739657 Sgt HJ Cahill**

Died: 6th April 2012 Aged: 89  
Served: 1942 - 1952

**2734619 Gdsm MH Davies**

Died: 18th April 2012 Aged: 90  
Served: 1939 - 1946

**2733552 Lsgt L Brooks**

Died: 24th April 2012 Aged: 99  
Served: 1932 - 1941

**2741708 WO2 RC Winston**

Died: 27 April 2012 Aged: 87  
Served: 1946 - 1968

**2737861 Lsgt BG Blackwood**

Died: 19th February 2012 Aged: 89  
Served: 1940 - 1950

**23523348 Gdsm R Williams**

Died: 7th May 2012 Aged: 72  
Served: 1959 - 1968

**2740924 Gdsm LG Benson**

Died: 12th March 2012 Aged: 85  
Served: 1945 - 1948

**2738733 Gdsm E Evans**

Died: 7th May 2012 Aged: 89  
Served: 1942 - 1945

**2738206 Gdsm PR Tozer**

Died: May 2012 Aged: 90  
Served: 1940 - 1946

**2738103 Gdsm H Brooks**

Died: 24th May 2012 Aged: 89  
Served: 1939 - 1945

**2741401 Gdsm SG Billen**

Died: 22nd June 2012 Aged: 84  
Served: 1947 - 1949

**22831129 Gdsm RL Owen**

Died: 17th June 2012 Aged: 76  
Served: 1954 - 1956

**2740771 Gdsm D Clatworthy**

Died: 30th May 2012 Aged: 85  
Served: 1944 - 1953

**2736011 Sgt W Wood**

Died: 26th Feb 2012 Aged: 91  
Served: 1939 - 1945

**2741410 Sgt D Hague**

Died: 24th June 2012 Aged: 85  
Served: 1945 - 1948

**2738314 Lsgt WJ Knapman**

Died: 22nd May 2012 Aged: 89  
Served: 1942 - 1947

# IN MEMORIAM - ÊR CÔF

We regret to announce that notification has been received of the deaths of the following

**22831820 Sgt DH Jones**

Died: May 2012 Aged: 72  
Served: 1957 – 1960

**2739619 Lsgt G Owens**

Died: 23rd June 2012 Aged: 86  
Served: 1942 – 1947

**22217544 Gdsm N Jones**

Died: 29th January 2012 Aged: 78  
Served: 1952 – 1955

**2738786 Lsgt K Scrivens**

Died: 25th July 2011 Aged: 89  
Served: 1942 – 1946

**22217606 Lsgt MD Jones**

Died: 4th June 2011 Aged: 74  
Served: 1952 – 1962

**2739083 Lsgt DG Knight**

Died: 9th June 2012 Aged: 86  
Served: 1943 – 1947

**2739054 Gdsm HC Whittaker**

Died: 1st December 2011 Aged: 75  
Served: 1943 – 1945

**22405776 Gdsm MO Burridge**

Died: 18th April 2012 Aged: 75  
Served: 1955 – 1958

**2735248 Lsgt B James**

Died: 16th August 2012 Aged: 93  
Served: 1939 - 1946

**22217560 Gdsm DG Gaymer**

Died: 22nd July 2012 Aged: 77  
Served: 1951 – 1954

**23399176 Lsgt G Williams**

Died: 16th August 2012 Aged: 74  
Served: 1942 – 1945

**2739662 Gdsm WH Payne**

Died: December 2011 Aged: 89  
Served: 1942 – 1948

**2740526 Gdsm F Morris**

Died: May 2012 Aged: 89  
Served: 1945 - 1948

**21010022 Lsgt H Griffiths**

Died: September 2012 Aged: 85  
Served: 1947 – 1953

**2734405 Lsgt HG Jones**

Died: 21st May 2012 Aged: 92  
Served: 1938 – 1959

**2739243 WO1 DT Evans**

Died: September 2012 Aged: 87  
Served: 1944 - 1967

**2740843 Sgt AGS Bray**

Died: 3rd October 2012 Aged: 89  
Served: 1940 – 1958

**24378054 WO2 J Williams**

Died: 15th September 2012 Aged: 56  
Served: 1975 – 1999

**21010015 Sgt J Anderson**

Died: 22nd October 2011 Aged: 81  
Served: 1947 – 1953

**2736112 Sgt T Rowlands**

Died: 30th July 2012 Aged: 92  
Served: 1941 – 1947

**24203177 Sgt S Davies**

Died: 10th January 2012 Aged: 62  
Served: 1970 – 1992

**24185118 Sgt N Moore**

Died: 10th November 2012 Aged: 58  
Served: 1971 - 1994

**2739389 Lsgt MK Free**

Died: 15th November 2012 Aged: 86  
Served: 942 – 1946

**22831365 Gdsm MW Coles**

Died: 5th August 2011 Aged: 76  
Served: 1955 - 1957

**22217335 Gdsm WG Lewis**

Died: November 2012 Aged: 77  
Served: 1953 – 1956

**Colonel Sir James Malcolm**

Died: 4th September 2012 Aged: 82  
Served: 1950 – 1976

**Lt IL Mackeson – Sandbach**

Died: 26th September 2012 Aged: 79  
Served: 1952 - 1957

**22154103 Gdsm GI Everson**

Died: 24th November 2012 Aged: 81  
Served: 1949 - 1951

**Lt EM Nettlefold**

Died: July 2012 Aged: 92  
Served: 1941 - 1943

**Capt PFF Brutton**

Died: 10th October 2012 Aged: 87  
Served: 1943 - 1949



*The Chefs at 7pm the night before the Guardsman's Christmas Lunch ▲  
The Commanding Officer delivering his Christmas Address during the Guardsman's Christmas Lunch ▼*











# WELSH GUARDS

REGIMENTAL MAGAZINE 2012