



WELSH GUARDS

REGIMENTAL MAGAZINE 2009





*Front Cover: Capt Terry Harman engaging with the Afghan locals
Rear Cover: CSgt Edwards-Jones 16, in the poppy fields in Afghanistan*



WELSH GUARDS REGIMENTAL MAGAZINE 2009

Colonel-in-Chief

Her Majesty The Queen

Colonel of the Regiment

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales
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Foreword

by Colonel A J E Malcolm OBE
Regimental Lieutenant Colonel

2009 has of course been dominated by the Battalion's OP HERRICK 10 tour in Afghanistan. There has been widespread media coverage of their time there and you will have all followed events there closely. The articles by the Companies and others provide further insight into what was undoubtedly a challenging, demanding but very successful tour. Given this coverage, I will only make three points on the Battalion's tour in Afghanistan. First, is to pay tribute to all ranks in the Battalion for their exemplary tour and which has made us all proud to be Welsh Guardsmen. Second, to reiterate that we rightly pride ourselves on being a close family and we have seen this in so many ways this year, not least in the support that has been demonstrably given by the Association and so many former Welsh Guardsmen. Third, the tour's success inevitably came at a price with the loss of five Welsh Guardsmen and others. For those families who have lost loved ones and to those that have been injured we will continue to provide as much support as we can now, and in the future.

This leads me onto the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal. The target is a £1 million and the Appeal is going well, not least because of the splendid efforts of both serving and former Welsh Guardsmen in organising and executing fund raising events. I would ask that aside from the major events planned in 2010, and which will be promulgated by the Appeals Office in due course, you continue to support the Appeal in any way you can not least in spreading the word.

We must not forget other good work and events in 2009. Our Recruiters in Wales have to be congratulated in exceeding their overall recruiting targets and our training staff in Catterick who do so much in getting young Welsh Guardsmen past the post and into the Battalion. The Band continue to be an enormous success story and are much in demand. They do a great deal for the Regiment, not least in fund raising for the Appeal and supporting the Battalion; they are fine Ambassadors for the Regiment. Our Association flourishes in its various parts and another very successful Battlefield Tour was held in September. I am so grateful to all who do so much to keep the Association alive and well. The Regimental website (www.army.mod.uk/welshguards) is now up and running, is much improved and continues to be a source of good information on the Regiment.

2010 will be a varied year. The Battalion will be focussing on training with 12 Mechanised Brigade but will be in Wales in force during March where Companies and the Band will march through a number of towns.

The Appeal will be a priority and of course, so much else will go on. Please note St David's Day with the Battalion in Aldershot on Monday 1 March. I have no doubt that 2010 will be another hugely successful year for the Battalion and the wider Regiment.

Foreword

By Lieutenant Colonel C K Antelme DSO
Commanding Officer

Afghanistan was the focus when my predecessor wrote his foreword to this magazine a year ago and he predicted that the Welsh Guards would 'step up to the considerable challenge that it presents – as the Battalion has always done in the past'. Lt Col Rupert Thorneloe was absolutely right in predicting how difficult the task was going to be and also how brilliantly the Welsh Guards would respond. He needed no crystal ball to work this out. Firstly, he was wise enough to understand the complexities of Afghanistan. Secondly he knew he could trust himself to draw the very best out of those around him – which he did in style. When I arrived in Helmand Province, blinking in the sunlight, I found a very slick Battle Group Headquarters unperturbed by every imaginable friction and complication; young Welsh Guardsmen of eighteen blooded in the highs and lows of combat and surging on; Officers, with and without commissions, leading from the front. In short, all was well and much credit for this lies with Colonel Rupert.

As the Regimental Lieutenant Colonel has remarked in his foreword, many of you will be familiar with the story of our tour and the articles that follow will hopefully add both colour and context. Nevertheless, I would like to make some quick observations. Though the cost was high we firmly believe the price worth paying. Welsh Guardsmen stood firm in three of the most intensely dangerous and important parts of Afghanistan: Sangin, Nad e Ali/Lashkar Gah District and Babaji. They fought with restraint and precision to improve the lives of people tired of oppression and intimidation. Schools, shops, roads, clinics and electricity grew as a result of their efforts – elections though far from perfect ran in relative peace. Whatever the politics of the campaign, the courage, humour, resilience and selfless sacrifice of young British soldiers serve as an example to us all. There is much to celebrate amongst the reflection and remembrance, as much laughter as there have been tears. Yet those who are injured or who have lost loved ones are never far from our thoughts and we, their friends, are with them wherever the road may lead.

Over the next year we look forward to rejoining 12 Mechanised Brigade and steadily climbing the hill again back towards operations in 2012. We will ease the journey with some well-earned leave, adventure training and sport – we aim to enjoy ourselves.

Finally, and on behalf of the Battalion, I want to thank the wider Regimental family for the incredible support given to us all over the last months, it really is much appreciated.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to Lt Col Doug Chalmers, CO 2 PWRR who brilliantly and lightly held the tiller between Welsh Guards Commanding Officers.

WELSH GUARDS CHAPTER 1 THE WELSH GUARDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST



1ST BATTALION WELSH GUARDS THE PRINCE OF WALES'S COMPANY

Maj Dart	LSgt Soko	Gdsm Bebb	Gdsm Jones
Maj Fordham	LSgt Thomas	Gdsm Bilton	Gdsm Jones
Maj Harris	LCpl Allen	Pte Boadi	Gdsm Jones
Capt Campbell	LCpl Astridge	Gdsm Booker	Gdsm Jones
Capt Davies	LCpl Barr	Gdsm Brackpool	Gdsm Judd
Capt Finnegan	LCpl Clowes	Gdsm Britland	Pte Lawson
Lt Fenton	LCpl Danso	Gdsm Brown	Gdsm Lewis
Lt Harris	LCpl Day	Gdsm Cann	Gnr McInnes
Lt Richards	LCpl Dryland	Gdsm Chance	Gdsm Morgan
2Lt Hammond	LCpl Evans	Gdsm Clark	Gdsm Mottram
2Lt Maltby	LCpl Ford	Pte Clark	Gdsm Muia
CSM Davis	LCpl Green	Gdsm Cook	Gdsm Niuyagoyago
WO2 Jones	LCpl Grimes	Gdsm Cummins	Gnr Nuttall
WO2 Price	LCpl Jennings	Gdsm Dalton	Gdsm Parry
CSgt Griffiths	LCpl Jones	Gdsm David	Gdsm Patterson
CSgt Rowley	LCpl Lawrence	Gdsm Davies	Gdsm Powell
Sgt Boika	LCpl Lewis	Pte Davies	Gdsm Price
Sgt Davies	LCpl Lodwick	Gdsm Deeks	Gdsm Rawson
Sgt Dickinson	LCpl Macdonald	Gdsm Delaney	Gdsm Rees
Sgt Dolby	LCpl Martin	Gdsm Divavesi	Gdsm Richards
Sgt Jones	LCpl Meek	Gdsm Edwards	Gdsm Roberts
Sgt Parry	LCpl Miller	Gdsm Evans	Gdsm Roberts
Sgt Parry	LCpl Neal	Gdsm Evans	Gdsm Rowe
Sgt Ponder	LCpl O Grady	Gdsm Fatchu	Gdsm Shaw
Sgt Turnbull	LCpl Owen	Gdsm Faulkner	Gdsm Sheppard
LSgt Bick	LCpl Phillips	Pte Galleger	Gdsm Sloman
LSgt Bjegovic	LCpl Pierce	Gdsm Greenan	Gdsm Small
LSgt Canavan	LCpl Qaimuri	Gdsm Greenman	Gdsm Smith 09
Cpl Collington	LCpl Ritchie	Gdsm Grimshaw	Sig Taylor
LSgt Duffy	LCpl Robinson	Pte Gurung	Gdsm Thomas
LSgt Griffiths	LCpl Safee	Gdsm Hay	Gdsm Tyers
LSgt Johnson	LCpl Watkin Bennett	Gdsm Hennebury	Pte Teale
Cpl Littlewood	Gdsm Anderson	Gdsm Hopkinson	Pte Vosalagi
Bdr Macgregor	Gnr Anderson	Gdsm Huish	Pte Ward
LSgt McIlvogue	Gdsm Aitken	Gdsm Jackson	Gdsm Waqanisaravi
Cpl Mortimer	Gdsm Arthur	Gdsm Jenkins	Gnr Weymouth
Bdr Patton	Gdsm Atherton	Gdsm Johnson	Gdsm Williams
Cpl Roberts	Pte Baker	Gdsm Johnson	Gdsm Williams
LSgt Rowlands	Gdsm Baw	Gdsm Jones	Gdsm Williams
LSgt Skitt	Gdsm Baxter	Gdsm Jones	

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Y Ddraig Goch Ddyry Cychwyn The Red Dragon Gives a Lead

By Lt Harris DJL Second in Command

The last twelve months has proved to be yet another exceptionally busy period for The Prince of Wales's Company following the Battalion move to Aldershot as part of 19 Light Brigade. Since returning from summer leave the company has been on exercise with the US Army in Germany, successfully retained the 300 Cup, undergone an intense package of Pre-Deployment Training and completed an arduous operational tour in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Now back in the UK, the company is looking forward to a generous period of Post-Operational Tour Leave before it returns to face 2010 suitably refreshed and full of gusto.

September heralded the beginning of an intense period of Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) and a shift in focus away from ceremonial duties back to 'green soldiering' in preparation for the company's deployment to Afghanistan on Herrick 10. The first rung on the operational training ladder saw the Battalion deployed at very short notice to Germany on Exercises BAVARIAN DRAGON and COOPERATIVE SPIRIT.

Exercise BAVARIAN DRAGON was a Battalion led field firing package on Grafenwoehr ranges headed up by Welsh Guards personnel. Progressing

from individual pairs fire and manoeuvre to company group attacks, the gradual transition allowed the Guardsman and commanders to gain confidence and re-acquaint themselves with the basics such as medical training, mine awareness and low-level patrolling. The Company Commander's penchant for bursts of early morning PT, however, proved slightly less appealing.

The exercise was extremely rewarding and provided the company with the opportunity to hone our skills and develop as a unit before turning our

attention to COOPERATIVE SPIRIT. Ran by the US Joint Multinational Readiness Centre in Hohenfels, the combat training exercise was designed to test inter-operability among the American, British, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand Armies (ABCA). More specifically, it sought to train and test the various units in a Counter-Insurgency (COIN) based, Afghanistan environment and establish whether we were ready to operate collectively in a combined arms formation context.

Conducted 'in the field,' under stressful battlefield conditions complete with a sophisticated opposing force and civilians on the battlefield, the three-week exercise was monitored and

assessed by US Army Training Teams. With their mirrored sunglasses, chewing tobacco and straight talk, our 'Timberwolf' mentors provided the company with excellent advice borne out of recent operational experiences in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

After Action Reviews were conducted after each serial to establish those aspects the company would 'sustain' or 'improve' as we attempted to quell growing unrest in our principal urban Area of Responsibility (AO), Jalalabad. Such reviews would often result in a cacophony as those of the Mid-West met the boys of Mid-Merthyr. Despite the small-scale 'clash of civilisations' our mentors developed a real affection for the Jamboys even

A relentless, unforgiving affair, the match was finally won in the dying minutes, as The Prince of Wales's Company proudly retained the 300 Cup for the third year running.

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dropping the occasional, 'alright, bud,' into their otherwise rather robotic debriefs.

As the exercise drew to a close, the company had overcome a myriad of counter-insurgency based challenges ranging from engagements with village elders, mayors and police chiefs to conventional attacks onto known insurgent firing points. Exercise COOPERATIVE SPIRIT undoubtedly equipped us with a sound basic understanding of COIN operations and the opportunity to foster a real esprit de corps that served us well over the next 6 months of PDT.

Returning to Aldershot, the company then found itself scattered far and wide as we embarked upon a concentrated training cycle in order to familiarise ourselves with the new operational equipment acquired as part of the Urgent Operational Requirement (UOR) process. In addition to the stock Team Medic and Signals courses, the guardsmen found

themselves learning how to operate the Heavy Machine Gun (HMG), Grenade Machine Gun (GMG), Combat Shotgun and 60mm Mortar among a raft of other weapons. Meanwhile, the command element headed to the home of 2 RIFLES in Ballykinler, Northern Ireland to undertake the Tactical Commanders' Cadre as part of 19 Light Brigade's conceptual preparation for Herrick 10. This proved to be an extraordinarily hectic period for the company, with Company Sergeant Major Jones 27 adroitly managing the inevitable chaos that ensued.

After a quick stage change, the company were quick to don their rugby boots and insert gum shields in preparation for the 300 Cup. A strong squad marshalled ably by Sgt Williams 205, powered through our first three matches against Support Company, Two Company and Headquarter Company with notable performances from LSgt Dwyer and LCpls Devine and Qaimuri. The seminal backline quartet of Lt Finnegan, Major Harris, Lt Harris and 2Lt

Fenton proved a delight to watch as it gracefully carved up the Two Company defensive line time and again.

Having lost to Three Company in qualifying, we then squared off again in the final played in front of a partisan crowd at Lille Barracks. A relentless, unforgiving affair, the match was finally won in the dying minutes as The Prince of Wales's Company proudly retained the 300 Cup for the third year running. What's more, the Players' Player Award went to Sgt Parry 19 who was reminiscent of a young, leaping Welsh salmon following some

epic performances in the second row. Riding high on the crest of the 300 Cup wave, the company then dispersed for Christmas Leave.

At the start of January the company formed up in earnest ready to begin the final stages of the Battalion's PDT package, replete with a newly qualified team of multi-role specialists and Fire Support Group 1 (FSG1) under the solidistic stewardship of Lt Richards and Sgt Boika. We then deployed to the Thetford training area (STANTA) to complete our Confirmatory Final Exercise (CFX). Under the watchful gaze of the

“After one particularly heavy engagement, Gdsm Anderson returned back to Argyll to discover that a round had actually passed through his day-sack!”

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Operational Mentoring and Tactical Advisory Team (OPTAG), we were given the opportunity to prepare and defend a static Forward Operating Base (FOB) location and conduct a number of complex company attacks onto prepared enemy positions.

Taking on board the lessons learnt, the company then raced up to Otterburn, Northumbria to begin the Combined Arms Live Firing Exercise (CALFEX). In spite of the snow, the exercise allowed the company to conduct realistic live field firing with the use of Close Air Support, 105mm artillery and Scimitar armoured vehicles which was to prove an invaluable experience this summer. Finally, February marked the start of the three-week long Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) on Salisbury Plain, a rather bleak affair full of blizzards and snow drifts. Nevertheless, the access to an urban/rural training environment afforded the guardsmen and commanders alike our last opportunity as a

company to confirm and sharpen our new skills before the Leuchar's Cup and deployment to Afghanistan.

In March, 1 Platoon, 2 Platoon and FSG1 readied themselves for the Battalion's annual inter-platoon patrolling competition, the Leuchar's Cup. This was carefully tailored to test the Afghanistan-focused Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) that had been taught during the PDT. After some respectable performances, the company finished mid-table despite LCpl Jones 89 winning Best Shot and Gdsm Johnson 16 revealing a fine grasp of colloquial Pashtun.

After seven months of intensive PDT, the Battalion deployed to Camp Bastion, Helmand Province arriving on April 14th. After a quick familiarisation, the company jumped feet first into the Reception Staging and Onward Integration (RSOI) package marvelling at the weight of our new Osprey body armour, the intensity of the

midday sun and the scale of the portions in the cookhouse. Under the supervision of the Royal Tank Regiment and the Royal Engineers, we were able to re-zero our weapons, re-configure our personal kit and familiarise ourselves with the latest mine/IED detection and clearance drills.

Herrick 10 was to become a tour of two halves for the Jamboys; the first half being very much an offensive battle at company and platoon level involving manoeuvre over a large AO. The second half saw the company fighting from several static locations with fewer deliberate

company operations. The company would eventually take over or establish 13 different locations across the Welsh Guards Battlegroup AO.

The Prince of Wales's Company were initially given responsibility for Nad-e Ali North, based out of Patrol Bases (PB) Argyll in the District Centre (DC) and PB Pimon to the North-West. At a kinetic level, this meant protecting the DC, keeping the Forward Line of Enemy Troops (FLET) away from the main population centres and maintaining route security for the many Combat Logistics Patrols (CLP) required to keep

Fortunately, at the time of impact, he was bending down stealing food from Gdsm Evans 35's ration box. Who said that crime doesn't pay?!

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the Welsh Guards Battlegroup going. This period was characterised by a number of company operations, namely, the 'Pwunch Ddraig' and 'Ddraig Shura' series designed to generate a sense of purpose and progression.

Additionally, the company had a key role in supporting the local Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's (GIRDA) infrastructure, working closely alongside the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and facilitating 'shuras' (meetings) between key figures in the local government, ANSF, NATO's ISAF and the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT).

As 1 Platoon and FSG1 operated from the main company location at PB Argyll, 2 Platoon found themselves occupying an isolated PB 6km to the North-West under Lt Harris and Sgt Parry 700. Within a few days, Gdsm Parry 26 revealed himself to be a DIY guru manipulating the large 'TIGERS' sign of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment into a '1WG' banner

that could be seen far and wide. After a month and a number of increasingly nasty engagements with the enemy, the platoon were reunited with their brother Jamboys in PB Argyll as an Estonian Company in armoured vehicles took over the location.

In the DC, FSG1 and 1 Platoon under Lt Fenton and Sgt Parry 19 played a vital role as part of the Pwunch Ddraig surge operations to push the enemy back. After one particularly heavy engagement, Gdsm Anderson returned back to Argyll to discover that a round had actually passed through his day-sack! By late June, the company had carried out 8 Pwunch Ddraig operations and created a significant security bubble around the DC and beyond. During this time we were also involved in a number of important Battlegroup-minus operations, including the Shin Kalay and Khowshal Kalay shuras which effectively allowed the local District Governor (DG) to address his constituents and hear their concerns as part of a wider influence piece.

With the company group complete, we turned our attention to Zarghun Kalay, a town to the North-East of the DC where the enemy enjoyed complete freedom of movement. Operation 'Tor Hajdar' was subsequently launched to clear the town and establish a Check Point (CP) to the North in order to prevent the enemy from re-infiltrating. As 1 and 2 Platoon took their respective positions on the Line of Departure (LD), FSG1 provided rear security occupying the centre of the town with elements of the Light Dragoons and FSG2 acting as a recce screen. Having cleared the town a serious charm offensive was waged flavoured by the dollar to persuade a local national to give up a particularly well placed compound. Shortly after, CP Khuday Noor was born. 1 Platoon moved into their new home immediately thereafter and excelled as they were given a hostile three week-long reception by the enemy as they sought to re-gain the ground we had driven them from.

The company then prepared itself for its role in Operation Panchai Palang (Panther's Claw), part of a wider Brigade-level offensive to clear the enemy out of key areas prior to the national elections on August 20th. This involved handing over the responsibility of Nad-e Ali DC to R Company, 4 RIFLES. On the 25th June, the company moved north by vehicle to Chah-e Anjir and moved straight into an old disused American development building within an industrial complex littered with abandoned Soviet vehicles. This location would become known as PB 'Shazad' after the Pashtun word for 'Prince'.

Operation Panchai Palang saw the company being pulled in two directions, split between the brigade's mission to secure the canal and the Commanding Officer's desire to exert control and influence over 'the prize in the north,' the town of Chah-e Anjir. From PB Shazad, 1 and 2 Platoon punched out east, denying the enemy a number of vital crossing points over the Shamalan Canal in line with the

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A Gdsm static in the GZ observing his area

brigade's intent. While 1 Platoon occupied a vital junction at the foot of the canal known as 'Yellow 14,' 2 Platoon fought hard to take and establish CPs 11 and 9 further to the north. FSG1 then arrived in their jackal vehicles to bolster our presence on the canal and assume the counter-IED task.

It was during this time that Gdsm Hopkinson narrowly avoided serious injury as an enemy Rocket-Propelled Grenade struck his Jackal. Fortunately, at the time of impact, he was bending down stealing food from Gdsm Evans 35's ration box. Who said that crime doesn't pay?

Billed initially as a two week mission, the company would eventually hold the CPs for the two and a half months often in extremely austere conditions. By mid-August, the forthcoming closure of CP9 and the addition of a multiple from 3 YORKS, allowed the company to re-rock and focus on its second task, the physical and conceptual clearance of Chah-e Anjir. As the national election day loomed, the company mobilised itself for what would inevitably be a difficult day as the enemy resolved to disrupt the voting process. Sure enough, come

election day, the company was engaged in fifteen separate contacts with the enemy but managed to provide the required security to allow up to 900 Afghans to vote.

Having effectively bullied the enemy out of town, we set about creating a 'ring of steel' around the main population centre comprised of a number of small CPs. These included 'The School CP,' 'Five Tarks,' 'Yellow 12' and 'Compound 23' manned jointly by Jamboy multiples and ANSF. Using these locations the company sought to keep the enemy out of the town, whilst persuading the local nationals that we were the good guys. This culminated in the opening of a school in Chah-e Anjir and added weight to the Company Commander's much used maxim 'everybody love everybody.' On the 30th September, The Prince of Wales's Company handed over responsibility for Chah-e Anjir to Inkerman Company, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards.

Finally, the company remembers the friends and family of Private John Brackpool who was Killed in Action at CP9 on the 9th July and pays tribute to the courage of those Wounded in Action.



Firing Irum during a contact



FSG curried element taking a break whilst on patrol



FSG patrol in Shin Keloy

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Gdenn Hay and PSG 1 on patrol in G2 near NDA DC



Sgt Parry 19 briefing LCpl Moxham (SG) whilst on patrol



LCpl's Lawrence and Endrick take a break after a contact w/c



With LCpl Thomas in goal 1PI get taught how to play football



Preparing to mount the Vikings prior to Panthers Claw



View from sangar on roof at Khuday Moor looking north taken



NUMBER TWO COMPANY

Maj HGC Bettinson	LCpl TM Nuku	Gdsm T Hodgkinson COLDM GDS
Capt CJW Lambe	LCpl CP Pheasey	Gdsm ST Howells
Lt OG James	LCpl K Simmons (CG)	Gdsm DJP Hughes 34
Lt ML Evison	LCpl S Powell	Gdsm Hughes 29
Lt C Fraser-Sampson	LCpl M Walters	Gdsm Hurrell
2Lt C Beare	LCpl K Williams RAMC	Gdsm TP James
2Lt M Simpson	LCpl PJ Williams-Day	Gdsm AJ Jenkins 46
WO2 MP Topps	LCpl MLI Ngando AGC (SPS)	Gdsm AK Jones 08
CSgt D McCabe	Gdsm WD Austin	Gdsm SB Jones 10
CSgt JG Jenkinson	Gdsm KS Bevan	Gdsm E Kemp
CSgt AM Brown 16	Gdsm S Bolabola	Gdsm CK King COLDM GDS
CSgt B Proudfoot	Gdsm PA Bromage	Gdsm TRT Knill
Sgt MP R-Buckley	Gdsm M Brooks	Gdsm JK Korosaya
Sgt AL Griffiths 96	Gdsm R Brown 25	Gdsm Langley
Sgt D Morgan 10	Gdsm C Brownett	Dmr DP Leach
LSgt RJ Bartley	Gdsm DT Cartwright COLDM GDS	Gdsm Leachman
LSgt J D'Arcy	Gdsm J Caswell	Gdsm B Livock
LSgt J Davies 29	Gdsm NA Chambers	Gdsm JD Lloyd
LSgt D Evans 36	Gdsm S Che	Gdsm R Lovell
LSgt GL Evans 53	Gdsm JAB Cooper	Gdsm MK Malley
LSgt CL Greaves	Dmr C Cooke	Gdsm LP Meaney
LSgt GM Hayman	Gdsm Craze	Gdsm CBM Mortimer-Rees
LSgt DR Lewis 29	Dmr LA David 30	Gdsm JJ Penlington
LSgt P Owen 39	Gdsm CP Davis 51	Gdsm Pothecary
LSgt LR Peek	Gdsm DR Davies 37	Gdsm M Retallick
LSgt CP Rogers COLDM GDS	Gdsm Davies 50	Gdsm A Richards 85
LSgt B Williams 11	Gdsm Dimmock	Gdsm S Roberts 49
LCpl DLR Crombie	Gdsm AP Doyle	Dmr DJ Rogers 58
LCpl GE Davies 16	Gdsm M Edwards 27	Gdsm Rowlands 69
LCpl C Davies 95	Gdsm SR Edwards 95	Gdsm JW Rowlands 89
LCpl CA Evans 88	Pte J Fraser	Gdsm Siviter
LCpl SAE Evans 74	Gdsm S Gizzie	Gdsm AC Smith 77
LCpl C Green 08	Gdsm S Goss	Gdsm MA Storrs COLDM GDS
LCpl N Griffiths 34	Gdsm MG Green 79	Gdsm SL Taylor 31
LCpl TA Hiscock	Gdsm DJ Griffiths 21	Gdsm AAE Thomas 22
LCpl GT Hillard	Gdsm DL Grindley	Gdsm KR Thomas 58
LCpl GI Lucas	Gdsm Gronow	Gdsm L Tucker 73
LCpl R Jones 09	Gdsm CH Harrison	Gdsm BR Tucker 37
LCpl WP Lewis 88	Gdsm MD Hawker	Gdsm S Williams 07
LCpl S Marsh	Gdsm BD Hellyn COLDM GDS	Dmr CJ Williams 22
LCpl C Morgan 65	Gdsm Hill	Gdsm G Woosnam
	Gdsm AJ Hobbs	

NUMBER TWO COMPANY



Number Two Company Group, RSCN Reg. Camp BSN, Apr 09

Gwyr Ynys Y Cŵdryn
The Men of the Island of the Mighty

Number Two Company OCT 2008 - OCT 2009

The past year for Number Two Company has been fast-paced, challenging and varied. In short our feet have barely touched the ground!

On returning from the multinational Exercise CO-OPERATIVE SPIRIT in Germany in October 2008 we quickly moved into the high tempo world of pre-deployment training with individuals sent all over the country to learn such things as: close quarter combat, how new vehicles were driven and commanded, how new weapon systems operated, communicating in Pashtu and intelligence reporting. Those not on courses were occupied with in-house training on new tactics and procedures and a steady build up of personal fitness. We also made the most of the Battalion-run range program in Ash, Lydd and Warcop ranges, with the Guardsmen taking part in comprehensive shoots with

SABO, LMG, GPMG, GMG and HMG.

As we entered 2009 Number Two Company was standing at three Rifle Platoons (4 Platoon, 5 Platoon and 7 Platoon, the latter having recently come across to us from Number Three Company), as well as Fire Support Group Two (a mixture of the Anti-Tank Platoon and Machine Gun Platoon).

The newcomers from Number Three Company and Support Company were quickly welcomed into the Number Two Company Group fold. Indeed no sooner had we come back from the Christmas break, we were heading into a near month of exercises designed to continue our training, giving us the opportunity to put into

practise that which we had learnt during the latter half of 2008 and to confirm that we were now ready to deploy on operations in Afghanistan. We travelled the length and breadth of the country from the Confirmatory Exercise (CFX) in Thetford, to the Combined Arms Live Firing Exercise (CALFEX) up in Otterburn, and finally to the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) on Salisbury Plain.

With the major pre-deployment exercises now over, February and March saw us take some well earned pre-deployment leave, whilst also continuing with our training to maintain and improve upon all the skills

that we had picked up and the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that we had developed. Indeed in March the Battalion's Inter-Platoon competition, the Leuchars Cup, took place with the very aim of testing competitors in a range of skills pertinent to operations in Afghanistan, from First Aid, Cultural Awareness and the conduct of Op BARNAB, to Fitness and Shooting. Number Two Company entered 4 Platoon, 7 Platoon and FSG 2 (5 Platoon having been sadly lost in the reshuffle following the short-notice resurrection of Number Nine Company), with FSG 2 proving the eventual winners by some margin.

By mid-April the time for training was over and it was finally time for us to deploy to Afghanistan on Operation HERRICK 10.

NUMBER TWO COMPANY



Mastiffs returning back to PB SILAB

By mid-April the time for training was over and it was finally time for us to deploy to Afghanistan on Operation HERRICK 10. On 14th April 2009 Number Two Company Group took off from RAF Brize Norton bound for Camp Bastion, Helmand Province.

On arriving in theatre we moved straight into our RSOI (Reception, Staging and Onwards Integration) phase, comprising a minimum of four days in-theatre training to deploying onto the ground. Number Two Company Group was tasked with occupying the Nad-e-Ali (South) Area of Operations (AO) within Battle Group Centre South. Prior to flying out to theatre we were anticipating having to hold just two locations, namely Patrol Base (PB) SILAB and PB TANDA. However by Day 3 of RSOI that situation changed as we found ourselves having to man an

additional two locations in the form of Check Point (CP) PARAANG and CP HAJI ALEM. With RSOI Training complete and after a quick re-orbat to reform 6 Platoon in light of these extra two locations, Number Two Company flew out from Camp Bastion to take over from the men of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment who were holding these PBs and CPs. That is, all except FSG 2 who after waiting behind in Camp Bastion to take over and prepare their JACKAL mobility vehicles, drove out the gates and across the desert to link up with the Company in PB SILAB. Number Two Company Group was now fully deployed on the ground.

Nad-E-Ali (South) was a relatively large region for a Company AO. It was a predominantly flat area of the Green Zone, interspersed with canals, irrigation ditches, tree lines, fields of poppy and wheat,

lone compounds, compound clusters and kalays (villages). As such it afforded good arcs of fire onto ISAF locations, as well as good cover for the insurgents.

At the south of our AO, housing 4 Platoon and a Troop of Royal Artillery, was PB TANDA, approximately 8km from the other Two Company locations. Further north and on the western edge of the Company's AO, where the desert met the Green Zone, was PB SILAB which housed Company Headquarters,

the FSG in their JACKALS, and later on, once they had arrived, the Recce Platoon and the MASTIFF Group. Roughly 2km east of PB SILAB was the village of KHOWSHAL KALAY and its approximate 2,000 inhabitants. Sitting on the southern edge of the village was CP PARAANG and 6 Platoon, ideally situated to influence the local nationals in the village to the north and to take the fight to the insurgents to the south and west. Approximately 2km further east again was CP HAJI ALEM and 7 Platoon. Housed in a substantial fort that had formerly belonged to a local drug lord, the men of 7 Platoon sought to dominate the area around them, despite being surrounded by the enemy on all sides. Although PB TANDA was collapsed after six weeks with some of the men of 4 Platoon redistributed amongst the other three locations, the Company remained stretched as it picked up an additional task of providing MOG dismounts for the Battle Group's VIKING vehicles.

Our time in Nad-e-Ali (South) was an extremely kinetic one for all locations - very quickly every Guardsman knew the compounds and enemy firing points surrounding their particular Patrol Base or Check Point like the back of their hand. Before long everyone had their

Whilst clearing one compound at the side of the Canal, he threw an L109 HE grenade but crucially forgot to remove the safety clip beforehand!

NUMBER TWO COMPANY



Fire Support Group Two

own personal war stories and dits! As well as the inevitable threat of small arms fire, there was also a significant Improvised Explosive Device (IED) presence in NDA(S), which made it increasingly difficult to resupply both PBSILAB and the outlying locations. We were greatly restricted in the routes that we could take owing to the size of our vehicles and there being very few places to cross the prominent canals in the AO. The vulnerable points of Green 1, Green 4 and Green 5 quickly became all too familiar to all concerned, and particularly to the FSG and MASTIFF Group.

But it wasn't all kinetic action. Under the Quartermaster Technical Capt Harman, Number Two Company conducted a well developed influence program to bring the local nationals on-side. We held numerous shuras, rebuilt the bridge at Green 4 and provided medical assistance to those in

the local area who required it.

After two and a half months in Nad-e-Ali (South) we were informed that we were to be handing over the AO to B Company, 4 RIFLES and moving north to take part in 19 (Lt) Brigade's summer offensive, Operation PANCHAI PALANG (Panther's Claw). And so on 23rd June 2009 we handed over PBSILAB and CPs PARAANG and HAJI ALEM to the Riflemen and moved back to Camp Bastion for 36hrs battle preparation, prior to launching on the next phase of our tour.

On 25th June the Company main body drove out from Camp Bastion to the newly-built FOB SHAWQAT, followed the next day by 6 and 7 Platoons who flew out there by Support Helicopter. Once the Company Group was complete, we were ready to step off and move north up the SHAMALAN Canal. Our role was to move north in a

mixture of MASTIFF, RIDGEBACK and VIKING vehicles, to link up with two Troops of CVR(T), before echeloning through the Prince of Wales's Company to clear our way north up the western side of the Canal from Crossing Point 10 to 3. We were to hold some Crossing Points by way of a physical presence on the ground, and destroy or deny the others by means of the Royal Engineers who were attached to us for this phase of the operation. We were to eventually link up with B Company, 3 SCOTS who were

holding the northern tip of the Canal before conducting a Relief in Place (RIP) with them.

By the 4th July Number Two Company had achieved its mission, but not without a few setbacks and challenges along the way: the Company Second-in-Command, Capt Lambe, was shot in the leg; a VIKING carrying 8 members of the Recce Platoon slipped off the road and into the SHAMALAN Canal. Amazingly and thankfully they all survived; elsewhere a RIDGEBACK caught fire, whilst another hung precariously over the edge of the Canal. These incidents all occurred against the background of repelling multiple attacks from the insurgents on a daily basis. As the Company Commander, it was humbling to see that despite all these setbacks, including the tragic loss of the Commanding Officer, the Men of the Island of the Mighty remained positive as we kept clearing north along the Canal.

Some however cleared better than others. LSgt Baines returned to his old Company on a brief attachment from instructing recruits at ITC Catterick. Whilst clearing one compound at the side of the Canal, he threw an L109 HE grenade but crucially forgot to remove the safety clip beforehand!

Over time local nationals were growing in confidence both in themselves and in our ability to protect them.

NUMBER TWO COMPANY



6 Platoon patrol through Khawshah Kalay

By last light on the 4th July Number Two Company had cleared north along the SHAMALAN Canal from Crossing Point 10 and conducted its RiP with B Company, 3 SCOTS. Crossing Points 7 and 1 were controlled by 7 Platoon and 6 Platoon respectively, with all other crossing points either destroyed or denied by the Sappers, Company Headquarters, the Recce Platoon and the MASTIFF Group were settled into what was to become Interim Operating Base (IOB) WAHID.

Number Two Company thus formed the north-western element of the 19 (Lt) Brigade BLOCK that helped to make the CHAR-E-ANJIR Triangle a "gated community", as the Light Dragoon Battle Group moved from our north-east, south then west to CLEAR the area of insurgents.

In this new AO the predominant

threat was from IEDs (particularly along the SHAMALAN Canal). All locations regularly received small arms fire from insurgents and IOB WAHID came under close scrutiny from a sniper team that was quickly countered by our own snipers. Similarly down at Crossing Point 7, Number 7 Platoon were under regular and heavy contact from insurgent forces. They fired over 20 Guided Multi Launch Rockets in reply.

The days surrounding the Afghanistan Presidential Election (20th August) were particularly kinetic. Crossing Point One was contacted six times on the 19th August and Crossing Point 7 five times on the day itself. Op TOR JAZIRA 3, one of a series of Company surge operations, was mounted on the day of the Election in order to provide greater security to local nationals as they went to vote. Unfortunately an extremely effective terror campaign by the insurgents meant that the vast

majority of locals feared vicious reprisals if they were caught travelling to a polling station, and so they stayed at home.

The main event for Number Two Company following the elections was Op TOR SAHAKATCHA. Phase 1 of the operation was the collapse of Check Point 7. It started with a FBINT by the Estonian Company in the west, before Number Two Company cleared the route south to 7 Platoon, with a welcome boost of 132 men from A Company, 3 SCOTS. Phase 2 saw the re-numbering of 7 Platoon to 4 Platoon and the establishment of a new Check Point for them in the LUY MANDAH Bazaar in the east of our AO. A significant number of IEDs were found in the vicinity of the Bazaar that would prove to be the principal threat facing 4 Platoon for the remainder of their time in theatre. The extent of the IED threat was sadly demonstrated towards the end

of the tour when the Recce Platoon moved through the Bazaar in the early hours as part of a preliminary operation to CLEAR the adjoining LUY MANDAH Kalay. Their interpreter unfortunately strayed off the cleared route and stepped on an IED. He was killed in the blast and the Recce Platoon Commander, Capt. Spencer Smith, suffered a shrapnel wound to the shoulder.

Meanwhile out to the west, following the closure of Check Point 7, insurgents had begun to focus their attacks on 6 Platoon at Crossing Point 1. In addition to small arms fire, the insurgents tried to fight on their terms by continuing to lay IEDs along any route that they thought we might take. This made for a tough period for 6 Platoon, however they fulfilled their role of disrupting insurgent freedom of movement across the northern end of the

NUMBER TWO COMPANY



Future Guardsman

SHAMALAN Canal and made a number of arrests that were successfully followed up by other ISAF elements.

Similarly to NDA(S), our time in the LUY MANDAH AO was not all about kinetic action. Indeed the influence piece was becoming increasingly more prominent as we began to win the security battle. We held regular shuras, including one at Check Point 7 to which over 90 local nationals turned up. We also implemented "Cash for Work" schemes, which included paying local nationals to clear 4 kms of stream south of the Bazaar, thereby improving the water irrigation to the surrounding fields. Over time local nationals were growing in confidence both in themselves and in our ability to protect them, and a few shopkeepers had begun to express a willingness to re-open their shops in the Bazaar.

We handed over the LUY MANDAH AO to Number Two Company, 1st Bn Grenadier Guards at a pivotal moment. Enemy forces were making concerted efforts to scupper our hard work, particularly through

their continued use of IEDs and scare tactics on the local populace. However we were similarly beginning to see signs that the influence battle was there to be won.

The resolve of the Company has been tested throughout the tour. Lt Evison was hit by small arms on a patrol near CP HAJI ALEM on 9th May and later died of his wounds. Gdsm King COLDM GDS was killed in an IED on the SHAMALAN Canal on 22nd July. Both these men will never be forgotten and live on in our hearts. Our thoughts and prayers remain with their families, along with the other 26 members of the Company who have been injured.

It has been a long year for Number Two Company, and the early days of pre-deployment training certainly seem a long way off now. This was a lengthy and challenging tour, but one that we have conducted with determination and professionalism. We have enjoyed a considerable degree of success, and are rightly proud of what we have achieved. We remain The Men of the Island of the Mighty.



Gdsm Cartwright COLDM GDS, Gdsm King COLDM GDS, L/Cpl Powell



Gdsm Gaze in CP HAJI ALEM



Gdsm Grindley, Retzlack, Hellyer, King & Tucker 37 in CP HAJI ALEM

NUMBER TWO COMPANY



Gdsm Guest and LSgt Williams



Gdsm Jones 10 provides top cover



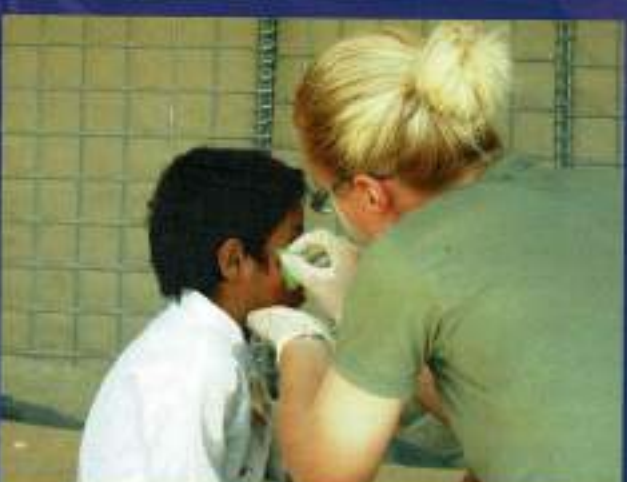
Gdsm Lewis, Gdsm, LCpl Powell, Gdsm Hawker & King GZUDM GDS



Gdsm Patherson



Gdsm Tucker 37, Keston, Davies 50, Murrell, Thomas 58 and 1



(Cpl Baldock RAMC treats a young local National

NUMBER TWO COMPANY



Lt Col Marsh



Local Nationals arriving for the First District Governor's S



Lt Evison in CP1 MAY ALDAM



Lt Fraser-Samson in Pk TANDM



Wg Butters and WO2 Stoddart-Bennett

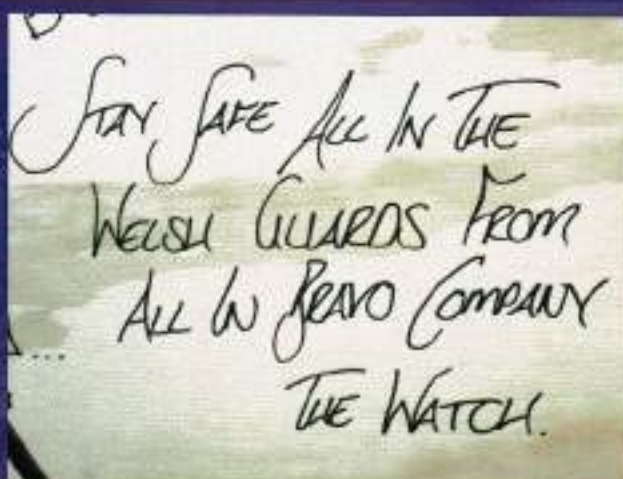


Members of 6 Platoon

NUMBER TWO COMPANY



Members of FSG 2 in JOW WAND



Message from our 3 SCOTS colleagues after Op PAMCHAI PSALANG



2500 BSW



Cadet Brownist



Sgt Griffiths '96 conducting Platoon Sergeant's admin



Cadet Mailey

NUMBER THREE COMPANY

Maj Stone	Cpl Williams
Capt Spry	Cpl Stocker
Capt Dunlop	Cpl Watt
Capt Stanning	Cpl Twiggs
Capt Dennien	Cpl Carter
Capt Harrison	LCpl Crabb
Capt McVey	LCpl Gray
Capt Pass	LCpl Jones
WO1 Baldwin	LCpl Fawkes
WO2 Ryan	Gdsm Evans 28
WO2 Epton	Gdsm Millins
WO2 Andrews	Pte Bailey
CSgt Edwards-Jones	Pte Bishop
CSgt Hooson	Pte Boffy
CSgt Bingley	Pte Bowler
CSgt Roberts	Pte Britton
SSgt King	Pte Gifford
Sgt McAulay	Pte Gale
Sgt Geen	Pte Greene
Sgt Laws	Pte Grove
Sgt Harthy	Pte Khuza
Sgt Evans 31	Pte Murray
Sgt Braithwaite	Pte Parkin
Sgt Hollingsworth	Pte J V Rensberg
Sgt Parkin	Pte Sterling
Sgt Watling	Pte Stevenson
LSgt Lewis 54	Pte Windsor
LSgt Ratcliffe	Fus Evans
LSgt Rowlands 39	Rfn Gane
Cpl Astill	Rfn Horrocks
Cpl Jones	

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

It became apparent early during our pre-deployment training that Number 3 Company's role on Op HERRICK 10 would be an interesting and demanding one. This role was as a Company Operational Mentoring Liaison Team (OMLT). There was already some experience of this role within the Battalion from previous HERRICK tours: Maj Corbet-Burcher, Capt Pridmore, Lt Charles-Jones, Lt Oksowski and Sgt Geen had all deployed as mentors within the previous two years.

The heart of the Company was from Number 3 Company however, due to the nature of the task, there was a heavy requirement for officers and SNCOs and we were backfilled from a number of different infantry Regiments including the Coldstream Guards, the Yorkshire Regiment, the Royal Regiment of Scotland, the Mercian Regiment and, for some armoured style, the Royal Tank Regiment. Of course we also had good representation from the Royal Army Medical Corps. All members of the Company were, of course, given honorary lifetime membership as 'Little Iron Men' though many were not as short and drama-prone as you might expect from this Company!

Our mission, in simple terms, was to 'mentor, train and fight

alongside the 2nd Kandak (Battalion)'. This Kandak mirrored a British Infantry Battalion in structure: a Lieutenant Colonel in command, a Regimental Sergeant Major, three Rifle Companies, a Heavy Weapons Company and a Headquarter Company. It was approximately 400 in strength, although if it was not for absentees it should be nearer 600; their absentee problem is more significant than the British Army. We knew before arriving that the Kandak had a good reputation and was proficient, principally due to a very strong commanding officer Lieutenant Colonel Wadood, a man of Russian education and twenty-five years operational experience. It was a source of concern to Company Headquarters that with such experience across the Kandak,



CSM Baldwin



LSgt Lewis 54

NUMBER THREE COMPANY



Csgt Edwards-Jones 16

what on earth could we teach them? Added to this, we were to be the Kandak's tenth set of mentors and there was a worry that they would see us and think, 'here we go again, another set of Brits with their good ideas'.

PDT was effective and we deployed on a Combined Field Exercise (CFX) in STANTA, a Combined Arms Live Firing Exercise (CALFEX) in Otterburn and finally a Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) on Salisbury Plain. Having completed BATUS and Germany a few months previously we felt well prepared for our PDT exercises and we were very familiar with packing our kit! The exercises and the Company Commander's recce to theatre allowed us to become more familiar with the task ahead and, by talking to those that had just returned, it seemed that the task we had of operating with the Afghan National Army (ANA) was going to be interesting, exciting and potentially very rewarding. We

were task organised to 2 MERCIAN (1st Battalion, The Worcester and Sherwood Foresters in old speak). Whilst it was sad to learn that we would be away from the Battalion for the tour, we knew that we would be in safe hands under a Battalion that was historically known as the 'The Guards of the Line'. We were immediately welcomed and we spent a number of days in Northern Ireland where they are based. However, our task organisation was not that simple! We learnt during the MRX that Number 3 Company would deploy to Sangin, a difficult and dangerous Taliban heartland in Northern Helmand. This meant that we would be operating within the AO of 2 RIFLES (1st Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets in old speak). Although there was no command relationship between us and 2 RIFLES, it became clear that this was the Battlegroup that we would see most and our relationship with them was crucial. The Company



Gdim Mhms

Commander realised that he was about to have four bosses: Commanding Officers of 1 WG, 2 MERCIAN, 2 RIFLES and the Commanding Officer of the Afghan Battalion that we would mentor and fight alongside. Like 2 MERCIAN, 2 RIFLES quickly made us feel part of the team and the Company Commander and Company Sergeant Major spent some time again in Northern Ireland developing our relationship and proposed concept of operations. The MRX was demanding mainly because of the snow. It may seem odd

that we trained for temperatures above 40 degrees in the snow but we did! It was interesting to hear the news channels being told by the Military Media Teams that it was a good idea to train in the snow as it would be as hard as the heat. The irony and strange logic was not lost on the men and they all thought Kenya would have been a better option! We were able to learn about Sangin during the MRX and the Kandak that we were going to be operating alongside. Of real assistance



Gdim Evans 28

NUMBER THREE COMPANY



Lt Sjt Lewis 54, Sgt Evans 31, Sgt Morris, Capt Dunlop, CSgt Edwards Jones 16, Sgt Bretherton

was the visit of the Major Zelgai to the MRX. He was the Battalion Second-in-Command from our Kandak and joined the exercise for three days. His presence was so valuable and we were able to get a real feel for the task ahead. His mood was not great throughout as during the previous Afghan Officer visit in 2008, accommodation had been in a smart hotel in London and this year they were put in a Barrack Block in Knook Camp on Salisbury Plain...in 18 inches of snow! The Company Commander drove him to his quarter in London one night to meet his family and have dinner.

This seemed to cement the relationship early. Major Zelgai told the Company Commander's wife that he would ensure that

he would not be shot during the tour. Unfortunately in the early stages of the tour it became clear that Major Zelgai never left camp, so we remain baffled that he was so confident in his promise! Inshallah! By the end of PDT, we were sufficiently content that every man could fire every weapon, use every radio (and in particular call in a fire mission and send a 9-liner), drive every vehicle, and act as a Team Medic. We knew that we would need to be patient, be respectful and achieve trust and mutual respect with ANA early. This we acknowledged would be best done through example, good drills and discipline.

Our deployment was unusual. We left a month earlier than the rest of the Battalion on 15 March

via Northern Ireland. Nothing is easy! We asked if we could deploy from Brize Norton rather than Aldergrove and the RAF and movers said, 'absolutely not'. Therefore, at public expense, the Company flew from Heathrow to Belfast to join other members of 2 MERCIAN at Aldergrove. You can imagine our surprise (and slight irritation) when we flew back into England the next day...to Brize Norton! Added to this, we were told that we would be spending a night in Brize Norton at the luxury Gateway House! The boys were excellent and did not complain but there was a bitter pill in having said goodbye to families the previous day after only a little pre-tour leave to then be back in England for another 24 hours! The flight

took off the next morning and, following a 24 hour stop-off in Muscat due to equipment failure on the anti-missile suite, we arrived in Afghanistan six days after leaving Aldershot.

After an OMLT sponsored Reception Staging and Onward Integration (RSOI) package in Camp Shorebak (near Camp Bastion) we moved up to Sangin in two Chinooks. There was a definite air of excitement tinged with apprehension. We had heard and read a lot about this famous town, but what would it really be like? We knew it was a beautiful area set in the lush 'Green Zone' either side of the River Helmand. What would the Patrol Bases (PBs) actually consist of? Would we be shot at all the time? Were the

NUMBER THREE COMPANY

*The Body Armour: It works!*

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) as common as we had been led to believe? We would know in a matter of days. We arrived and were welcomed in a typical Royal Marine fashion (2 RIFLES had not yet taken over). A heavy burst of .50 cal rang over our heads as we were being given our arrival brief by the RSM 45 Commando. We all hit the floor, but the Royal Marines stood still and smiled at their practical joke. 'Welcome to Sangin' said the RSM and we got up covered in dust and mildly confused. Boot-necks – don't you just love them?

We were to operate as a Company minus size with a Company Headquarters in Sangin District Centre (DC) and four Patrol Bases: PBs Nabi, Blenheim, Waterloo and Pylae. Each PB was commanded by a Captain with a Colour Sergeant as his second-in-command and then eight NCOs or senior soldiers under them. The PB were jointly occupied by the ANA, normally a Platoon plus or Company minus. In the OMLT role every UK rank mentors and 'looks after' a rank above his

own in the Afghan Army. So the Company Commander worked with the Commanding Officer, the Company Sergeant Major with the Regimental Sergeant Major and the Platoon Commanders with Afghan Company Commanders. Some members of the Company were promoted to give them added credibility with the ANA as they are a very rank conscious organisation. So this was rather good if you were a 2Lt made up to a Captain or a Lance Sergeant made up to a Sergeant!

The PBs quickly developed and bonded with their ANA warriors and officers. PB Nabi was quickly identified as the one with most banter (CSgt Edwards-Jones 16 was the 2IC!), PB Blenheim had the most style (other PBs wrote off to men's magazines for literature; Blenheim – Sergeants Geen and Harry – wrote to Twinnings for Earl Grey tea; PB Waterloo was the fittest with CSgt Hooson insisting on PFTs (1.5 miles was 13 laps of the PB!) and, unfortunately for them, PB Pylae was the most threatened with IEDs which seemed to surround

*Company Commander*

it. Back in Sangin DC, Company Headquarters lived across the river from 2 RIFLES and we were truly embedded with the ANA. It was impossible not to bond quickly and we ate regularly with them and quickly became very fond of the Afghan cuisine which was normally stewed goat, rice, bread, tomatoes and cucumber with mountains of salt. It certainly beat rations which was the alternative! All meals with our Afghan colleagues were cross-legged (not as easy as it was at prep school...) and provide a good opportunity to discuss future plans with commanders as we realised early on that formal planning groups were simply not going to catch on. The Company Sergeant Major sorted the fitness with casevac drills and he certainly set the example with runs around the FOB. LSgt Lewis 54 had a shock in the first week. Keen to kick start the tour on the right note, he thought that he would go for a jog. Army shorts, Company t-shirt and brand new trainers he set off for his run by leaving the security of the DC in error and,

when he noticed that he was running through open fields with locals ploughing, he suspected that he may be in some considerable danger. On his return route he beat his best PFT time which he got at the Guards Depot in 1989! Some nice Royal Marine had not stopped him at the sangar, clearly thinking that he was a local in a Number 3 Company t-shirt!

Our approach with the ANA required a clear understanding of the standard to be achieved and the patience to get there by whichever means possible. The ANA, we learnt on PDT, could be volatile, prone to drug use, irrational and quick to turn to violence. We were lucky with our Kandak as we saw none of these characteristics. They were often unclear in their planning and objectives and we saw this as one important line of operation. We needed to remember that we were assisting the ANA, not doing it for them and this differentiation was difficult to adopt, particularly in the early weeks. The goal was to leave in six months time with great

NUMBER THREE COMPANY



CO 2 Rifles, Lt Col Thomson, Lt Col Woodwood & Hyatt (interpreter)



Local lunch with The Major General, Lt Col Woodwood, Company Commander, The Major General, VQZ (COMS) Ryan

respect and affection for our ANA counterparts, having passed on advice as required.

We were equipped with WMK vehicles and some Snatches. The IED threat meant that we tried to conduct operations and patrols by foot, although the anti-personnel threat rose too during our tour. We were lucky and received 2 JACKALS and a Panther vehicle half way through the tour. Our personal equipment was outstanding and we had great faith in the body armour having seen two men survive having been shot in the chest. We were not short of weapons: 50 cal, GPMG, shot-guns, SA-80, grenades and we had access to air, aviation and ISTAR through a Fire Support Team (FST) that was attached to us when required. This also gave the ANA real confidence, but they are also reliant on such assets, which is not ideal for future independence.

We knew that the enemy was tough and resolute. The Taliban has been described as a 'Government-in-Waiting', but

they have a number of key vulnerabilities: senior leadership is divided; there are tensions with AQ; they struggle to win a Pashtun support base (Helmand) as they cannot offer tangible benefits, and they are suffering from campaign fatigue. However, they deserve 'respect': they were brave and determined with a clear goal. Their strategy in Sangin was to gain local support and undermine the government. More widely they want to prioritise Helmand, isolate Kabul, effect Western electorates and convince locals that Kabul cannot govern. IEDs were their main tactic in Sangin, sometimes covered by fire. They were often laid remotely and Remote Control (RC), Pressure Pad (PP) or Command Wire (CW) operated. A sound maxim was for us to believe that we were always 'being watched' and that there were IEDs everywhere: this kept us on our toes and ensured that our Vallon (metal detectors) skills were on the ball. Often the insurgents would use walkie-talkies (ICOM radios) and our interpreters

would listen to their conversations. Comments such as 'there are nine of them, ANA and British; they are by the mosque and turning left. Get out the big guns and blow the large thing.' If this fitted your position on patrol, it was very unnerving but, more often than not, it was just talk.

Our intent was to develop our ANA Kandak. Companies and Platoons and defeat the insurgency in Sangin through training, patrolling and intelligence led operations and, where possible, ensure 'partnered' ANA and ISAF patrols with 2 RIFLES. If we could move from 'mentoring' with OMLT to 'partnering' with 2 RIFLES towards ANA 'independence', we would be going in the right direction within COMISAF. General McChrystal's intent. This was difficult at the start of the tour as the ANA taught us far more than we were able to teach them but, together, we made a capable force against the insurgents. The PBs patrolled everyday less Fridays (ANA Day of Prayer) and

Company Headquarters would visit the four PBs and lead operations. Often, through good skills, patrols would find IEDs before they detonated and then task the IEDD specialist team to come and deal with the device. The ANA found this frustrating as often this would mean a five hour cordon! The ANA do not do five hour cordons! It would require a lot of diplomacy from the PB Commanders to persuade them to remain in place and not pour petrol over the IED and light it with a burning cigarette (yes, it happened). The ANA had many strengths: they are so brave, very committed to the cause, utterly loyal, amusing, great at finding IEDs and, crudally, they know the ground and the enemy. These strengths are, of course, also wrapped in their legitimacy. We, as NATO, are not legitimate in the eyes of many locals but the ANA do not have this limitation. Less positively, the ANA have some weak commanders, little planning, poor equipment and only a developing leave/training/operational

NUMBER THREE COMPANY



LSgt Ritchie receives his US Coin for excellence in war from COMSAC General McChrystal US Army

cycle. In addition we found that our Kandak was understandably tired: it had fought in Helmand for three years and Sangin for one year.

We tried to develop the Kandak's weaknesses through patrols and operations and had some success with planning techniques in the Headquarters and also advised the Commanding Officer on rebalancing his Companies and Platoons into more strategic locations away from the heart of Sangin to improve wider security. In doing this we established, with 2 RIFLES support, three new PBs. The PB Commanders concentrated on improving the tactics of the ANA Companies and Platoons: counter IED, medical training, weapons drills and navigation. There is no doubt that the Kandak was better by 25 September 2009 than it was on 25 March 2009, although these were small steps adding polish to an already highly effective organisation.

We felt privileged to have some high profile visits: HRH The Earl of Wessex, The Secretary of State for Defence, the Chief of the General Staff and The Major General. Some of us also had Gary Lineker and Freddie Flintoff on our flight home! We took The Major General on patrol and fortunately did not have a contact!

It would be wrong to record our tour notes without mentioning two ANA individuals. The Regimental Sergeant Major, Mohammed Hasan, was unique. He was a gentle and fair man but utterly ruthless when required. He and Company Sergeant Major Baldwin had a great relationship and he was presented with a GPS from the Company when we left and he was totally delighted. Lieutenant Colonel Wadood was equally impressive and apparently set to be a Brigade Commander in the future. He was given the Household Division book 'Excellence in Action'!

At times we felt emotionally and physically (about 40 miles) very separated from the rest of the Battalion, particularly when we learnt of casualties. The deaths of the Commanding Officer and Lieutenant Evison hit us particularly hard. Lieutenant Evison was commanding a platoon from Number 3 Company detached to Number 2 Company. However, we were immensely proud to hear of the success of Operation Panther's Claw and the positive news of 1 WG exploits further south.

Sergeant Braithwaite described the tour as an 'adventure' and this sums it up well. 408 patrols were conducted over our six and a half months and we had an incident (IED find, detonation or contact) almost every day. We had seven ANA killed in action and seventeen injured. As a Company we were more fortunate with three injuries, none life-threatening or life-changing. I am immensely proud of the 'Little Iron Men' who did exceptional work in a very nasty part of Helmand. Under strong leadership from the PB Commanders and ZICs standards were kept high and they ensured that tight discipline and correct drills were maintained, but there is no doubt that we owe a lot to the ANA in helping to keep us safe. We feel immensely privileged and proud to have worked with the ANA – they are exceptional and brave men in extremely testing conditions. We knew that we were coming home; they have no 'end of tour date'. I hope that we have helped the ANA in a small way and none of us will forget our experiences – probably the most memorable in our careers. We now look forward to welcoming back the other Little Iron Men detached to other Companies and, with a bit of luck, winning the 300 Cup!



The (Orbit)

SUPPORT COMPANY

Maj Salusbury	Gdsm Biggs
Capt Durham	Gdsm Bisp
Capt Spencer Smith	Gdsm Broome
WO2 Scholes	Gdsm Bunce
CSgt Davies	Gdsm Carter 03
CSgt Pullen	Gdsm Evans 11
CSgt Roberts 99	Gdsm Evans 84
Sgt Evans 62	Gdsm Evans 94
Sgt Harper	Gdsm Francis
Sgt Lewis 34	Gdsm Fullman
Sgt Marsh	Gdsm Griffiths 04
Sgt Millar (4 Para)	Gdsm Griffiths 87
Sgt Peters	Gdsm Guest
Sgt Young	Gdsm Harries
LSgt Cunningham	Dmr Hayer
LSgt Ahearne	Gdsm Jones 10
LSgt Collins	Gdsm Jones 29
LSgt Deren	Gdsm Jones 84
LSgt George	Gdsm Jones 98
LSgt Jones 14	Gdsm Kastein
LSgt McGowan	Gdsm Kemp
LSgt O'Brian	Gdsm Liddy
LSgt Parry 34	Pte Lock (R Welsh)
LSgt Pearce	Gdsm Macedru
LSgt Ralph	Gdsm Matthews 27
LSgt Scarf 31	Gdsm McMail
LSgt Shapland	Gdsm Meadows
LSgt Thomas 90	Gdsm Monaghan
LSgt Williams 57	Gdsm Morgan
LCpl Burnett	Dmr Potts
LCpl Comeston	Gdsm Richards 08
LCpl Cook	Gdsm Rowlands
LCpl Evans 88	Gdsm Salisbury
LCpl Haines	Gdsm Scalfe
LCpl Hill	Gdsm Screen
LCpl John	Gdsm Skates
LCpl Liversey	Gdsm Smoldon
LCpl Powell	Gdsm Thomas
LCpl Roberts 51	Gdsm Walters
LCpl Waddell	Gdsm Watts
LCpl Williams 84	Gdsm Williams 21
Gdsm Barber	Gdsm Williams 80
Gdsm Bazzard	Dmr Wyer
Gdsm Beattie	



Recce Pl NKDs - LCpls Roberts 51 and John, LSgts Williams 5

Nac Ofna Ond Gwarth Fear Nothing but Disgrace

Operation HERRICK 10 saw Support Company personnel distributed across the Battle Group. The Company Commander spent the tour as the Battle Group Influence Officer, the Company Sergeant Major (CSM) as Task Force NAWA CSM, sometime Pl Comd in No 2 Coy and as BG Buzzard. CSgt Williams 27 spent the tour as CQMS IX Coy in LKG, whilst LSgt Parry 34 did sterling work as Sp Coy G4 Rep in Camp BASTION – a crucial and complicated task. The Anti-Tank Platoon and Machine Gun Platoon were re-grouped in autumn 08 into Fire Support Groups (FSGs), with additional manpower being drawn from the Rifle Coys. They remained as FSGs for the duration of the tour and have recently been re-organized back to individual platoons with Sp Wpns specializations as of mid-Oct 09.

MORTAR PLATOON

With a long winter of pre-deployment training behind them, the Mortar Platoon were ready to deploy to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 10. For a good number of mortar men, this was their second tour having previously deployed on Op HERRICK 6. The Platoon supported troops from the Welsh Guards Battlegroup as well as other battle groups within 19 Brigade.

The first section to deploy was under the command of Sgt Harper 5G. The section was attached to the Light Dragon Battlegroup (LDBG) operating out of FOB KEENAN in the GERESHK VALLEY. The thoroughness of the Platoon's pre-deployment training proved

invaluable when working as individual Sections attached to different battle groups. Every mortar platoon has its own nuances, but the importance of being able to fit smoothly into a different battle group's Joint Fires Cell was quickly obvious. Sadly, 1WG suffered its first casualty of the tour with the death of LSgt Fasfous on 28 Apr 09. An MFC from the section attached to LDBG, he was killed near FOB KEENAN by an improvised explosive device whilst on foot patrol. His loss so early on the tour was a sore blow to the Platoon. However, his death forged a tangible sense of purpose and drive amongst the Platoon of which he would have been proud. He will be remembered mainly for his sense of humour and

SUPPORT COMPANY

remarkable level of professionalism as a Mortar Fire Controller.

The main event of the summer was the much publicized Operation PANCHAI PALANG (Panther's Claw). This saw all three sections moved to different locations, one in support of LDBG in BABAJI and the remainder in NAD-E-ALI working to TWG. They supported troops in the clearing of areas collectively identified as an insurgent stronghold, the clearing of which enabled the provision of deeper security to the provincial capital (LASHKAR GAH) and its surroundings. The mortar lines deployed to both The Prince of Wales's and No 2 Company's area of operations as they disrupted insurgents crossing the SHAMALAN CANAL into BABAJI, where the third section was established with LDBG.

The mortars were deployed as part of the ever-growing suite of a Task Force's indirect fire assets in conjunction with the Royal Artillery and Army Air Corps. In all, approximately 4500 high explosive rounds were fired in anger. Different situations called for a variety of types of ordnance to be used, mainly due to factors such as the proximity of civilians or the severity of the engagement. Mortar Fire Controllers became adept at quickly assessing the situation and advising commanders on the best form of fire. Time and again, the 81mm mortar proved to be the weapon of choice for breaking contact with the Taliban quickly.

RECONNAISSANCE PLATOON

The Recce PI deployed to Afghanistan on 16 Apr 09. At this late stage the exact role that the Recce PI would perform was still to be identified, but it soon became apparent that the

Platoon would be split into two groups. One half became dismounts for the Mobile Operations Group (MOG) under the command of Sgt Peters and working alongside elements of the Royal Marines who had become mobility experts over their long deployment in Afghanistan. The other half of the Platoon was attached to Number Two Company at PB (Patrol Base) SILAB under the command of CSgt Pullen.

The element attached to Number Two Company at PB SILAB became the patrol's multiple and were given the task primarily of GDA patrols around the vicinity

Commander (Capt Spencer Smith) was back in command of the Platoon.

With the Recce PI united, they could expand their patrols and have a greater effect on the ground. This soon began with numerous recce and standing patrols taking place in No 2 Coy's AO. In Jun, the Recce PI took over TWG's Jackal fleet from No 2 FSG. Over the course of the following week, they escorted R Coy 4RIFLES to FOB SHAWQUAT and elements of 2 US Marine Expeditionary Brigade to PB JAKER. The vehicles were then handed over to the Prince of Wales's Company.



LCpl Cook and LSgt Derrin

of the PB. Due largely to manpower and resource shortages, this was a demanding task.

From the outset, the element attached to the MOG had their work cut out. Having been originally given direction that they would be deploying for 48 hours, they came off the ground five weeks later to hand over in Camp BASTION. With the handover complete, they deployed to PB SILAB to join the remainder of the Platoon. Finally, the Recce PI was concentrated in one location and, following the closure of PB TANDA in the S of NAD-E-ALI District, the Platoon

Prior to the launch of Op PANCHAI PALANG, the Recce PI was re-subordinated to Number Two Company. During this phase of the tour, the Platoon was tasked to provide protection to the Royal Engineers Search Team (REST) to clear routes and to secure compounds as necessary. As part of this operation on 29 Jun 09, the PI incurred several serious casualties as a result of a Viking amphibious vehicle overturning into the SHAMALAN CANAL from the narrow North-South track to its West. The Platoon's swift action saw all personnel out of the overturned vehicle and into safety. As a result, 8 men were

out of action due to a range of severities of injury. Predictably, losing this many men to non-battle injuries was a significant blow to the Platoon's morale.

On 02 July the Recce PI arrived in Interim Operating Base WAHID to take over from 3rd Battalion Royal Regiment of Scotland (3RRS). Concurrent to the construction of the IOB, the Recce PI conducted routine patrols to interact with the local nationals (LNs) and to get to know the ground. Of note, the Platoon executed a very successful linear ambush on the night of 22 Aug which killed two insurgents. At this time, the Platoon was commanded by Sgt Peters due to the absence on R and R of both the PI Comd and 2IC.

With the end of the tour now in sight, Number Two Company had collapsed Crossing Point 7 and were now in the process of constructing CP LUY MONDEH. Throughout the build phase, Recce PI secured the Eastern flank. During a patrol in the town, an IED detonated sadly killing the interpreter and injuring the PI Comd, Capt Spencer Smith. This led to Lt James, who had deployed in Sp Coy as Fire Support Group 2 Commander, taking over Recce PI for the final few weeks of the tour. For the Recce PI, patrolling momentum was maintained despite the loss through injury of the PI Comd. On their last patrol on Op HERRICK 10, the Recce PI were successful in finding 2000 rounds of 7.62mm short and 2 x AK deaning kits.

The tour had taken its toll on the Platoon. Originally deploying with 28 men, the Recce PI eventually recovered back to the UK at a strength of 14, returning on 22 Sep 09.

SUPPORT COMPANY



Gabon Willets and Salfisbury conducting a night firing mission



No 2 Coy Snipers - Gabon Guest (left) and LCpl John (right)

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Lt Col Antelme	LSgt Harris	Gdsm Cullen	LSgt Dunn
Maj Launder	LSgt Jones	Gdsm Divers	LSgt Primrose
Maj Miles	LSgt Lias	Gdsm Evans	LSgt Stafferton
Maj Mott	LSgt Marquardt	Gdsm Fuller	Cpl Darkwa
Maj Speed	LSgt Maslen	Gdsm Gardner-Allen	Cpl Dewan
Capt Aldridge	LSgt McFall	Gdsm Horrell	Cpl Donald
Capt Bowen	LSgt Owens	Gdsm Hughes	Cpl Francis
Capt Dawson	LSgt Prosser	Gdsm Johnson	Cpl Gibbons
Capt Hannan	LSgt Smith	Gdsm Lee	Cpl Shaw
Capt Harman	LSgt Taylor	Gdsm Llewellyn	Cpl Thomas
Capt Moukarzel	LSgt Threadgold	Gdsm Luke	Cpl Turley
Capt Pridmore	LSgt Webb	Gdsm Mathews	LCpl Astridge
WO1 Monaghan	LCpl Abraham	Gdsm Millins	LCpl Bee
WO2 Campbell	LCpl Adams	Gdsm Payne	LCpl Felix
WO2 Davies	LCpl Allen	Gdsm Rogers	LCpl Forrester
WO2 Pollard	LCpl Buller	Gdsm Stanfield	LCpl Gurung
WO2 Roberts	LCpl Butler		LCpl Harry
WO2 Thomas	LCpl Clowes		LCpl Michael
CSgt Harries	LCpl Davies		LCpl Miller
CSgt Myers	LCpl Glanville	Maj Fordham	LCpl Ngandu
CSgt Smith	LCpl Gwilym	Capt Morgan	LCpl Novu
CSgt Thomas	LCpl Hannan	Capt Jones	LCpl Pimlott
Sgt Farr	LCpl Jenkins	Lt Brownridge	LCpl Pryde
Sgt Hawkins	LCpl Jones	Lt Wright	LCpl Williams
Sgt Jones	LCpl Lewis	WO2 Harrison	Cfn Kirby
Sgt McGowan	LCpl Miller	WO2 Oldfield	Cfn Goad
Sgt Owen	LCpl Morgan	SSgt Bartlett	Cfn Moore
Sgt Parry	LCpl Pienaar	SSgt Hayward	Cfn Wharmby
Sgt Stephens	LCpl Robinson	Sgt Chandler-Johnson	Pte Adjei
Sgt Turner	LCpl Smith	Sgt Clarkson	Pte Burton
Sgt Williams	LCpl Sullivan	Sgt Gordon	Pte Campbell
Sgt Williams	LCpl Stirling	Sgt Knight	Pte Gurung
LSgt Davies	LCpl Wilks	Sgt Luff	Pte Kemeh
LSgt De-Wit	LCpl Williams	Sgt McGillycuddy	Pte Mabe
LSgt Fuller	Gdsm Allen	Sgt Sanders	Pte Nyathi
LSgt Grant	Gdsm Barnes	Sgt Veasey	Pte Rowe
	Gdsm Boulton	LSgt Cooper	Pte Samuel
		LSgt Edwards	

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Ofna Dduw, Anrhydedda'r Brenin
Fear God, Honour The King

The last twelve months for Headquarter Company have been to extremely busy and to say the least challenging, but it is with a great deal of satisfaction that the Company can look back on a successful period.

The first thing on the Companies agenda was the Handover of Wellington Barracks to the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards and of course moving to our new home in Lille Barracks Aldershot. This is where the Coy came into its own ensuring that all equipments was prepared for handover and that the Camp was clean and ready for the next Battalion to move in. This went extremely well lead by then the Quartermaster Maj Mark Cooling, with then Captain Nicky Mott who moved forward with a small G4 party to takeover Lille Barracks, again thanks to the team the Camp was taken over in good order. Lille Barracks is a decent sized camp for the Battalion with much needed facilities such as Sports field, decent training areas surrounding the camp, and a very good Gymnasium just down the road. After a well deserved leave it wasn't long before the Company was

earning it's pay again with the move to Germany to conduct a live firing package, after which we joined a Multi National Overseas Exercise called Co-Operative Spirit involving the American's, New Zealanders, Australian's, Canadian's, of course the British represented by the Battalion. The Company was involved in all areas of the training, G6 Communications supplied by our CIS Platoon, NIT Platoon supplying a vast amount of vehicles which where loaned to us for other Regiments serving in Germany, to Battalion Headquarters supplying qualified range teams so that the rifles Coy's could benefit for what can only be described as excellent ranges. This is where SSgt Hayward (REME) joined us on his 2 year assignment as the IC of the LAD.

On our return for Germany, it wasn't too long until the Company where heavily involved in the preparation to



USA army joint patrol

move its equipments to Afghanistan using the Sea route, this meant that planning had to be precise and thought of well in advanced.

During this period the 300 Cup was being held and with Coy good spirit, dedication and true grit with the Coy managing to reach the semi finals with LSgt "Mikey" Prosser leading the way. I think it's time to retire.

Herrick 10 preparations were now well on their way with the Coy not only preparing the Battalion to deploy but also attending a number of courses to qualify Drivers, Helicopter Handlers, Search teams, Team Medics, Environmental Health Handlers, Language Course and many others all which had to be

achieved between the preparation and deployment phase. A number of Study days involved the Coy held at Battalion level in Northern Ireland to Gdsm Level held in the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst with the All Ranks Brief (ARB). They do say that Churchill Hall at the RMA is the biggest sleeping bag in the Army, but I can tell you this, all of the Coy remained alert and took in every word the lecturers said.

Christmas was soon upon us with most of the Coy taking a well deserved Christmas break; however always having the back of the mind that deployment on HERRICK 10 was getting closer.



Convoy moving through the training area in Germany



Re-supply to a patrol base in Thailand

HEADQUARTER COMPANY



Battalion Headquarters relaxing between serials.



Maj Speed and Maj Miles with the Estonian Guards.

January 2009 saw the Coy deploying on a number of confirmatory exercises including that wonderful place that we all know "THETFORD".

Training for Afghanistan in January wasn't quite the weather we were going to be experiencing on operations, but the Coy carried out its task in a way you would expect.

The Coy then moved to Salisbury Training Area to conduct the MRX and the Bde's CPX. Temporary patrol bases were set up by the duty Coys, with HQ Coy supporting them carrying out re-supplies including setting up of a temporary dining facility run by SSgt Bartlett (Chef). Comments were made by not

only the Battalion personnel, but those visiting stating that the food was outstanding, and probably the best they have ever tasted.

At this point Battalion Headquarters were being put through its paces dealing with incidents likely to happen in theatre; well that's another story for the up date of theatre.

During the month of February the Battalion Second in Command and the Coy Comd had the privilege to visit the Estonians who would be attached to the Battal Group in theatre. The hospitality shown to them both was excellent. In their short visit they managed to see the training being conducted and still had time to

see the sites of a beautiful Country.

All of this was achieved to the highest standard and with a well deserved leave the Coy carried out its final preparation for the deployment to Afghanistan. Most of the flights left on time with all of us being received into theatre by now Maj Mott (Quartermaster) and his team.

Headquarter Company from the beginning were broken down into small supporting groups and mainly attached to the Rifle Companies. There was not one Patrol Base or Check Point where Headquarter Company was not deployed to in the Area of Operations. This was in aid to support the Rifle Companies

from G1 to G9. Even the Quartermasters Department didn't go without a hit, based in Bastion, Lash Kar Gah and many other locations with the Quartermaster Technical Capt Terry Harman being attached to Number Two Company as the Influence Officer. The Motorised Transport (MT) Platoon supplied drivers and maintenance crews in each location with Capt Karl Dawson with the OCCP. They also supplied most of the MT personnel for the Bastion Support Group who deployed in January lead by ACSgt Stephens. The AGC supplied that vital G1 support in Bastion with the Company clerks deploying forward with their Companies.

The CIS Platoon as well as in



Estonians during training.



RSM on handover.

HEADQUARTER COMPANY



Helicopter fly's into Argyll

support of the Battle Group Headquarters headed up by CSgt Smith 63 and Sgt McGowan supplied the expertise needed within the Company Dets dealing with all communications systems including IT. The chefs was another thing, deploying first into Bastion and then finding themselves deployed throughout Helmand Province, and not just Centre South but supporting those who were lucky to have a dining facility. The Regimental Police staff, Army Physical Training Corp Instructor in the mean while supplied commanders and escorts to the logistic patrols which ran almost weekly. The Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers (REME) maintained their good name by keeping the availability of vehicles and equipments to a level that the Battle Group Commander could carry out his mission. The Officers and

Sergeants mess staff supplied the Int cells with manpower as well as the vital moral boost of sorting out the vast amount of mail from back home. Even Company Headquarters took a hit with CSM Campbell taking over the role as CSM IX Company based in Lash.

Overall Headquarter Company stepped up to the mark and supplied the Battle Group with all its needs and a little more in some places. This has been probably the most testing Operation for the Company for many years, with every individual taking something positive away from the Operation.

Families back home can be truly proud on their achievements. The Company has helped in many ways in improving the security and the overall standards of living for the Afghan people.



Maj Speed keeps up the standards on the close down of PS TARDAR

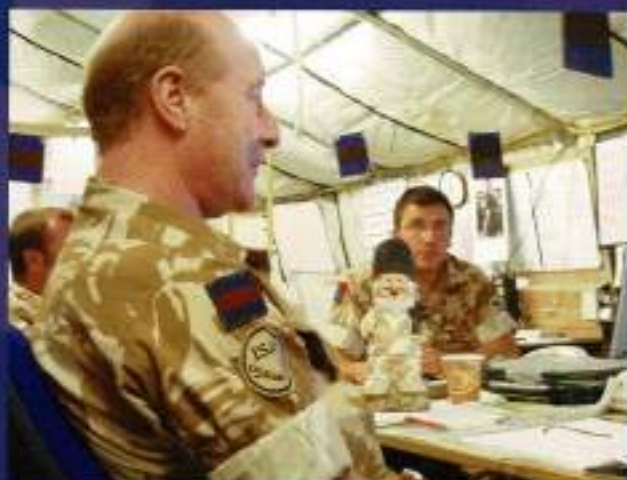


Maj Miles and then Capt Saunders looking as happy as ever



Two company commanders together

HEADQUARTER COMPANY



RQMS John Williams '65 was 54 on duty in the Ops room



LSGT's Grant and McFall in Camp Bastion



Cdr Groom on sentry



CSgt Harris (WATER)



Sgt Perry '64' He is the 'STIG'



Capt Mawker waiting for sleep

HEADQUARTER COMPANY



GJ Cad in Camp Bastion



LSgt Webb enjoying a nightly snack



The Adjutant Cape Aldridge, always got time for the important things of life



ISM in SLA



LSgt Owens 43



Sgt Gordon (APIC) preparing for another day out on patrol

HEADQUARTER COMPANY



Nad Fakh



Capt Connors



The beginning of FDR Shawaq



Command Officer Lt Col Ansell



Right for Ahmed Pasha an Interpreter who lived down his life



District Governor

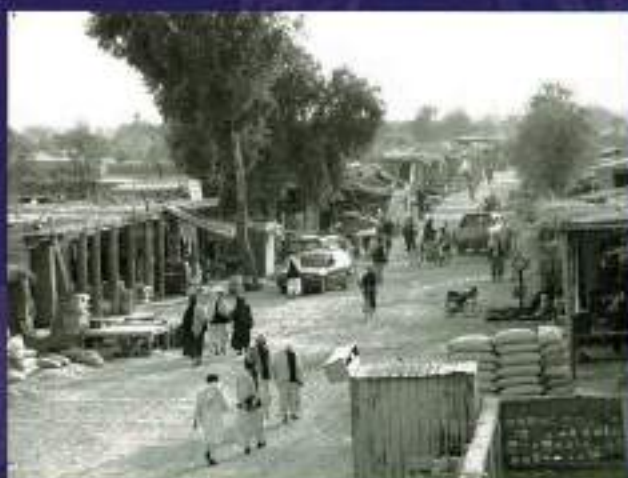
HEADQUARTER COMPANY



The way we were



Battle Group Headquarters holds ADC Drills



Nad E An



Lt Col Antoine Cornd DPM with Maj Saunders' District Governors visit



The poser - DSgt Pollard



Sgt Williams 37 deploying on yet another QP

HEADQUARTER COMPANY



A friend



Capt Holman with a local national



District Governor saying farewell to the Camel One



ICapt Morgan 66



Sgt McGillick taking a well earned rest on his way home on R&R



Memorial constructed at FOB SHAWQAT in memory of those lost but not forgotten

NUMBER IX COMPANY

Major Birchall	LCpl Viavalevu
Major Corbet Burcher	Gdsm Abberley
Capt Davies	Gdsm Adjei
2Lt Emlyn-Williams	Gdsm Allen
2Lt Thompson	Gdsm Arnold
WO2 Campbell (CSM)	Gdsm Berry
WO2 Brown (INTWO)	Gdsm Bladen
WO2 Pollard	Gdsm Bruford
CSgt Williams 27 (CQMS)	Gdsm Clarke
CSgt Shield	Gdsm Cousins
Sgt Davies 03	Gdsm Davies 01
Sgt Owen 75	Gdsm Davies 11
Sgt Warchol	Gdsm Davies 35
LSgt Davies 84	Gdsm Davies 200
LSgt De-Wit	Gdsm Davies 05
LSgt Duffy	Gdsm Edwards 90
LSgt Dunn	Gdsm Florence
LSgt Evans 53	Gdsm Horrocks
LSgt Green	Gdsm John
LSgt Martin	Gdsm Jones 17
LSgt Mathias	Gdsm Jones 97
LSgt Owen 39	Gdsm Jones 83
LSgt Paddock	Gdsm May
LSgt Tudball	Gdsm Matthews 06
Cpl Gibbons	Gdsm Mundy 16
Cpl Darkwa	Gdsm Mundy 02
LCpl Adams	Gdsm Nabukebuke
LCpl Byfield	Gdsm Nadin
LCpl Chard	Gdsm O'Sullivan
LCpl Evans 15	Gdsm Payne
LCpl Jones 88	Gdsm Roberts 34
LCpl Jones 13	Gdsm Roberts 95
LCpl Lewis 23	Gdsm Robinson
LCpl Lewis 65	Gdsm Siviter
LCpl Moce	Gdsm Tame
LCpl Robinson	Gdsm Taylor 21
LCpl Simons	Gdsm Thomas 61



A Fynno Barch Bid Gadarn
Let him be Strong who would be Respected

Sixty two years after it was disbanded, the second Battalion, in the form of Numbers IX and X Company, rose again. This time the Battalion found itself in Helmand Province, Afghanistan on Operation HERRICK 10. Number X Company spent the majority of their time in southern Helmand, fighting alongside the United States Marines Corps. Number IX Company were based in Lashkar Gah (LKG), as part of the 1st Battalion Battle Group.

Formed at the last minute and specifically for the tour, Number IX Company deployed on Op HERRICK 10 as the LKG Operations Company in April 2009. Originally numbering around sixty men, the Company grew in size and strength as the tour progressed, reaching a peak of over one hundred and eighty personnel from a variety of both regular and territorial units. Based in the Main Operating Base (MOB) in LKG, the Company found itself co-located with 19 Light Brigade Headquarters and a number of other military and civilian agencies.

Tasked with supporting the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), securing LKG, deterring and disrupting the insurgency while all the while convincing and reassuring the local nationals, the Company's initial order of battle saw four multiples; one on guard, another on Quick Reaction Force duties and two on patrols. The

first few weeks were spent settling into new surroundings. However, this period of familiarisation was to be short lived, as the Afghan National Army (ANA) became restless and eager to deal with a troublesome spot known as BASHARAN (BHN) 5Km to the North of LKG. The subsequent operation to clear the town (Op ZAFAR) was the start of a six month period where the Company became heavily committed to the area.

Op ZAFAR started towards the end of April and the beginning of May and involved a number of phases to enable ISAF to fully establish itself in the area. Indeed, there was also an Op ZAFAR 2. Throughout the operation the Company found itself fighting alongside troops from the Light Dragoons, 2 MERCIAN, Foxtroop 'Tavoletto' Company The Royal Gurkha Rifles and of course the ANA and the Afghan National Police

NUMBER IX COMPANY

(ANP). Heavy fighting was experienced by all but the Company acquitted itself well and assisted in establishing three new Check Points; Worcester, North (N) and South (S). In true Welsh Guards style, the Company also managed to 'pencil in' a meeting with the Prime Minister to give him a quick debrief on how things were panning out.

Op ZAFAR came to an end and the Company found itself committed to BHN, despite early reassurances that the deployment would only last for approximately ten days. Actually it came as a blessing, as it enabled the Company to settle into an area and try and bring about real change to the local population. Projects were immediately identified in conversation with the local nationals; in particular the Company Commander highlighted a disused school that had never properly been used for teaching. In fact the last caretaker teacher had been hung and tortured in front of his family in one of the classrooms. Education is extremely important to the Afghan people and the Company Commander, the late Major Birchall, understood that if IX Company were able to assist in the opening of the school then this would be a significant step in bringing the local population on side. Throughout this initial period a platoon from the Company lived in CP (N) (CP (S) was home to an 'OMLT' Team and ANA and Worcester housed a group of relatively disruptive ANP). CPs (N) and (S) were subjected to daily small arms fire (SAF) attacks both onto the CP itself and almost immediately as patrols left the CP to try and

dominate the local area. It was an active period but the Company relished the opportunity and became thoroughly immersed in the experience. Admittedly, it was made all the more bearable by the rather pleasant orchard in the CP and the stream that ran through it. Insurgency aside, CP (N) was a pleasant country retreat.

The Company's commitment in BHN impacted on our ability to operate in LKG. Help came in the form of XL Troop in the middle of May. This saw approximately forty gunners from 40 Regiment Royal Artillery deploy to LKG to take over guard duties.

Mercian Regiment, Territorial Army. They had initially deployed as part of the Bastion Force Protection Company, but as this task had been handed over to the United States Marine Corps, the Company was somewhat redundant. The decision was made to re-task them and they moved to LKG and, as with XL Troop, settled in straight away with a platoon patrolling in LKG and the other in CP Worcester. It was also about this time that Worcester was renamed CP TAPA PARAANG (CPTP) or 'British Hill', as it was known locally. Ironically, the hill, where the CP

as Major Birchall would have wanted them to. The next Company Commander, Major Corbet Burdett, arrived in late June and took over from the Battalion Second in Command, Major Speed, who had assumed command immediately after the incident.

July brought with it fresh challenges. The Battle Group was heavily involved in Op PANCHAI PALANG. The Company initially didn't play a major role in the operation, instead continuing with its routine business. However, in the first week of July they were given the responsibility of manning another Check Point at the southern tip of the SHAMALAN Canal. This was to be known as 'Yellow 14' and became an obvious task for Normandy Company. Although it was a relatively austere CP it was ideal for many reasons. It meant the Company, in conjunction with CP Gold (ANA CP) and the BOLAN Cemetery ANPCP, had created a 'ring of steel' of visible security around BHN allowing for growth and development from within. The number of stabilisation projects rocketed.

This laydown and routine continued until a couple of weeks before the end of the Company's tour, although IX Company personnel were rotated through CP North and LKG on approximately a fortnightly basis. In LKG the Company had to perform a broad range of tasks. There were frequent escort tasks along Route 601 to move IEDD teams to assist the UK and US Police Mentoring Teams (PMTs). Battle Group tasks that gave us the opportunity to see other Company's area of operations (AOs) and the tasks to assist Brigade staff. From a

the Company also managed to 'pencil in' a meeting with the Prime Minister to give him a quick debrief on how things were panning out.

and conduct localised mobile patrolling. Their presence was much needed and much appreciated, as it enabled the Company to focus more on developing BHN and patrolling into greater LKG. It seemed that by the end of May the Company had settled into a steady rhythm that would carry it through to the end of the tour. However, June proved to be a turbulent month.

June saw the Company increase in size once again. This time the Company received fifty members from Normandy Company, 4th Battalion The

stood, had previously been employed by the British over a hundred years ago.

Sadly, the arrival of Normandy Company was marred by the death of the Company Commander, who was killed on a vehicle patrol in BHN. The patrol was aimed to familiarise the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards recon party, the battle group that would take over on from the Company, with the area. The death came as a great shock and was a huge loss but the Company showed great resolve and determination and continued with the task at hand,

NUMBER IX COMPANY



NUMBER IX COMPANY / NUMBER X COMPANY

stabilisation perspective, most of the focus was directed towards BHN. However, we did manage to identify projects in a town called MUKHTAR. This is a fairly sizeable settlement to the immediate North of LKG that houses thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Major Birchall had secured funding for the building of a school wall at the beginning of June and so work continued on that project. In addition, money was secured for a new set of lavatories and a well for the school. Similar projects started to spread throughout MUKHTAR although this was not until towards the end of the tour. There were also the routine patrols to resupply BHN and the patrols to dominate our own AO continuing in the background throughout.

In July the insurgents rocket campaign increased on LKG and the Company were tasked to conduct counter indirect fire patrols (IDF) under Op ZAFAR 4. In August, the Company were tasked to provide a protective mobility escort for the Battle Group operation, Op TOR SHADEY. This was an operation to clear a place called Gorup-E-Shesh Kalay (GEK) and saw insurgents cleared from the village and a check point established. The Company relished the opportunity to be part of the Battle Group and working alongside the Estonians and the US route clearance teams. A particular highlight included discovering a pressure plate IED with the words 'Made in China', handwritten on the back.

No sooner had TOR SHADEY finished then the Company returned to LKG to prepare for the elections. There were 29 polling centres within the AO and the Company were tasked, along with the ANSF and other US and UK units to provide security. Our part

in the plan saw the Company patrolling in vehicles in the greater LKG area to counter IDF attacks. With assistance from airborne surveillance assets the Company were able to destroy a rocket team on the morning of the elections and prevent further attacks during the rest of the day.

In mid September NORMANDY Company left and returned to Camp BASTION for their end of tour and the Company handed Yellow 14 back to The Prince of Wales's Company. The ANA in BHN were replaced and the OMLT were relieved by a new team from 2 YORKS OMLT Battlegroup. Towards the end of the month The Queen's Company from 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards arrived and the handover began. Transfer of Authority occurred on 01st October and the last of the Company returned to Bastion on the 02nd.

On 16th October, Number IX Company was put back into suspended animation. The past seven months have been extremely challenging and yet hugely rewarding for many reasons. The Company has brought visible security and tangible improvements to the lives of the Afghan people, no more so than in BHN. From a Regimental perspective they have been part of a small piece of Welsh Guards history. IX Company may never form again making the experience for those that were part of the Company all the more special. Individually, each member has worked hard throughout a hugely mentally and physically demanding tour. Hopefully the experience has brought with it a huge amount of satisfaction and pride to each person and furnished each one of them with many lasting memories.

"No Better Friend No Worse Enemy"

X Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards fighting with Afghans and United States Marines.

**Hebddial Ni Ddychwelaf
I will not return unavenged**

By Major R W Gallimore Welsh Guards

I have written this article, which bolsters the growing number of Afghan pieces in this magazine, for two reasons: Firstly as a footnote to an interesting piece of Welsh Guards regimental history which was the reforming of Number Ten Company from 2nd Battalion the Welsh Guards – a brainchild of Lt Colonel Rupert Thorneloe; secondly as a brief insight into the United States Marine Corps (USMC).

The Afghan province of Helmand is a place where we as a nation have invested significant blood and treasure and the USMC will ultimately play a considerable part in the final outcome that is to be achieved. As I write there are 5 USMC Battalions deployed in Helmand, shortly there will be 6. In the last 12 months 107 British soldiers have been killed in action in Helmand; in that same period the USMC have seen exactly the same number of men killed in action in Helmand. For that reason it is very much worth our while to take a brief look at how they operate. X Company under my stewardship fought alongside the US Marines and the Afghan National Army (ANA) we were mentoring and therefore I feel I am in a relatively unique position to give that insight.

X Company was borne out of the requirement for a 4th Infantry Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) to work with the extra ANA Kandak (Battalion) that had been drafted into Garmsir in late 2008. When the OMLT Battlegroup 2 Mercian were asked to provide they admitted

their cupboard was now bare, having had much already stripped from them by 19 Brigade. Colonel Rupert stepped in to offer me and some WG manpower to head up and form the rump of a multi cap badge OMLT under the proviso that if fought under the banner of X Company Welsh Guards. Initially there was some resistance from 2 Mercian, however when I revealed that the company motto was "Non Reveratur Inultus – I shall not return unavenged" they bought into the concept with abandon. T-shirts were printed, company colours liberated from Regimental Headquarters. Major D W N Bevan's mother, whose father commanded the Second Battalion during World War II, was made honorary Company Captain and we deployed to Helmand as a happy and motley crew of vagabonds reflecting 17 cap badges with an excellent Household Division representation. As we employed my only reservation was not our lack of cohesive pre-deployment training, every man was a volunteer for the OMLT which was good and brave

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enough for me, but that my Commanding Officer had reformed a company that had lain dormant for 62 years just to get me out of Battalion.

The Company initially deployed to Garmsir province in support of Battlegroup South in the guise of first The Queen's Dragoon Guards and then The Light Dragoons. X Company and our wonderful ANA of the 4th Infantry Kandak were essentially Battlegroup South's only manoeuvre unit available for offensive operations and therefore had a busy first 8 weeks. We conducted Landrover and Ford Ranger borne raids into the deep south of the Green Zone astride the irrigated patches of the River Helmand in order to distract and fix the Taliban so that redevelopment could continue within Garmsir DC. These raids into Taliban strongholds with romantic sounding names such as Koshtay, Laki, Lakari and Mian Poshtay saw us punching out into the desert then reappearing for the assault. They were enormous fun and blissfully free from the pervasive Improvised Explosive Device (IED) threat as the insurgents further south tended to prefer the old fashioned gunfight; they had the air of Special Forces or LRDG operations without any of us having to possess the gumption to actually pass selection. One notable low point was having to listen to the Welsh Guards Battlegroup being requested over the crackly Brigade tactical satellite radio to launch a 145km vehicle recovery operation in support of one of our perhaps over ambitious raids which had resulted in 3 wounded in action, one vehicle denied and us

licking our wounds in a desert leaguer. I knew my stock would be sky high in Battalion Headquarters!

June saw the insertion of the United States Marine Expeditionary Brigade replacing the Light Dragoons in the shape of 2nd Battalion 8th Marine Regiment "Front Toward Enemy" under the charismatic leadership of Lt Col Christian Cabaniss in Garmsir and 1st Battalion 5th Marine Regiment "Maka Peace or Die" in Nawa. The initial desire was to remove X Company so as to firstly fully support Operation Panchai

company to fight with the USMC whilst I lost half my charges under my second in command Capt T Rogers IG to Op Panchai Palang. This meant that realistically we could only fight alongside one ANA company at a time, which would prove challenging given the expansive aims of the US Op River Liberty and their right and proper insistence at having ANSF front and centre of all offensive operations. As we conducted our initial shaping operations for the USMC push south whilst still under the command of the Light Dragoons we tragically lost Lt Cpl Hill during a gritty and

destroying huge numbers of insurgents whilst inflicting minimal collateral damage; Golf Company 2/8 advancing 23 km in 2 days in contact throughout without suffering a single heat casualty whilst Echo Company 2/8 remained in contact for four days from the moment they stepped off their Sea Stallions, ending up fighting from hastily built slit trenches and dug outs, using mirrors on the end of sticks to identify insurgents such was the intensity of the fight. Afterwards they stayed, not ceding an inch. X Company's involvement in the operation was both frenetic and critical. Initially supporting 1/5 in Nawa pre D Day shaping the battlespace for the operation by conducting almost daily company attacks against known Taliban strongholds in concert with USMC forces and fantastically supported by USMC's Air Wing and dedicated US FACs – a very rare treat for the OMLT. 1/5, veterans of Fallujah, described the fighting as far tougher and the insurgents far smarter and were genuinely flabbergasted that Nawa had been previously held by 8 members of X company and 80 ANA (1/5 consisted of 1,500 Marines!). On D Day the majority of X Coy and the lion's share of the Kandak flicked to operating with Golf and Echo Company 2/8 in the south for their epic fight down the Snake's Belly (the lower River Helmand). After about a week of hub jang – good fighting – there followed a brief period of calm after which the Taliban came back hard particularly at 2/8's most exposed southerly outpost in Main Poshtay which was occupied by the ANA, X Company and Echo Company 2/8. The concerted Taliban

“your friends will not be returning from their skullduggery as they had been killed by our magic”

Palang in Bobaji and secondly to avoid the complicated command issues of having a small British sub unit operating under US command. We fiercely resisted this move. I saw our mission as mentoring the ANA who had been allocated to us and not merely as the parochial mentoring of ANA in UK battlespace supporting UK operations. We had also forged an enormous attachment to our ANA in the furnace of the initial fight and emotionally we did not want to give them up. A very British solution of compromise was arrived at where I was left with half the

bloody day of fighting.

Op River Liberty was the MEB's complimentary operation to TFH's Op Panchai Palang in the north. It was a truly remarkable operation and a feat to behold. The extent of their achievement was incredible and probably received minimal exposure in the UK due to the fantastic UK effort to the north however 2/8, their partnered ANA and X company, became veritable rock stars in the American media. Over 48 hours 2,500 US Marines were inserted in 89 Helicopters from which they cleared over 100 km of green zone

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effort to dislodge us from Mian Poshtay lasted 3 weeks. We endured 4 to 5 contacts a day with every action being supported by a 60 man USMC QRF which allowed Echo Company to continually defeat the Taliban breaking him physically and psychologically. We were also further enhanced by a staggering amount of ISTAR platforms and dedicated precision artillery which allowed ruthless and accurate prosecution of the Taliban whilst maintaining volatile local consent due to negligible collateral damage.

The bloody nose inflicted on the Taliban predictably resulted in them migrating towards a campaign of IEDs. This usually productive path for the insurgent proved catastrophic for the Taliban as they met the considerable might of the United States Marines. 2/8 received hours of covert UAV flights to monitor the IED layers and were provided with the real ace in the pack- Ground Based Observation System (GBOS) which allowed us to monitor up to 25 identified areas of threat every 2 seconds; this impressive suite of surveillance delivered almost round the clock monitoring of those who wished us harm and was backed up by an incredible array of artillery, guided missiles, helicopters and aircraft. It was an almost an everyday occurrence to witness the demise of another wretched bunch of IED layers on the screens in the Mian Poshtay operations room; they would be picked up by the GBOS camera as soon as they began their nefarious work, within seconds their hostile intent would be confirmed (often by the CO or

battalion lawyer deployed at Company level), missiles either from on station aircraft or from guided rockets would then rain down on the miscreants and then on all known Taliban radio frequencies it would be broadcast that "your friends will not be returning from their skulduggery as they had been killed by our magic". This synergy of surveillance, fires and psychological operations was both breathtaking and highly effective. The Marines were also remarkably innovative in the manner in which they countered the IED threat. They fuelled rumours

inserted covert snipers as they came down to inspect their perceived success.

By the time we left in September the security bubble around Garmsir had been expanded by 40 km, our ANA were in rude health, there were visible signs of progress such as a high voter turn out at the election and families eating ice cream at stalls in the District Centre; disposable income to be spent on non-essential ice cream whilst feeling safe enough to spend extended periods of time amongst the representations of the Government of Afghanistan

allowing them to maximize their footprint on the ground and this was reflected in the Spartan nature of their bases. As an organization their ability to learn and adapt was staggering. Ever was it thus. From General Mark Clark's armies fighting up Italy to General Patreus' surge in Iraq the American ability to innovate and adapt after initial setbacks is remarkable. It is, I believe, the reflection of a young, bright and confident nation rather than a demonstration of Churchill's maxim that they will eventually get the right answer after exhausting all the other possibilities. When marveling at American achievements one cannot ignore the issue of resources. The United States is a superpower geared for and at war; this is reflected in the level of support they are allocated to achieve their aim. The sheer number of boots they have on the ground shapes the type of fight they conduct; they man a constant, credible and resourced reserve as well as maintaining the ability to effectively picket any high threat route and backfill any ground gained. The contentious issue of helicopters does not raise its head with the USMC; they have a surfeit. This allows them to insert and resupply avoiding the IED strewn and limited roads, the majority of 2/8's casualties came primarily from gunshot wounds rather than IEDs. The very fact that helicopters were not a scarce asset meant that the Marines were almost profligate in their use, coming to the point of wounding of any casualty whatever the ferocity of the immediate fight and even delivering frozen water to an isolated patrol base inhabited by the ANA despite it being

The bloody nose inflicted on the Taliban predictably resulted in them migrating towards a campaign of IEDs.

that Marines were working undercover to identify IED teams by asking for local dress at the bazaar; this created mistrust and separation between the insurgent and the local population. They carried out a particularly cunning ruse of war by staging their own dummy IED strike metres short of a known IED that was being observed by the Taliban. Following the faked strike which involved casualty simulation, plastic explosive and the dummy extraction of casualties by helicopters, pre positioned daymores were initiated against 5 insurgents by pre

is a very real metric of achievement.

All of us in X Company had undergone the unique experience of being exposed to and indeed infected by the contagion of USMC positivism. They are a very different beast to the US Army indeed they appear to reserve a unique amount of contempt for their Army cousins; there are no Burger Kings, very little welfare provision, a tendency to want to live out of a rucksack and they are driven by the tenet that a Marine should be happier on patrol than in his base thus

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under almost constant attack. Numbers of men and helicopters tend to grab the headlines in the scramble for resources however I believed that the Marines' battle-winning asset was their ability to prosecute highly accurate indirect fires almost free from collateral damage. Artillery is not an attractive means of conducting a counterinsurgency campaign, but if it is applied within the context of almost constant ISTAR support that can confirm hostile intent and prohibit collateral damage it is a ferocious weapon that confuses, compounds and decapitates the insurgents whilst undermining his will to fight.

The exit strategy from Afghanistan, which is so prematurely discussed, is focused upon the ability to train and mentor the indigenous security forces. We have decided to deliver mentoring through the concept of the OMLT Battlegroup who are embedded with the ANA at the lowest level and stand shoulder to shoulder with them in the fight. There has been some criticism of this approach with the inference being that were the ANA to require mentoring at such a low level in a year's time it would be a demonstrable metric of failure. The USMC has a different approach to mentoring; preferring to partner across the board with every sub unit being partnered with an appropriate ANSF grouping. Interestingly they share the view that this role can only be carried out on the ground living and fighting with Afghans rather than from an anodyne operations room, such is the nature of Afghan culture.

They are passionate about their partnering with young non commissioned officers immersing themselves deeply into the ANA way of doing things whilst remaining remarkably culturally aware. Working alongside indigenous forces runs through their veins they have been doing it since the Banana Wars, through Vietnam where they were the chief proponents of it up to Iraq where they again were at the vanguard of partnering. They are deeply respectful of the Afghan Army never appearing as the indulgent Westerner humouring the native. After much initial suspicion the American Marine way of doing things was greatly appreciated by the Afghans. They paid the immediate relatives of ANA Warriors \$10,000 when their relative was killed in action, named their patrol bases after fallen Afghan Army soldiers; in short they got it in spades and this drew a commensurate level of performance and commitment from the Afghans. Lt Col Christian Cabaniss would sit next to my Commanding Officer Lt Col Abdul Hai at every orders group or conference and would seek permission to conduct any USMC activity in his (i.e. Hai's) battlespace in a theatrical yet highly effective manner. This was in stark contrast to the attitude of some British Officers who fundamentally failed to understand the status and purpose of the ANA; it was enough to drive you to exasperation and I am embarrassed to say at times my stock phrase became "it's their f**king country, unless this has escaped your attention" from RAF Wing Commanders

berating me for my ANA firing their 82mm Mortars in "his" airspace to bumptious Captains turning up to complain about ANA taking photographs of his vehicles. It is a tragedy that these people have so fundamentally missed the point.

The Marine way of leadership can appear to differ on the surface from our own. To them an order is not the starting point for a debate but very much an instruction that is to be followed to the letter. To the British, with our reliance on mission command and flexibility and trust at the lowest level where even at the sub unit the Company reflects the nature of the commander, this seems an anathema and counter intuitive. However this apparent rigidity leads to dynamism and tempo when the Headquarters issuing the orders has so completely understood the task, the environment, the enemy and the people whilst being fully engaged at every level of the fight. This was absolutely the case with CO 2/8; there was therefore no unnecessary navel gazing from his subordinates who understood that they were relatively small pieces of sand on a very big beach. Much has been written on the "strategic corporal" (by Americans and Marines at that) but what I think 2/8 fundamentally understood is that the strategic corporal is about preventing errors from the lowest level subtending to the strategic level rather than the corporal pondering his every move like a crafter of strategy. Their Officers fully understand theatre and their orders resemble scenes from every war movie you have ever seen. We are probably too

cynical to take such drama seriously but when delivered well the hairs on the back of one's neck go up and all feel bonded and resolved to the task in hand. I feel my greatest achievement was being able to influence the manner in which the USMC command element interacted with the media. The Light Dragoons had very kindly left the OMLT their BFBS television and this was therefore the Marines only piece of welfare equipment. Some of the lulls in the fighting were coincidental with ashes test matches therefore I embarked upon the Sisyphean task of teaching Americans cricket and when Lt Col Cabaniss was being probed by British journalists, attempting to lure him into decrying the British effort in Garmisr he hastily cut them off and replied: "Listen the Brits did an amazing job down here with very little resources, they held the line and pushed it forward – very much like the draw at Cardiff, now we came along with a hell of a lot for Op River Liberty and that was the victory at Lords, now we go the Oval and the Afghan Security Forces must be opening". My work in Garmisr was done.

X Company's time with the USMC was both eye opening and rewarding. It also came at a price with 17 Marines and 6 of our own paying with their lives. What I found remarkable about their achievements was that the methods that brought them success so resembled the Household Division way of doing business: self-discipline and uniformity in the field, total reliability, unconventional innovation and everything carried out with a carefree elan and relaxed professionalism.

1ST BATTALION WELSH GUARDS REAR PARTY/BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS

1st Battalion Welsh Guards Rear Party

For all of us working on the 1WG Rear Party the last 9 months have been extremely challenging and varied. On an operational footing, our absolute focus has been on supporting all the injured, their families and the families of our Fallen. As the whole of the Welsh Guards community is aware the Battalion's hard won successes in Helmand came at a great cost.

Consequently for many of our soldiers and families the last few months have been extraordinarily difficult as they have come to terms with the tragedies of the front line. The Rear Party, in particular the Welfare Office, has made every effort to provide the very highest standards of support to our injured, their families and the families of those so tragically killed in action. There was always a Welsh Guards face to help at Selly Oak or Headley Court, a driver on hand to give a lift, a goody-bag to ease the days of rehabilitation or someone to walk a dog, have a coffee with or simply talk to. Moreover there was always someone selling a Welsh Guards wrist band for the appeal or promoting the Battalion's efforts in Afghanistan.

On the home front the day to day welfare of our so called 'headless' families was at the forefront of our minds. With the additional operational funding the Welfare Team put on a series of events to help the families get through what was an extremely anxious summer. Aside from regular barbeques and children's parties there were mass trips down to the coast, visits to Thorpe Park and even guided tours around HRH the Prince of Wales's garden at Highgrove. Tuesday morning coffee meetings were a hive of gossip and Captain Darren Fildmore and CSgt Myers held regular evening meetings in the Connaught Centre to keep the hundred or so

Aldershot families up to date with developments in Afghanistan.

It goes without saying that the normal duties of the Rear Party continued to be the basis of the Rear Party's routine. These included the guarding and maintenance of Lillie Barracks, supporting the deployed companies' R&R, conducting pre-deployment training for new draft and those returning to the Battalion as well as manning the decompression cell in Cyprus. Furthermore, under the new RAO, Capt Gemma Jones, the Admin Office continued to administrate the Battalion. This was a considerable feat with Welsh Guardsmen spread to the four corners of Helmand with very little IT to back them up.

This summer was extremely challenging for all those within the Welsh Guards and our wider community. The Rear Party was extremely fortunate to receive considerable support from numerous individual and agencies that went far out of their way to help us through the summer. These ranged from undertakers to police outsiders to gardeners to quilt makers. All of us in the Rear Party are incredibly grateful for all the support we received. It helped us assure the deployed Welsh Guardsman that should the worst happen, they and their families would be looked after.



The Band playing at Bishop's Palace

Support to HQ Land, Brawdy South Wales and Armed Forces Day, June 2009

by Musician Kim Easter

As the newest recruit to the Band of the Welsh Guards, Brawdy was my first trip away, and it did not disappoint. As the coach transported us past the historic town of Tenby, and headed around the beautiful South West coast to our destination in Brawdy. Our mobile phone signal slowly began to decrease to nothing, it was clear we were heading to a very remote part of Wales!

A brass quintet was provided for a mess night on camp, which was appreciated by all who attended. Some of us explored the delights of the NAAFL and met a few soldiers who were serving there. While the remainder headed into Tenby for some much needed refreshments.

The following day was glorious, the sun was shining and we were not required for the concert until mid-afternoon. Being by the coast, we decided to go for an early morning jog (note jog not run), and set our way off round the coast. Having made ten minutes up the road we came to a fantastic beach, with shiny yellow sand and a clear blue sea. With no towel or swimming costumes, (just running kit) what started as a water fight, ended with a swim in the sea, for most of the morning! After this we explored some of the coastal routes, (still dripping wet), and after a rather unfortunate incident involving a herd of about thirty cows, and a

bull, we found an exit to the field. However, we still had to navigate our way through a great deal of cow pats, before making it back to the barracks.

In the afternoon we traveled to St David's and were greeted by the rustic ruins of Bishop's Palace, and the arena where we were requested to play. The concert contained a varied programme, which was enjoyed by an appreciative audience young and old. What started out as a sunny day, minutes after we finished playing our last piece of the concert our Regimental March 'Rising of The Lark', the heavens opened and it was a race to pack up all of the equipment before it was all ruined. Likewise the audience had to run for shelter, having enjoyed a thoroughly entertaining concert.

Friday was a rather chilled out day as the Band of the Welsh Guards pop group were being unleashed in the NAAFL later on that evening! It

BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS



Sergeant Libby playing his saxophone solo



The Band playing during the concert

was a fantastic occasion with all of the Soldiers up and dancing to hit after hit following a few drinks at the bar! The band performed two sets and really set the party mood in full swing. In addition to this there was also a karaoke session, although I would have to say the Soldiers

should probably stick to their day jobs!

The last day of the trip we had to travel to Cardiff to take part in Armed Forces Day, however there was doubts as if we would even make it as the Coach driver supposed to be picking us up got

lost in the Welsh hills for two hours and was bemused by his sat nav! It was not the calmest start to the day. On arriving at Cardiff we launched straight into the uniform and off to play, the day was amazing to be a part of and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Throughout the day we

performed to the crowds before finishing in traditional style with a beating retreat, performed with the Royal Air Force Band around six o'clock that evening. As my first trip for the band I had a brilliant time! (except for the bull!)



The Band playing at the Armed Forces Day, Cardiff

BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS



The Band rehearsing with our guests Musicians at Theatr Brycheiniog



The Band and guest Musicians putting a finishing touch to the music before the concert at Theatr Brycheiniog

Afghanistan (Kape) Concert Tour October 2009

by Lance Corporal Gary Llewellyn

The Welsh Guards Band's KAPE tour took place between the 13th and 16th October. It included evening concerts at Brecon, Monmouth, and Shrewsbury and a variety of workshops and concerts for students and cadets during the days. The tour coincided with the First Battalion returning home from a very gruelling and costly 6 month OP tour of Afghanistan.

The Band had participated in many of the funerals at the Guards Chapel for the fallen. It was decided that the Band would use the opportunity the KAPE tour provided to raise as much money as possible for the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Fund. This idea was supported and helped by the fact that

Theatr Brycheiniog in Brecon, and the Blake Theatre in Monmouth (part of Monmouth Boys School), kindly offered the theatres for minimal cost, meaning that money raised would go directly to the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal. Similarly, St Chad's Church in Shrewsbury was made available

at a minimal cost for the concert with the Shrewsbury Male Voice Choir so that the Band could honour a request by Capt Ben Parry (Montgomeryshire and Shropshire Branch of the Regimental Association) to perform in the town and once again raise funds for the appeal. As the coach set off from Wellington Barracks in London, members of the Band knew the importance of the following few days, so when the coach made its first stop at the services on the M4 and a musician spotted that there was water leaking from the underside of the bus, many held their breaths wondering whether the bus would actually make it to Wales. Fortunately this little scare was the only one and the Bus arrived

safe and sound in a very sunny Sennybridge later that day.

That evening the first important job of the tour began when members of the Band started to fold and staple some 500 programmes in readiness for the concerts. The programmes included important information about the purpose of the Afghanistan fund and the vital work that it will be doing over the forthcoming years. The programmes were free, but the audience was invited to make a small donation in return. In the end the programmes alone raised over £2000 for the fund.

On arrival at Theatr Brycheiniog in Brecon, the Band was pleased to see musicians from the Gwent Powys Army Cadets Force, Brecon High School and



During the concert at Theatr Brycheiniog



The Band performing with Musicians from Monmouth School

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Treorchy Comprehensive patiently waiting outside for the doors to open. The Gwent Powys Army Cadet Force Band has close links with the Band and only a few months earlier had traveled to London to see the Band perform at the changing of the Guard ceremony at Buckingham Palace. As the morning progressed, the Band split up to work with individual sections, before gathering everybody together again on stage for a full Band rehearsal.

The Musicians were hosted by the Band to some quality army food at Derring Lines, before performing a joint concert in the afternoon to schools children and teachers from the Brecon area. The Band organized a screen above the stage so that when the Band played themes such as, You Can't Stop The Beat (from the musical Hairspray), Now or Never (from High School Musical 3) and the title theme from Pirates of the Caribbean, the audience could see the films which of course went down really well.

The First Concert was an overwhelming success and set the standard for the remainder of the tour. The Band were honoured and privileged to have in the audience the family of Private Richard Hunt of the Second Battalion, the Royal Welsh, who was the 200th British soldier to be killed in Afghanistan in August 2009. Father Richard, Mother Hazel and his sister and Fiancée were in attendance supporting the Welsh Guards. There was also a special mention made to Trevor Turner MBE who organised and was responsible for 2 coach loads of people attending from Abergavenny. Trevor does a lot of charity work,

especially for Help for Heroes. The music was wide ranging from Verdi's 'The Forces of Destiny', a selection from Benny Goodman to a Welsh musical hero Tom Jones's, 'It's not unusual'. With around 500 hundred in the audience, this was a concert that will be remembered for many years in Brecon.

The Band travelled to the Blake Theatre in Monmouth the following day for a similar working day to that in Brecon. There was much enthusiasm as the Band was still buzzing from the night before. During the afternoon concert the Band played a piece entitled 'A Monmouth Overture', which had been written especially for the school by Philip Sparke. In this piece there is a musical reference to the Battle of Agincourt, fought by King Henry V who was born and grew up in Monmouth. Following a successful day we were fed a delightful curry, which gave us enough energy for the evening concert which again was a sell out. The last day of the tour was a journey to Shrewsbury to share the concert platform with the Shrewsbury Male Voice Choir who are celebrating their 50th Anniversary. Both the Band and Choir performed individual pieces during the concert, before combining to give a great rendition of some great tunes that included Gwahoddliad, The Rhythm of Life, Soldiers' Chorus and Morte Christie.

Although the Band can't give an exact figure on how much the tour has raised (at the time of writing this article the box office receipts are not in), it is expected that with the help of the 2 Theatres, plus a £500 donation from Monmouth School, together with the programme sales, it is expected



Musicians from Monmouth school and the Band outside the Blake theatre

to be around the £10,000 mark. Final mention must go to those members of the Band who helped the concert tour be the success it was. They are Colour Sergeant Beckett for the overall organisation, and for the concert in Brecon in particular, Lance

Corporal Lockwood, Lance Sergeant Bartholomew too, for driving the kit truck. All members of the Band worked extremely hard to produce a memorable tour which will be remembered by all who attended these very important events in Wales.



LSgt Eccles, MSgt Watt, LCpl Williams

Exercise Cockney Lark 3 Andorra January 2009

by Musician Mark Skinner

Due to the high workload of public duties in the Household Division, this year was the first opportunity for an organised ski trip in the Welsh Guards Band since 2006. Therefore, all the participants in Exercise Cockney Lark 3 were looking forward to a fun and challenging week on the slopes above El Tarter in the stunning mountains of Andorra.

Aside from Welsh Guards Band members, we also welcomed WO2 Jo Taylor from London District, Sgt M (Bart/Bryn) Simmonds from the Scots Guards Band and LCpl Lewis Henaghan from the Grenadier Guards Band as our guests. We stayed in a

comfortable and (more importantly) warm civilian ski lodge in the town. The particular upsides of this lodge were great meals and free wine during dinner, while the only downside was a steep uphill walk to reach it after each hard day's skiing.

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Mush Ashment

On the Monday morning we divided into our three groups, tutored by COH Grimwood, LSgt Mitchell and LSgt Penny. All three instructors we knew well – especially since two were 'til recently former members of the band.

The beginners were to spend the week working towards their Basic Ski Proficiency qualification. This saw them transformed from complete beginners, to being able to comfortably get down blue runs – via much snow ploughing and endless falls as they struggled to master the basics of turning and stopping. The latter of these key

skills particularly eluded Mush Olly Galletta, resulting in some breakneck speeds as he flew down the mountains before falling in a comical tangle of poles and skis at the bottom. Olly was the first recipient of a crown-like hat, presented to the 'Wipeout King' of each day, as a result of his hilarious collision with a fence on the nursery

slopes. He was characteristically late for the presentation!

The intermediate and advanced groups spent the first part of the week honing their previous skills before moving onto some ski touring. Although all of the members of these groups had been on army skiing trips before, some people's skills were rustier than others. LCpl Bartholomew nearly sparked an avalanche when he took a tumble whilst going down a run. Many people on the slopes had to quickly move out of the way to avoid this giant human snowball. The ski touring element of the week was new to most people. This was a lot of people's first encounter with the touring skins which enabled them to zigzag up hills and cross country. There was confusion from the start as people tried to work out how to attach the skins to their skis. The two groups soon got the hang of the techniques used – known as telemarking – though most people would agree that it was hard, sweaty work and that going downhill was much easier. Evenings were largely our own, which we mainly spent in the lodge bar or other bars in the town. However, on Wednesday we had a dinner

and night out in nearby Soldeu while on Thursday a group from the band triumphed in a quiz night at the lodge. This shouldn't have been a surprise since the questions were all music themed.

Saturday was due to be a day of free skiing and some members of the group were keen to use this as an opportunity to wear fancy dress for the day. Unfortunately, due to extremely bad weather the slopes were shut off very early in the day, resulting in some rather disappointed Cowboys, Wolverines, Biggles and Kilted Scotsmen! Even more upsetting was the cancellation of the dog sledging (which became affectionately known in our group as 'Snow-Dogging') in which many people were keen to participate!

Special thanks should go to the instructors and in particular to Sgt Chris Shields for organising such a beneficial and enjoyable week. Also, thanks go to the following for the funding which enabled this week to occur: Household Division Fund, Welsh Guards, London District (Major Chapple) and CAMUS Trust.



Mush Olly Galletta



Mush Olly Galletta taking a fall



Mush Hamilton

BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS



The Band marching in Vigo

Vigo Tour 2009

by Musician Mark Skinner

The Welsh Guards Band tour to Vigo is regular only in the sense that it has taken place every six years since 1985. Indeed, only 15 band members on this year's tour had been before, so the rest of the band only knew what to expect from the many tales recounted from previous trips. The purpose of the tour was to provide musical entertainment for various events at the World Fishing Exhibition, held in a conference centre a short distance from Vigo.

We left London on a Tuesday afternoon with an air of anticipation for a productive and enjoyable tour. The bulk of the band flew from Heathrow, but mention should be made of LSgt Bartholemew who drove the kit truck overland - either side of a 20 hour ferry crossing from Plymouth to Santander - accompanied by Musn Watt as navigator. When the rest of the

band arrived at the Hotel Ciudad de Vigo, we discovered that the 2 of them had already found the 'World's Best Beach 2007' that afternoon, and made the most of what turned out to be the best weather of the week!

On the Wednesday we launched straight into an itinerary of high profile events, performing a marching display for the Mayor of Vigo and other VIPs who were

clustered on the steps of the Museum of Modern Art. This was located on a busy shopping street and our display caught many spectators by surprise, especially when we wheeled right up against the crowd line and spread out for the "bow tie" manoeuvre. We used this occasion to perform the first of our specially prepared Spanish pieces, Puenteareas, and the crowd was very appreciative of our performance. Special praise should go to Musn Watt for his note perfect obligato trumpet calls in the middle of this piece.

The second event of the day was the main opening ceremony for the exhibition, held at a large conference centre close to the airport. While the delegates were arriving we stood in the drizzle, adjacent to the red carpet playing

incidental music - alternating with the Real Banda de Gaitas de Ourense. This ensemble was in a fact a pipe band - highlighting that Galicia (the Northern region of Spain in which Vigo is located) shares a similar Celtic heritage to that of the British Isles. The pipers particularly impressed the band with their nimble rendition of the Mexican Hat Dance. Once the VIPs were assembled we moved inside for the opening ceremony itself. This turned into a long stand of over an hour listening to speeches given in Spanish, a language which none of the band had more than a basic knowledge in. We were thus relieved when we received our cue to play the Galician anthem before marching off, to the very upbeat local tune - Para Vigo Me Voy.

BAND OF THE WELSH GUARDS



The Band playing static music for the crowds

The second day was much quieter than had originally been planned as the concert that evening had been cancelled by the organisers. In the early afternoon we made the short trip to the conference centre to perform a short display to welcome the President of the Xunta (the Galician Parliament) to the exhibition. Fortunately we didn't have to wait as long as the previous day.

We then moved back to the busy location of the previous day's display and marched down the street, stopping and playing static pieces at short intervals. The crowd which gathered around us was very enthusiastic and fortunately didn't seem to notice our unconventional start to Copacabana. Many of them took the opportunity to come and have photos taken with those members of the band happy to pose, whilst we were waiting to re-board the coach.

Our work finished for the day, we were taken to a spa looking out to the sea. The regulars at this spa were very bemused to see forty people in full summer guard order arrive before stripping off to their swimming trunks and making full use of all the facilities. The band was in complete agreement that they had never been on a trip before where they were treated to such a luxurious spa. After everyone had a relaxing couple of hours, we headed to the spa's restaurant for a slap up meal.

This was not however the only

good meal of the tour. Every single meal was of the highest standard. The food was predominately seafood served in a tapas style although we also had a brilliant meat grill at one venue. A starter on the menu in many restaurants was Galician pie which was very tasty. The only concern for many of us was buttoning up our tunics after each feast!

The final working day was the busiest of the week and our first venue was a converted cinema which was packed out with hundreds of local schoolchildren. Our task was to entertain them in a concert for just over an hour. The children were excited enough to simply see us walk on the stage so when we started playing we were greeted with lots of enthusiasm. Our specially tailored programme included some items which enabled the children to actively participate. As a reward for getting questions about the band right 4 children were given the chance to conduct the band, and the excitement we saw when the children were given percussion



The Band performing at the World fishing exhibition

instruments to play during West Side Story, was so great that we gave them another chance in Latin Pop Special. The children were literally dancing in the aisles and the musicians distributing the instruments came very close to being mobbed. However, the highlight of the concert (for the band at least) was watching the demonstration of marching given by LCpl Whitwham and Musn Gurney. When the kids fell in behind them to march round the hall there were certainly some unconventional styles of marching on display from the children (and band members alike).

After another VIP welcoming ceremony at the exhibition we moved to the beautiful surroundings of Castrelos Park to give a cabaret style marching display in the courtyard in front of the historic building. This was made slightly more complicated by the fact that rather than

being square, the courtyard was circular and had a large water feature in the centre. The assembled guests enjoyed our display and particularly Sgt Andy Libby's performance of What a Wonderful World. After marching off there was just enough time to swap our bearskins for forage caps before sitting down in the gardens to provide background music for a cocktail party. Our efforts were slightly hampered by a lack of lighting - particularly in the centre of the band, but the band succeeded in performing a programme of suitable music to accompany the evening's festivities, albeit after much squinting. Our job done, we enjoyed some of the food and drink provided before loading the kit truck for the final time and enjoying the rest of our final evening in Vigo able to reflect on a successful and highly enjoyable tour.



The Band performing at the Museum of Modern Art

Band Of The Welsh Guards Picture Parade



DISTRIBUTION OF OFFICERS

as at 1 January 2010

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

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

Colonel A J E Malcolm OBE

Regimental Adjutant

Colonel (Retd) T C S Bonas

Temporary Equerry

Captain HTS Finnegan

Assistant Regimental Adjutant

Major (Retd) F K Oultram

Director of Music

Major S Barnwell

1st BATTALION

Lieutenant Colonel C K Antelmi DSO

Commanding Officer

Major G CG R Stone

Second in Command

Major G R Harris MBE

Officer Commanding The Prince of Wales's Company

Major DWN Bevan

Officer Commanding Number Two Company

Major R W Gallimore

Officer Commanding Number Three Company

Major M W Miles MBE

Officer Commanding Headquarter Company

Major J A Corbet Burcher

Officer Commanding Support Company

Major N P Mott

Quartermaster

Captain J W Aldridge

Adjutant

Captain T C Spencer-Smith

Operations Officer

Captain N R K Moukarzel

Regimental Signals Officer

Captain J P Olszowski

Mortar Platoon Commander

Captain J J Bethell

Anti Tank Platoon Commander

Captain A R Bourne

Training Officer

Captain S C Broughton

OC Machine Gun Platoon

Captain C J P Davies

Zic 2 Coy

Captain T Harman

Technical Quartermaster

Captain K Dawson

Defence Transport Manager

Captain A F Bowen

Regimental Careers Management Officer

Captain P Robinson

Recruiting Officer Wales

Captain D W Pridmore

Welfare Officer

Captain J R E Harvie

Zic 3 Coy

Captain O G James

RSD (designate)

Lieutenant D J L Harris

Zic POW's Coy

Lieutenant C S N Fenton

Reconnaissance Platoon Commander

Lieutenant A Dunlop

Platoon Commander

Lieutenant C Beare

Platoon Commander

Lieutenant T R Thompson

Platoon Commander

Second Lieutenant C Maltby

Platoon Commander

Second Lieutenant M Simpson

Platoon Commander

Second Lieutenant R Emlyn-Williams

Platoon Commander

Second Lieutenant R C Figgures-Wilson

Platoon Commander

Second Lieutenant A Major

Platoon Commander

DISTRIBUTION OF OFFICERS

as at 1 January 2010

EXTRA REGIMENTALLY EMPLOYED

Brigadier B J Bathurst OBE
Comd Initial Training Group

Brigadier R H Talbot-Rice
Director Equipment, HQ LF

Colonel A J E Malcolm OBE
Chief of Staff Initial Training Group, Upavon

Colonel R J E Scanford MBE
COS HQ Theatre Troops, Wiltshire

Colonel R H W Bodington LVO MBE
ACOS J7, HQ ARRC

Lieutenant Colonel G A J Macintosh
SO1 J3 Land Division, PHQ, Northwood

Lieutenant Colonel G Bartle-Jones
British Loan Service Team, Abu Dhabi

Lieutenant Colonel D L Bossi
SO1 Inf Sold Wing, Glasgow

Major C T Sargent
UK INSE

Major R G B Pim
SO2 J3 FP, PHQ, Northwood

Major B P N Ramsay
DIC WGAA 21C TWG Designate

Major T F Charles
COS HQ 145 (South) Bde, Aldershot

Major HGC Bettinson
SO2 Inf, Fd Trg GP, Warminster

Major J H Hobrough
SO2 G3/S HQ Theatre Troops, Netheravon

Major E J Mellish
SO2 J5 Plans, HQ 11 Lt Brigade, Aldershot

Major M L Lewis
HQ 101 Log Bde, Aldershot

Major D H Basson
HQ RRC-FR, SHAPE

Major T A Smith
HQ RG, Upavon, Wiltshire

Major J D Salisbury
SO2 Concepts and Doctrine, Land Warfare Centre, Wiltshire

Major E N Launders
ICSC(L)

Major H S Llewellyn-Usher
ICSC(L)

Major A J Salisbury
Defence Intelligence Secretariat

Major M Cooling
SO2 CSS Plans, HQ 3 (UK) Div, Salisbury

Major T A H Eastman
SO2 Plans/Resources, 16 Air Assault Lt Bde

Major T J Badham
OC Guards Coy, JTC Catterick

Captain A R M Spary
Staff Capt, HQ London Dist

Captain C N Ulvert
SO3 Info Ops, Cyprus

Captain F T Anderson
SO3 G3 HQ, 12 Mech Bde

Captain C G Jones
Ministry of Defence

Captain J D Livesey
Ministry of Defence

Captain J CR Westropp
Platoon Commander, Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst

Captain P J Durham
OC HDRCE

Captain W G H Freeman
Attached to 1 GREN GDS on Op HERRICK II

Captain M Evans
SO3 G3 ORD Headquarters 4 Div, Aldershot

Captain A J Plewa
Gunnery School, Armoured Centre

Lieutenant G C H Charles-Jones
Training Mentor, Iraqi Military Academy, Op TELIC

INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE CATTERICK

Captain T R Richards
Platoon Commander, Guards Training Company

Lieutenant C J R Fraser-Sampson
Platoon Commander, Guards Training Company

DISTRIBUTION OF WARRANT OFFICERS & BATTALION STAFF

as at 1 January 2010

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

	Number	Rank	Int	Name
Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant	24788725	WO2	WJ	Williams
Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (designate)	24797497	WO2	A	Campbell

REGIMENTAL BAND

Band Master	25083859	WO1	E	Frost
Band Sergeant Major	24862977	WO2	S A	Charles

1st BATTALION

Regimental Sergeant Major	24797524	WO1	M	Monaghan
Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Main)	24788299	WO2	A L	Roberts
Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Tech)	24823463	WO2	B I	Baldwin
Drill Sergeant	24830440	WO2	M	Pollard
CSM The Prince of Wales's Company	24842627	WO2	J J	Jones
CSM Number Two Company	25014286	WO2	M	Toppo
CSM Number Three Company	25050230	WO2	C A	Taylor
CSM Headquarter Company	24815109	WO2	D P	Brown
CSM Support Company	24738054	WO2	LT	Scholes
Training Warrant Officer	24773216	WO2	T W	Fade
Company Sergeant Major in Musketry	25026698	WO2	L M	Ryan
Regimental Signals Warrant Officer	24772333	WO2	J G	Davies
Master Tailor	24866734	CSgt	L	Wilson
CSM Number Two Company (designate)	24710250	WO2	P	Dunn
CSM Support Company (designate)	24906414	WO2	J G	Jenkinson

EXTRA REGIMENTALLY EMPLOYED

Garrison Sergeant Major London District	24520588	WO1	W D G	Mott OBE
Garrison Sergeant Major 160 Brigade Wales	24772832	WO1	A J	Hughes
RSM Old College, RMA	24772353	WO1	DL	Thomas
30 Cadet Training Team Wrexham	24805880	WO2	A	Brown
Welsh Guards Recruiting Team	24772480	WO2	A	Price
Jungle Warfare Warrant Officer, Belize	24815116	WO2	D W	Roberts
Counter Terrorist Training Team	24738040	WO2	G W	Jones
Training Wing Blandford	24836375	WO2	R F	Williams
Master Tailor, London District	24823101	Cygt	S D	Shield
HQ London District	25018575	DMaj	S	O'Brien

LONG SERVICE LIST

RQMS Ministry of Defence	24454142	WO2	B J	Cordy
AOO Wrexham	24623898	WO2	R J	Brace

HONOURS AND AWARDS 2009

LONG SERVICE AND GOOD CONDUCT

25026698 Colour Sergeant L M Ryan
 24863588 Sergeant G Lloyd
 25018534 Sergeant G Lewis
 25033690 Sergeant A P Libby
 25029759 Lance Sergeant S A Brandon
 25024068 Lance Sergeant J Phillips
 25028683 Lance Sergeant J A Davies
 25030213 Lance Sergeant J Hammond

BATTALION EVENTS

1st Battalion Welsh Guards Rugby Season 2008/09

By Capt A F Bowen,

Rugby Officer 1st Battalion Welsh Guards.

The culmination of an extremely "short and sharp" Welsh Guards rugby season saw the Battalion rugby team in the Army Premiership final in Aldershot. The opposition were 1 SCOTS (1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland) who were victorious with a narrow 29-20 win following a dazzling display of speed and deft handling from their Fijian international players.

Although very disappointed with losing such a gripping and tense final the Battalion rugby team can hold their heads high in the knowledge that they progressed so far in a season which might not have involved a single competitive match. In October 2008 we discussed the possibility of taking a sabbatical for the forthcoming season as we felt that we would not have time to prepare for high intensity operations in Afghanistan and play competitive sport at the same time. How wrong we were! The entire squad, coached by WO2 (CSM) Andy Campbell and Sgt "Jack" Hawkins, displayed a level of personal commitment which was extremely impressive, setting the benchmark for future seasons of playing rugby in a very busy Battalion. The majority of training took place out of hours and often at significant personal cost to individuals with members of the squad travelling from Catterick and Wales to train and play. The level of commitment shown by the rugby squad has been a real example to the whole Battalion of how sport can underpin the moral component of Army life. A real surge of enthusiasm for rugby took place amongst all members of the Regiment with

fantastic support for the squad throughout the season. I am utterly convinced that our rugby success allowed a vital respite from the hugely intensive preparations that preceded our operational deployment to Afghanistan.

Throughout the 2008/09 season the rugby squad has shown a massive level of selfless commitment, dedication and sheer guts and this can only bode well for the future of Welsh Guards rugby as we continue our relentless pursuit of being crowned Army Champions. Many of our predecessors who have worn the green/white hoops will be rightly demanding that we do better; rest assured we are trying our hardest but it is becoming a progressively more difficult task. As a single Battalion Regiment we cannot draw from other Battalions and we do not have the luxury of thousands in the Corps to draw together all good players into a single Regimental team. Is this a complaint, no it is simply stating the facts. This situation may also hold true for many of our predecessors but I would be bold enough to say that I think the Army is now significantly busier than in previous years and fitting in rugby is nearly

impossible. We will never return to a struck off rugby squad as Company Commanders could not withstand the impact of losing large numbers of men from their incredibly important training programmes. Under the current regime the rugby squad will adopt the approach of a semi professional club with physical training and conditioning taking place in a player's own time with rugby time being dedicated to skills and drills on the rugby field. Fitness tests will be introduced to ensure that personal commitment continues to be tested. We will also take steps with nurturing the younger players and this is where the senior players must continue as they have in the 2008/09 season. The example set by the senior players, led by our skipper LCpl Melvin Lewis 23, in their whole approach to Welsh Guards rugby is of fundamental importance. Rugby in our Regiment is not about one person it is about the whole squad and the fact that we

represent the Regiment and we have shown during this season that when we focus we can achieve near greatness regardless of how busy we are. The secret now is to work to our strengths, eliminate our weaknesses and pull together in a professional manner. Competitive sport in the Battalion is vital in ensuring that we develop our soldiers and prepare them for future military operations where many of the facets of rugby are tested including teamwork, commitment, determination and the will to win.

So will we win the Army Cup? Watch this space! I am absolutely convinced that with the right approach from the entire rugby squad in demanding high standards amongst ourselves and the nurturing of the younger and more junior players we will give the Welsh Guards rugby team every chance of delivering the trophy that so many of us dream of.

300 CUP 2009

The 300 Cup was contested on 22nd October 2009, the day prior to the Battalion departing for a well deserved post operational tour leave. The Cup was presented by the founder of the event, John Williams 300, who very kindly travelled to Lifle Barracks for a fabulous day of sport.

As many of us will be aware 300 has been none too well this year and the huge roar he received from the Battalion when he was introduced is testament to the very high esteem in which he is held by today's generation of Welsh Guardsmen. We wish 300 well and look forward very much to seeing him next year.

The aim of the 300 Cup has always been to provide an opportunity for rugby players of all abilities to display their skills with the hope of being selected for the Battalion rugby squad; this year was no different. The competition ran along the normal league system in the morning followed by a 3rd/4th place play off and a final in the afternoon. As always the

BATTALION EVENTS/BATTALION TRAINING

Companies went hell for leather with some good, and not so good, rugby on display. Evident in bucket loads, however, was the commitment shown in all the matches with tackles flying in as players competed with every last breath for their team. This year's 300 Cup formed a fundamental component of our essential decompression and normalisation following an arduous summer tour in Afghanistan and with many Companies spread far and wide for the previous six months this event brought them back together in style. The final was contested between Number Two Company and Number Three Company with the "Little Iron Men" running out as emphatic winners by 43 point to nil. Number Two Company did exceptionally well during the league matches but simply ran out of steam in the final.

The Young Player of the tournament award went to Gdsm Craze, who finished the day on crutches but with a big smile, and the Veteran was none other than 44 year old CSgt "Andrew Morgan Brown 16" who spent most of the previous 6 months as a reservist in Afghanistan with the Battalion. 16 said a few words which summed up the last 6 months and we all wish him well as he returns back to civilian life in Llanelli. Following a thoroughly impressive day long display of skill and tenacity the player of the tournament award went to Gdsm Davies who we are sure we will hear more of.

In early December we will run a Possibles versus Probables match with those who featured positively during the 300 Cup having the chance to cement a place in the Battalion rugby squad for the remainder of the season. On the Army Cup front we will be attempting to go one further this year and win the coveted Army

Cup but as the season is well underway and we are all still on leave we will have to work exceptionally hard to get through our group and into the knock out stages where anything can happen. The senior players will once again need to set the example and take all new players into the fold and bring them on for the benefit of the entire squad in what is bound to be a condensed season.

In addition to the rugby this year's 300 Cup incorporated 6 a-side football, tug O war and "cream cracking eating". All events were hotly contested with Support Company winning a very tense football final on a penalty shoot out. Headquarter Company were emphatic winners in the tug O war where they dominated the entire event with some of the "big boys" coming into their own and proving their athleticism on the rope! The "cream cracker eating" relay was won by a rampant Support Company who devoured their plateful in a record time. All agreed it was a cracker of an event!

All always these events do not take place without significant support so thanks indeed to all who assisted and in particular Sgt Gordon our PTI who was instrumental in keeping the day running to a strict timeline. Many thanks also to the Regimental Adjutant who very kindly presented the prizes. Quite possibly the biggest thanks for the day goes to Capt Bourne's mother, Liz, who was exceptionally generous and donated four thousand pints of beer to the event, trust me, the "cheer for the beer" was massive!

We look forwards to a re-run of the event next year and in particular to seeing 300 back with us to present his trophy.

RECRUITING PERSONEL

Capt PL Robinson – Regimental Recruiting Officer

Regimental Support Team (South)

Sgt Hayes
LCpl Morris 13
Gdsm Luke

Regimental Support Team (North)

LSgt Jones 60
Gdsm Cunningham
Gdsm Harris

Army Recruiting Team 32 (Combat 1 Wales)

LSgt Scarf
LCpl Saniger
Gdsm Davies 77
Gdsm Evans 23

Army Recruiting Team 33

LCpl Jones 61
Gdsm Griffiths 07
Gdsm Dade
Gdsm Caffrey

Army Preparation College (Swansea)

LSgt Jury

Army Preparation College (Bangor)

LSgt Williams 31

Army Preparation College (Haverfordwest)

LCpl Lee

RECRUITING OFFICES

Cardiff Group
LSgt Cake – ACIO Newport
LSgt Barry – ACIO Merthyr
LSgt Lloyd 88 – ACIO Pontypridd
LSgt Adams – AFCC Cardiff

Swansea Group

CSgt Ryan-Young – AFCC Swansea
LSgt Harrison – ACIO Bridgend
LSgt Phillips – ACIO Haverfordwest

North Wales Group

CSgt Sanger – ACIO Rhyl
LSgt Jones 91 – AFCC Wrexham
LSgt Jones 51 – ACIO Bangor

143 Brigade

LSgt Luckraft – AFCC Shrewsbury

LONDIST

CSgt Lewis 37 – Strand London

BATTALION TRAINING/OPERATIONS



LSgt Scott with members of the MPC on a J day Lat.

WELSH GUARDS REGIMENTAL RECRUITING

By Recruiting Officer, Capt Robinson

Recruiting in the Army in general has picked up significantly over the last year with the armed forces projected to reach full manning by April 2010. The current economical climate has seen more people than usual wanting to join up, these people have recognised that the Army is a not just a last minute dot com job, but it has the prospects to offer a full time career, with a pension second only to members of parliament, however, what it is recognised is that it does come with an element of risk.

This year in particular, has seen a number of changes in the way that we recruit, and the market for jobs in the Army is now more competitive than it has been for the last 10 years, therefore, we are in a much better position to become more selective. In the recruiting year 2008 - 2009 Wales was a very successful region reaching 90% of its

target, with 943 soldiers recruited. Of this figure the Welsh Guards reached 101% of its target with 135 recruits that went to ITC Catterick, AFC Harrogate and ATR Winchester to become Welshguardsmen.

2009-2010 has proved to be much more successful than in recent years; the Welsh Guards have been able to recruit

extremely well to date and our retention in the training establishments is much better. This year up to the first 6 months, 79 potential Welshguardsmen have been enlisted into training, 33 have been allocated a training date, a further 31 are waiting for a vacancy in a training establishment, additionally 52 have passed out and reached the battalion in Afghanistan if over the age of 18.

The Army Recruiting Teams (ARTs) remain active. The majority of their work is based around Personal Development Activities (PDAs) that are centred on schools and colleges. This is based on teaching youngsters the art of teamwork, leadership and communication skills in a challenging environment. Aimed at the deep battle, this sets the

seed and gives young school leavers a first encounter with soldiers and a feel of what the army may offer them in terms of a career in the future.

The Regimental Support Teams have kept themselves busy and continue to support, train and help the Combined and Army Cadet Forces. They attended the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) camp in Weymouth this year assisting in various fieldcraft and many other activities. During June the CCF in Treordy Comprehensive School which are Welsh Guards cap badged cadets received their annual inspection, this year performed by the Prince of Wales, which was a great success.

The Army Cadet Force (ACF) cadet camp took place in Longmoor this year; the RST

BATTALION TRAINING/OPERATIONS

attended this and assisted with ranges and field exercises as well as giving presentations on the Battalion.

All of the recruiters ARTs and RSTs have been involved in a number of KAPE events this summer from OP Dragons March South in Margam Park to OP Dragons March North in Bodelwyddan Castle in Rhyl. Both events were based on enhancing the Army's profile and highlighting the jobs on offer using displays and equipment, each show lasting for 4 days, they concentrated primarily on schools and colleges and the final day was open to the public. Summer time is always a busy period in the recruiting calendar, and normally there is a show every weekend like the Armed Forces Day in Cardiff that was attended by all of the recruiters, RSTs and ARTs.

As previously mentioned the way that we recruit has now changed, at the selection centre in Litchfield a new concept has been introduced called the Individual Development Selection Tool (IDST), this is aimed at reducing quantity to quality recruits. To support this concept, the RSTs have had to box clever and start running their own Insight Courses with the aim of being able to filter the weeds out of the recruiting and selection process. There were 14 of these courses planned from April to October which run for 3 days over a weekend and consist of a number of presentations from the Recruiting Officer on the Battalion and training establishments, and presentations from recruiters on tips on how to pass selection centre. The course meets up on

a Friday and potential recruits go through a number of PowerPoint and admin briefs. On the Saturday potential recruits are taken to London to visit the rehearsals of the Queens Birthday Parade (in the summer) and to see a Queens Guard Mount. Thereafter, they have the opportunity to take a look around London, focusing on the Royal Palaces, Horse Guards Parade and the Guards Museum. On return from London they conduct some fitness tests equivalent to those that they will do as per the selection centre criteria, over watched by a PTI. Later on that afternoon the course deploys onto Flagstaff Training Area for an overnight exercise where they perform some low level training. On returning to barracks on the Sunday they are briefed by the recruiter on the Army Development Selection Centre (ADSC) and are then put through their paces carrying out a number of physical and mental command tasks. Prior to leaving Litchfield Barracks their confidence is measured as they stand in front of an audience and conduct an ice breaker consisting of 10 questions used at the ADSC. All information gained on each potential recruit is then collated and forwarded to the recruiter for remedial training or what ever action needs to be carried out.

The recruiting offices remain busy with a back log of people waiting to be processed with little training vacancies left available for the remainder of this year, thus clogging up the recruiting pipeline, at present the average person wanting to join the Welsh Guards will have to wait up to 9 months and beyond to get a training



LSgt Adams at AFCD Cardiff as busy as ever passing



Capt Robinson and recruiting team after the Cardiff Half Marathon 17 October 2009



LCpl Morris 13 and Gdsm Davies 77 assisting LATCH

BATTALION TRAINING/OPERATIONS

vacancy. Therefore, next year the RST will switch its focus from recruiting in the towns and streets of Wales, to running more Insight Courses for those attending ADSC giving us the ability to be able to be more selective. Additionally, we will run nurturing courses for those who have passed ADSC and are waiting to join the training establishments.

In terms of charity and fund raising events, the RSTs have supported the Welsh Guards Reunited walk from Merthyr Tydfil to Newport, the Snowdonia walk organised for the Afghanistan appeal, "Walk the Walk" up Pen Y Fan organised by SAMA 82 and most recently, a team of 10 people comprising of recruiters, members of the RSTs, MPC and the Recruiting Officer ran the Cardiff 1/2 Marathon in aid of the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal. They also support LATCH, the Welsh children's cancer charity throughout the year.

Lastly before summarising, I would like to mention a bit about a local hero by the name of LSgt (Blair) Jones 60 (RST N commander) originally from Number 2 Company. Whilst during his leave and on holiday in Jersey in July, LSgt Jones was enjoying a peaceful day on the beach along with his wife and children. During the afternoon he noticed that out to sea people were for some reason having a lot of difficulty in the water, it then came apparent to him that there had been a rip tide which had caused major problems. LSgt Jones observed that 2 children had been pulled out to sea by the current and were in extreme difficulty, he also noticed that surfers that were in

the water could not reach the children. LSgt Jones without any thought for himself, immediately used his instinct, and swam out to the two of them, made an assessment of the situation, and retrieved a 12 year old girl who was the weaker swimmer of the two, without further thought for himself he grabbed a surfboard off the beach and swam back through the rough tide and surf again and retrieved a boy aged 10 years old from 400m out and brought him to safety. The whole incident took over 40 minutes to rescue the children, LSgt Jones's story ended up in many local newspapers in Jersey and in North Wales; he was therefore branded a local hero. He has now been offered a lead role in the new Anglesey bay watch film and has been nicknamed Jones the Hassihoff.

On a more serious note, LSgt Jones has received an awarded for his bravery, from the First Minister for Wales, Rhodri Morgan, at the Welsh Assembly Government "Recognising Achievements" awards ceremony at Caernarfon on 8 October. This award recognised his individual contribution in achievement for his courage and bravery above the call of duty in "Helping People in Difficult Situations".

In summary, the entire recruiting world has been kept busy over the previous year with help from the ever changing economical situation, Op Herick 10 and various other recruiting events to date. I would also like to mention that the profile of the regiment in Wales remains high, sadly, in some cases for the wrong reasons. I would like to praise the majority of those involved in recruiting for the way they conducted their duties with dignity and compassion,

during the number of military repatriations and funerals that took place during Op Herick 10, without their support during

these sad occasions, the funerals would not have been befitting those who were buried or cremated.



Insight Courses visiting the Guards Memorial



LT/Lt Lee instructing on 24hr GRP



LSgt Jones 60 (The Hall) receiving his presentation from Rhodri Morgan (First Minister of Wales)

BATTALION TRAINING/OPERATIONS

OPERATIONAL LOGISTICS IN A BATTLE GROUP

by MAJOR N P MOTT

Quartermaster 1st Battalion Welsh Guards

When I was asked to write this article, I saw it as an opportunity to inform all how busy, diverse and challenging the G4 chain is on operational commitments, compared to setting up the customary A1/A2 echelon we're all so accustomed too.

At present, the Battle Group (BG), finds itself spread over a vast area within Nad e Ali and occupying no less than 15 Check Points (CPs) up to PI strength, and a number of Patrol Bases (PBs) up to 250, with a Forward Operating Base (FOB) in the process of being constructed, which will become home for 300, including Battle Group HQ. Supporting the Battle Group is quite a challenge, with its current manning figures of in excess of 1300 - double the size of any other BG - but with the same G4 team you'd expect to find on any training exercise in UK.

All BGs have a similar set up, which is slightly different to the way we train for Conventional War, in as much as, the echelons tend to be grouped collectively. Initially, A1 A2 and B Echelons were grouped together, in line with other BGs, with the Quartermaster at the helm, the Quartermaster Technical and the Motor Transport Officer being employed elsewhere, and in tasks outside of G4. The Battle Group Logistics Officer (BGLO) was then left to concentrate on the planning side of G4 Operations. Would it work with the traditional A1, A2 and B Echelons? Probably not in this Theatre, as it would hinder and slow down the re-supply chain, but as we've spread our wings and occupied additional CPs within Helmand, what has become clear is the need for an A1 Echelon forward located,

or a grouping similar if not in numbers then certainly in function even if it's only to act as a mailbag to push and pull Combat Supplies. Other BGs have managed to do without an A1 or G4 node, but not all BGs are supplying "Life Support" to approximately 1,300 personnel.

All re-supply convoys are escorted with Force Protection, so the business of having G4 assets on call or sending forward stock that has been accidentally left behind (forgotten) doesn't happen. In some cases, it may be over 3 weeks until some locations can be reached, with the much anticipated morale of mail & fresh rations. Some locations can't be reached by road so foot patrols are utilised for re-supply. The importance for commanders at all levels to ensure that the kit and equipment needed to be deployed forward on the initial troop movement is carefully thought through must not be underestimated.

In an ideal world, and as doctrine would suggest, a minimum of 30 Days of Supply (DOS) of Combat Supplies should be held in reserve at all locations. Realistically, if this was to be put in place at all locations within BG Centre South, the unthinkable would have been achieved. Don't get me wrong, in some of the more disconnected CPs, such as Haji Alem (HAM), as a

BG we decided the best course of action would be to insert 90 DOS of mixed commodities. To achieve this, it took manpower from 3 Coys, and over 30 hrs to complete the task. HAM sits less than 1 KM from its closest PB, but it may as well be on a different island, due to the difficulties and vulnerability of the one route in and out of the CP. To deliver 90 DOS of water alone, took over 4 Support Vehicles (SVs). One SV will carry 10 pallets which equates to 6,000 Litres of water, which is 20 DOS for 30 men. On top of this you then have the Rations, Ammunition, Fuel and any Welfare goods if they can be fitted onto the SVs. In total, approx 20 VEHs were involved with the re-supply. This was for 30 men, BGCS is currently running at 1300. There are a number of constraints and frustrations to get kit out to the Boys, particularly mail, but where there's a will, there's a way - we've even managed to get hot pizza delivered to all locations, if only the RAF knew what was in those Welfare boxes! The smell was unbelievable.

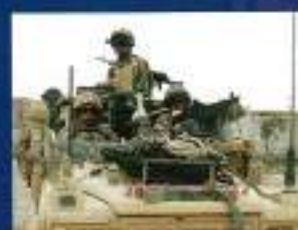
At times locations will go down as low as 2-3 Days of Supply (DOS). This is through no failings on behalf of the G4 chain, it's due to restrictions applied and prioritising of loads throughout the BG. The use of Support Helicopters (SH) whilst on operations for G4 re-supply is seen to be a great asset, but due to other priorities for the use of SH assets, not many Combat Supplies are moved forward by these means. The majority of re-supply tends to be conducted by Combat Logistic Patrols (CLPs) or by use of packing kit in the Bergans of personnel moving between locations.

CLPs will usually consist of approximately 10 Vehicles when

headed up by the BG, or up to 40 Vehicles when the patrol is run by the Brigade Logistics Regiment. CLPs take place on average once a week, and the majority of the QM's Department will be used for the patrol, and will be deployed in most cases for up to 48 hrs, leaving the remainder to prepare for the next patrol. The main issue with CLPs is the fact that you can't get to all locations in one clean sweep - with this in mind, it's not unrealistic if some of the more isolated CPs are only visited once per month, unless the overstretched SH becomes available for re-supply. One of the main challenges the G4 setup will face whilst on operations is not getting the stores, but facing the frustrations in moving the stores forward. For this reason alone, Pre Deployment Training (PDT) should be based around the difficulties the G4 element will face once deployed. During the Battalion's PDT I thought it was unrealistic and a huge ask to support the Battalion at Aldershot, Thetford, Otterburn and Salisbury Plain simultaneously, but looking back, there could have been no better preparation for what it is like in theatre.

As the Quartermaster of the BG, and within the current tempo we find ourselves in when deployed on Ops, I find myself in a very fortunate position, in as much as I have an extremely well organised and experienced G4 team, who've been put through their paces over the past 12 months preparing for HERRICK 10. I have no doubt, if it wasn't for the Subject Matter Experts we tend to take for granted from within the QM's Department, MT and CIS P, BGCS wouldn't be in such a healthy state it finds itself during a very demanding Operational Tour.

Afghanistan Picture Parade



Afghanistan Picture Parade



BATTLEFIELD TOURS



(L-R) Roy Bailey, John Williams, Arthur Bland

Normandy 1944 - 2009

by Brian Keane

Hundreds of events to commemorate 65 years of the liberation of Normandy from the Nazis were held throughout the region during June, one of which was held in Montchamp on 6th June.

The Guards Armoured Division saw much fighting in this area, and the small cemetery at St Charles de Percy bears witness to the bloody losses incurred by the allies, with over 40 being those of the Welsh Guards.

I was privileged to be invited to these commemorations by the Mayors of both villages, to represent the Welsh Guards Association, and so together with my wife Sandra, we embarked on a frantic 48 hours whistle stop tour, leaving on the night ferry from Portsmouth on Friday 5th June, and returning on the night ferry the following day.

On arrival at Montchamp, we feasted on fresh bacon rolls, hot chocolate croissants fresh orange juice and ample tea and coffee, courtesy of Jeanette and David Mabitt owners of 'Poppys Tea Rooms', who gave us a fantastic welcome.

At the cemetery we met up with 4 Welsh Guards veterans who fought in the area, two of which were Association members, Arthur Bland from the London

Branch and John Williams, Montgomery and Shropshire Branch. We were then introduced to Roy Bailey, who also fought at Montchamp with the 1st Battalion. This was the first time he had ever been back since the war, and was visiting his Brother Harry's grave (also from the 1st Battalion). Harry Bailey was given special permission to marry immediately before disembarkation to Normandy, and sadly never managed to spend a weekend with his bride.

The residents of Montchamp and St Charles de Percy came out in force, with almost 400 residents present at the ceremonies as well as 47 Standards on parade. A special badge and commemorative booklet was presented to the veterans by the Mayors in a special service besides the Resistance Memorial on the Square.

Later in the afternoon after several courses of sumptuous food, the wine began to flow freely, the singing got louder



Serving members with Roy Bailey, Brian Keane, Arthur Bland

and the bonhomie of the French and the British 'old soldiers' became more apparent - what a day to remember!

I am sure every one of the veterans present, would join

with me in thanking sincerely the Mayors of Montchamp and St Charles de Percy as well as the residents, for their warm and sincere welcome. We are all proud to be part of their history.

Anniversary Tour 2009

by Capt (Retd) Graham Taylor

Fichtel Veterans
L-R - Fred Bowden, Arthur Bland, Alan Appleby MBE, RQMS Warren Williams

The 25th Regimental Battlefield Tour last September will be remembered as one of the very best, and there have been plenty of those. We were privileged to join local celebrations marking the 65th anniversary of liberation at three places with Regimental connections, and everywhere we were warmly welcomed.

We set off from Wellington Barracks, thence to Pirbright, full of happy memories, driven as always by Peter Gullis, an Honorary Welsh Guardsman, on a bright crisp September Friday

morning. The crossing to Calais was smooth and uneventful and we arrived in good heart in Medhele where we had stayed the year before. The following day we travelled to Diez where

BATTLEFIELD TOURS



David (Spider) Webb on parade at Diest bearing the North Wales Branch Standard

In 1994 we were given the Freedom of the City. We were met by the Burgomaster and other officials and, flanked by police outriders we proceeded to the Resistance Memorial. Peter had manoeuvred us through some of the most inaccessible streets on the Continent, so with local police leading the way, the short journey should not have been a problem. But it was. We were led into a narrow street in the city centre which, to cut an amusing story short, resulted in the area being gridlocked.

Street bollards were removed, the traffic jam was expertly negotiated and we arrived at the Monument where a brass band and a large group of former Resistance and Veteran associations awaited. Wreaths were laid, anthems played and

we were taken to the Citadel, home of the Belgian Parachute Regiment, where we enjoyed a splendid lunch.

Cafes were visited, a brass band played and we enjoyed a reception in the Town Hall where vast quantities of wonderful local beer was dispensed from large jugs by ample bosomed ladies. The Burgomaster expressed his delight that we had returned to renew the bonds of friendship and spoke of the difficult and dangerous days of early September 1944 when civilians and British soldiers were injured and killed by German bombing.

It was, he said, to express appreciation and gratitude for the efforts and sacrifices made then by the British that the Welsh Guards had been given the Freedom of the City. He expressed the hope that the

Regiment would continue its links with Diest for the future generations. After a response by Colonel Bonas, which expressed all our feelings of gratitude for such a rapturous welcome, we exchanged gifts, enjoyed more beer, rendered "Land of my Fathers" and returned to base.

The Welsh Guards attendance at Hechtel was swelled to over 100 by the welcome presence of Ogmore and Swansea Branches and, as always, the Church Service was emotional. The Reverend Willy Pryor took part robed in his late Uncle Hugh Lister's Field Vestments. An Anglican Priest, Major Hugh Lister commanded No. 2 Company in the Battle of Hechtel where he was killed on the final day.

We visited the town cemetery where many local people killed in the fighting are buried, and also a

new memorial centred around the town's Sherman tank. Lunch followed, as always a splendid occasion, but it exceeded everyone's expectations this year. Some 200 were seated in a very smart marquee and enjoyed a three course luncheon worthy of a state banquet.

After lunch we watched a play which told of the occupation of Hechtel, the atrocities suffered by the inhabitants and the battle which led to the town's freedom. It was produced by an amateur dramatic group based in Hechtel and was extremely powerful and moving. It was a sobering thought that among the audience there were people who had lived through those terrible times.

Fred Bowden and Arthur Bland are regular tourists who fought in Hechtel and they were joined on

BATTLEFIELD TOURS



Colonel Bonas addressing the Mayor and people of Izel-les-Hameaux



Party Time - The end of Tour dinner in Arras

this occasion by Alan Appleby who won the Military Cross for his part in the fighting there but was unfortunately taken prisoner when his tank was destroyed. It was an emotional return for Alan who was accompanied by his two sons who were great company. There have been many wonderful occasions in Hechtel over the years but the 2009 visit ranks among the most memorable, thanks to the Mayor Raf Truyens and the townsfolk.

Some talk of taking coals to Newcastle but it is unlikely that anyone would take beer to Belgium which is renowned for its ale. But Beryn Lewis of Felinfoel Brewery did just that. He brewed a special beer for Hechtel and provided 380 bottles bearing a label featuring the town's coat of arms. Like all good beers it went down well and was considered by locals to be a match for Belgium's best!

On Monday we left Mechelen and headed into France to Arras where we were to stay for two nights. In the afternoon we visited the impressive Vimy Ridge Memorial which commemorates the 66,000 Canadians who died

in the 1914-1918 war. On Tuesday morning we went first to the park of the Abaye St Vaast to lay a wreath at the Welsh Guards Memorial Plaque only to find that, unknown to us and our French contacts, it had been moved to a new site nearby. We just managed to stop workmen excavating the paving in front of the plaque, and carried out our act of remembrance.

From Arras we travelled a few miles west to the village of Izel-Les-Hameaux where seventy years before, the 1st Battalion were billeted. They spent the winter there until, in May, they moved to Arras to stem the German attack which ended what has been called the Phoney War. The Mayor, Jean-Pierre Dupois and his wife have carried out extensive research into the Regiment's stay and have even visited the Imperial War Museum. Wreaths were laid at the splendid memorial to the Welsh Guards, a Vin d'honneur was greatly enjoyed, speeches were made, gifts were exchanged and the occasion was added to by the translator, a charming young lady who taught in the local secondary school. The presence of young children here and at all the

ceremonies we attended throughout the tour is very encouraging and at Izel-Les-Hameaux few will forget the tiny tot who clapped and kept time with the band.

Andre Coillot who lives near Arras has a massive collection of all things military which he had displayed in his house. Now, it has been moved to the Ocean Villas site which is owned by Avril Williams who is well known to Great War historians. Its new setting is a great improvement and we enjoyed our visit before returning to Arras for our traditional group dinner.

We dined and wine well and enjoyed the entertainment that followed. New tourists added to

the great atmosphere on this tour of tours, among them Helen Fumell who is Director of Music for the Powys Army Cadet Force Band, whose members are cap-badged Welsh Guards.

We were led by Colonel Bonas and expertly driven by Peter Gullis whose opinion of continental police-out-riders and horse-boxes is unprintable. We visited some interesting places, enjoyed the company of Ogmore and Swansea branches, and were royally received. All that makes for a happy tour, but it is the friendship and spirit in this "Family within a family" that makes the Welsh Guards Battlefield Tour so unique and very special.



Mrs Vivien Bonas with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Hechtel

ASSOCIATION EVENTS



Back Row L-R: Eric Jones, Brian Keane, Sandra Keane, Rev Martyn Davies
Front Row L-R: Len Brooks, Major Tudor Price MBE, Mayoress and
Mayor of Merthyr Tydfil, Clive Jones

St David's Day 2009

by Brian Keane

We all looked forward to celebrating St David's Day at Lillie Barracks, Aldershot in 2009, in order to give a rousing send-off to the Battalion before they embarked on Afghanistan.

Unfortunately this was not to be, since late plans saw the men having a well deserved leave before their deployment. This decision obviously resulted in hasty plans to find a suitable venue for St David's Day at extremely short notice, especially since the day fell on a Sunday. Fortunately, the Rector of Merthyr Tydfil, the Reverend Martin Davies, kindly offered his services, as well as the use of the Old Parish Church of St Tydfil, and the Mayor of Merthyr Tydfil, Councillor Clive Jones, enabled the Association to procure the hall at the newly built Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Centre at a special rate.

By kind permission of the Band Master, members of the Welsh Guards Band played at the church, which was once again filled to capacity, and then led over 200 Association members in the March Past across the river bridge spanning the Taff to the Leisure Centre.

We were extremely proud to have the 2 oldest Association members with us on the day, namely Len Brooks, who traveled from Bristol and is a member of the Monmouthshire Branch, aged 95, and Eric Jones, Merthyr Tydfil Branch aged 94. They are an inspiration to us all, and prove you are never too old to take part. It was also good to see members of 'Welsh Guards Reunited' supporting the event. Some are members of the Association, whilst others were not, proving we all belong to the same family, regardless of what we call ourselves. Let us hope this trend continues, since without younger members the Association will cease to exist.

Hopefully, 2010 will see us celebrating this day with the Regiment, which will be extra special after their arduous and difficult tour in Afghanistan. I am sure we will witness another great turn-out!



Eyes Down - The Welsh Guards' marquee in deep concentration

A Day At The Races

by Roy Lewis

The first Association Race Day was at Bangor-on-Dee in 1999. From 2000 to 2005 it was held at Hereford and since then at Ludlow in Shropshire. The 11th was on Sunday April 26th 2009 and, as usual, the weather was in our favour

Very few of those who attend the Race Days are experts, but it's not intended to be a serious punters v bookies occasion. The attraction is the opportunity to enjoy day's sport in good company, and our fourth visit to Ludlow was greatly enjoyed.

The main attraction is the Welsh Guards Association Race which the ladies show their equestrian knowledge by picking the best turned out horse. The winning owner receives a splendid statuette of the first Welsh Guards Regimental Sergeant Major Stevenson. In 2009 the winning horse was Erzen ridden by the famous jockey Tony McCoy and the owner was presented with the statuette by Colonel DRP Lewis.

One great advantage of going to our race day is a private marquee in which we have a first class buffet. Race goers study the Racing Post and the race card while enjoying refreshments from the bar. We pose no threat to the bookies, but even amateur punters win sometimes which adds to the fun.

Captain David Davies (21) has organised the event from its inception and the hundreds who have enjoyed the Association Race Day owe him a debt of gratitude. It is a very good Regimental Day and members, their ladies and friends travel considerable distances to attend it.

May it long continue.

ASSOCIATION EVENTS



Left to Right: Mr Ronald Jaynes, ATS Francis Fox, Mr Islwyn Evans and Harry Webb were all present on that fatal day in 1944

IMBER COURT – 27th June 2009

By RQMS W J Williams

This year we gathered at Imber Court to commemorate the lives of 20 personnel on that tragic day of 30th June 1944 when a German doodlebug bomb killed Welsh Guardsmen and two attached personnel during a sports day.

It was a beautifully hot and sunny day where the service was conducted by The Reverend William Pryor and attended by approximately 100 Association members from the London, Ogmore and Aberdare Branches.

As enthusiastic as ever, Mr Islwyn Evans who was present on that tragic day read all the names inscribed on the memorial and laid a wreath on behalf of the Regiment and Association.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Stephens stood in for the Regimental Adjutant and gave the reading and later give the speech back at the Metropolitan Sports Bar where presentations were given to Chris Forrester (Metropolitan Police) and Nick Hartfree (General Manager of the Club) for all their help and support over the years.

Imber Court Memories of 14363331 Gdsm Norman Edwards

As I recall, allowing for the age gap, the sports day at Imber Court was delayed owing to bad weather. I think it was originally scheduled for the Friday, but held over till the following Tuesday.

We were in the stables at Sandown Park from where we marched to the Police sports ground at Imber Court. It was reasonable June day.

I had a "Stablemate," Gdsm O'Brien, "Typically Welsh", who worried a lot about his mother, and how she would manage the small holding, somewhere in South Wales.

Anyway, Sports Day was under way, and O'Brien and I were in the stand watching some event or other. He kept asking me to go with him on the field to watch the Long Jump, - I think it was. I told him to go on down and I would follow on, but he wouldn't go without me.

All I remember was the very characteristic engine sound of the



"Doodle Bug" then silence. Then someone shouting "Get Down." A massive orange flash of the air burst of the bomb. I don't remember anything else for a time, during which I must have been thrown quite a distance with the blast. I came to, and thought, I must be alright. Fortunately O'Brien and I were O.K.!! But, oh no, I shall be in terrible trouble now, - I had lost my cap badge.

Just imagine, in all that carnage, and believe me, it was carnage, that the loss of my cap badge seemed, at that moment, to be all important!!

I remember walking around in a daze and seeing an ATS girl on the ground. I think she worked in one of the offices.

We all smoked in those days, and as I knelt down by her she said "give us a fag taff" I lit a cigarette, gave it to her and put my arm under her shoulder to support her.

She had massive back injuries which no one could survive. She passed out, - away, in my arms. I laid her gently on the ground to await further assistance. History tells the sad story of the aftermath.

Two things stick out in my mind. After some semblance of order was restored, we were formed up and marched back to Sandown

Park. I can remember people from nearby houses pleading with us, have you seen my Johnnie, or have you seen my little girl. They must have got in to watch the events taking place. Very traumatic.

Secondly, getting back to Sandown and having a vacant bunk in your stable. Guardsman Lemon, amongst many more, did not return that day.

My mate, O'Brien, kept asking me why I wouldn't go with him on to the field, the point of impact of those bombs had a long probe and it exploded, as near as I can remember, in the area of the Long Jump.!! Why didn't I go with him, who knows. Personally, I like to think "someone up there was keeping his eye on me" I still do.

I never knew what happened to O'Brien after that. Would love to find out.

I went out to join 3rd Battalion. We sailed from Gourock on the Clyde. On the Orantes down through the Bay of Biscay, - hunted by "U" Boats, 10 days to Algiers & Oran in North Africa.

Then on to Naples, and onwards and upwards to Austria, where hostilities ceased.

(My Army number is ex Royal Welsh Fusiliers I was transferred to the Welsh Guards.)

ASSOCIATION EVENTS



Ludlow 2009
L - P Stan Evans, RQMS Warren Williams (the only one who could afford a pint) and Roy Lewis

TOGETHER AGAIN The Association Dinner 2009

By Roy Lewis

The 24th Association Dinner at Ludlow Racecourse was a success but such great occasions always are. Even though the number of those attending was low compared to other dinners in the past, the atmosphere was perfect. Being in a room full of Welsh Guardsmen, all with a tale to tell and a funny story to recall, is the perfect way to spend a Saturday evening.

For many the fun began in the afternoon at a hostelry adjacent to the Travelodge, both having been taken over by the Tafts. The purpose of Association Dinners is to bring Welsh Guardsmen of all ages and periods of service and from all the Branches together and that was fulfilled before, during and after the dinner.

Ludlow Racecourse now has strong connections with the Regiment, the 1999 Association Dinner was also held there. Colonel Tom Bonas presided and we were honoured by the presence of General Lord Guthrie and the Regimental Lieutenant Colonel whose father presided over many such events in the past.

We were particularly pleased that the Commanding Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major found time to join us despite the imminent deployment of the 1st Battalion to Afghanistan. When we heard, just a few months later, of the death of Colonel Thorneloe we thought of the evening when he had been with us enjoying the Association Dinner. It is a memory we shall treasure.

There have been eleven venues since the first dinner in 1962 at Swansea's Brangwyn Hall when nearly 350 members attended. The Annual Report noted "the number would have been greatly increased but for the

small-pox outbreak in South Wales at the time". That did not deter the diehards, despite arms throbbing from inoculations and warnings not to sample the local brew, it was a great launch and a Regimental tradition was firmly in place.

The other ten venues have been Cardiff where on the Regiment's 50th Anniversary in 1965, HM The Queen attended the Association Dinner in the City Hall, Merthyr Tydfil in 1997 where 450 were present, Aberdare, Wrexham, Llandudno, Chester, Shrewsbury, Ludlow, London and Pirbright.

With very few branches holding men only reunions, the Association Dinner remains a traditional event and one that should be well attended wherever it is held. It is biennial which means that one is due in 2015 when we celebrate the Regiment's Centenary.

It is a night for all ages but special mention should be made of the older Welsh Guardsmen present at Ludlow who enlisted in the

1930s. Things were so different in their day, but they remain young at heart and are among the most loyal supporters of all Branch and National events.

There are sixteen Branches in the Association, one of them in North America, whose President David Tilley sent a message apologising for his absence, quite understandable because he lives over 6000 miles away. Almost every other Branch was represented at a function that ended a few hours before Summer time began.

We may have lost an hour, but it was not a lost week-end. It was a very happy one thanks to those of our Regimental family who travelled from far and wide, and Brian Keane, Secretary - General who organised it.

Following the inaugural Association Dinner in 1962, 2731136 A G Simons wrote a poem which he dedicated to a fellow Welsh Guardsman who was in hospital and could not attend. The first and last verses are worth recording:-

"Twas on a Saturday evening,

A Grand Time to recall,

When old time Guards were
teeming

In Swansea's Brangwyn Hall,

"So to every member

I penned this parting rhyme,

Grand moments to remember

Good luck until next time".

There were absent friends we recalled at Ludlow, some in hospital no doubt thinking of us enjoying themselves. Those who could have attended but did not missed a "Grand Time". However the great thing about Association Dinners is that there is always a next time.

ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Welsh Guards Rugby Reunion Dinner

Chris Beynon (Hon Sec)

Whilst other rugby dinners, of which there had been three, had been successful, our fourth at the Stradey Park Hotel, Llanelli on 23rd October 2009 has had lavish praise heaped upon it. For the last three decades it has been the spiritual home of Llanelli RFC – "The Scarlets!" It has been the venue of visiting New Zealand, Australian and South African touring sides and one can understand why.

The evening was a success due in the main to Ms Angela Saunders, the Chef and all the staff. We were all treated superbly. To paraphrase War-time American Army General Douglas MacArthur "We will return!" Unfortunately, General the Lord Guthrie was committed to a long standing duty elsewhere and was unable to attend. We therefore welcomed our Regimental Adjutant, Colonel Tom Bones BA, who attended for what we hope is the first of many of our dinners.

The evening's special guest was Mr Jim Cahill of Barry. A sprightly 83 years young, Jim was our oldest player "on parade" and Colonel Tom presented him with a copy of "Soldier", the autobiography of General Sir Mike Jackson along with a set of wartime DVDs.

The highlight of the night, however, was the presence of our returning troops from Afghanistan. Hot foot off the plane, brushing the dust from his 'combats' with one hand and mess tin and razor in the other, Captain Alun Bowen, our rugby

officer got "tell in", top table. He, along with other members of the Battalion rugby squad, had just completed a tour of active duty in Afghanistan. Who better than Alun could relate the soldier's story? All of us in attendance could remember how the role of a rugby player once was. Struck off all duties, "tracksuit" brigade, isolated from our individual companies, - having it "right off!" Our world did not comprise of I.E.D.s, child suicide bombers or losing friends unnecessarily. What Alun Bowen did that night was to bring the battlefield and all it entails to our tables. He served it to us as a fifth helping! He highlighted the role played by L/Cpl Mel Lewis, our British Army and Combined Services prop forward, who when asked, stepped out of the role of rugby player, perfectly naturally into that of a fighting soldier. Mel had epitomised the Welsh Guardsman of today by displaying a whole range of skills in an alien environment, - but bravery is not a

skill, it is an inherent trait and Mel, like many others of our own, earned his 'spurs' in Afghanistan. We have always been proud of Mel and the sporting honours he has brought to the Regiment. Now, more so.

The room that night exuded a warmth, a depth of feeling that I had never before experienced. It was a feeling that I will always remember and treasure. It transcended mere rugby bonhomie – the feeling for our returning troops bordered on sacrosanctity!

Returning to normality came the raffle. Dai Graham, that "Jam Boy" extraordinaire had exceeded even his gregarious standards. As our main sponsor, he had acquired and purchased two jerseys. The first, a Willie John McBride British Lions jersey, signed and with an enclosed photograph of the great man. The other a Barbarians jersey, signed by Gareth Edwards and with photograph too. Major Glyn White had donated two of his debenture tickets for the home internationals and John Lott, another "Ironman" had donated telephones of the digital, high-tech variety! A Welsh Guards grand slam!

When "Ossie" Morris (19) won the Edwards Barbarians jersey, he magnanimously donated it to the new Welsh Guards rugby "dubhouse" at Lille barracks. Alun

Bowen nearly bit his hand off!

Come the auction, Dai Graham's gift of donating six tickets, two each to see the Wales v Argentina, Australia and New Zealand games – went very well. Andy Hunter proved to be an audacious gambler. He bid £150.00 for the Argentina game while New Zealand went for a mere £90.00.

Between the raffle and the auction we exceeded £750.00, that sets a healthy pot for our next dinner in 2011.

Given that after 'decompression' leave of a week or so, - the Battalion went on official leave that very day – it was asking a great deal to expect a large turn out from our rugby squad, those that did attend lit up our night and we were both honoured and humbled to have had them share room space with us.

There will always be a bond between young and not so young rugby men. That we are Welsh Guardsmen reinforces it so. For so long as this committee continues its most pleasurable work, its main purpose for functioning will always be to support 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, its rugby squad and its rugby men – be they ever so old.

"Ordered to attend" the next dinner 2011. One wing-forward, number 6, General the Lord Guthrie! One wing-forward, number 7, Lt Col. CK. Antelme DSO!



"Ossie" Morris (19) donating his raffle prize of the Gareth Edwards Barbarians rugby jersey to Capt (Rugby Officer) Alun Bowen



Col Bones presenting Jim Cahill our oldest player "On Parade" with General Sir Mike Jackson's autobiography "Soldier"



May (Reed) Glyn White MBE presenting Capt Alun Bowen with a team photograph of the 2009 British and Irish Lions tour of South Africa and a signed Llanelli Scarlets jersey

Welsh Guards Association Picture Parade



Welsh Guards Association Picture Parade



WELSH GUARDS ASSOCIATION GOLF SOCIETY



Lt Col Brian Morgan Presenting B Pennock with the Malcolm Trophy



The Contenders
On the tee John Harford, behind observing Major G White MBE, centre Bryn Pennock and this year's runner up Roy Gardiner



On the tee Martyn Griffiths, behind left Ken Davies, on the right Rob O'Rourke



Lt Col Brian Morgan Presenting J Haycock with the Stanier Trophy

Welsh Guards Association Golf Society

By Martyn Griffiths

We started the 2009 season in Cardiff at Cottrell Park playing for the John Powell Trophy where it was with great sadness that we were to learn that John Powell had passed away from a long illness he will be greatly missed as he was a stalwart of the association golf.

Having just taken over the Golf from Captain (RETD) DM Davies who seemed to have the golden touch where the weather was concerned, I was praying for the day to go, well, the turn out was a drop on normal years which was down to the Battalion in Afghanistan then the clouds arrived also the rain however the course was in such good nick every one enjoyed the day (I hope).

The results of the day:

1st: Brian Turley 35 Points
2nd: P John 31 Points
3rd: B Pennock 30 Points
Longest Drive: M Griffiths
Nearest the Pin: P John

For our second Association meeting on Thursday the 25th June 2009, we travelled down to

Haverfordwest Golf Club in West Wales as the theme this year was we would play golf in S Wales, W Wales, E Wales and N Wales as it gave an opportunity for all to taste a bit of golf in each others' district (also no complaints), the good news was the weather was better for this meeting which reflected in the high scores.

The results of the day:

1st: Roy Gardiner 39 Points
2nd: B Pennock 33 Points
3rd: J Harford 31 Points
Longest Drive: L Davies
Nearest the Pin: K Davies

The third meeting of the year took place on Thursday 27th August 2009 at Alice Springs Golf Course in Usk which was tinged with sadness as we were

to learn that Brian Turley had suddenly passed away, who again will be very sadly missed as he also was a stalwart of the Golf Association, I must be now having the same luck with the weather as it was a lovely day but the course took its toll, those who knew the course opted to take buggies this proved to be invaluable as the course was very hilly to say the least.

The results of the day:

1st: B Pennock 32 Points
2nd: Col S Malcolm 31 Points
3rd: R O'Rourke 30 Points
Longest Drive:

Martyn Griffiths
Nearest the Pin: R O'Rourke

Our final meeting of the year took place on Thursday the 24th September 2009 at Chirk Golf Course in Wrexham where a lot was at stake. Not only were we competing for the Stanier Trophy we were also playing for the Malcolm Trophy which is presented to the Welsh Guards Association Golfer of the Year, and this year it has never been closer as a number of people were in contention, it was also a delight to see Lt Col Brian

Morgan, C Hopkins and John Williams who didn't come to play but came for the occasion.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Col Morgan for presenting the prizes on the day, also special thanks to John Williams for taking all the great photo's thank you.

The results of the day:

1st: J Haycock 35 Points
Winner of the Stanier Trophy
2nd: B Pennock 32 Points
3rd: A Hughes 26 Points

The Welsh Guards Association Golf Society Player of the year for 2009 and winner of the Malcolm Trophy is Bryn Pennock with a score of 127 points over the season. Well done Bryn I am looking at courses for the 2010 season and as soon as I have confirmed the bookings I will let you know the dates. I would just like to thank all members who have supported the golf through 2009 and very much look forward to your company in 2010.

THE GUARDS DIVISION CORPS OF DRUMS ASSOCIATION



Having formed in November 2004, the Guards Division Corps of Drums Association can now boast a membership of seventy Veteran Drummers drawn from all Regiments of the Guards Division.

Although not all members participate in playing, we can still put out a Corps of up to thirty-five Drummers for engagements. We Practice every month at the Grenadier Guards Club in Windsor, and carry out at least eight engagements each year. During our five years of operation, we have made appearances at Various Regimental Garden Parties, The Royal Chelsea Hospital, The Royal Star and Garter Home Richmond, Remembrance Day Parades at Bristol and Ashford in Middlesex, Veterans Day Parades in Walsall and Portsmouth, The Grenadier Guards "Grenadier Day", at Windsor and Aldershot, and The Grenadier Guards Regimental Remembrance Day Parade marching and playing behind the Band of the Grenadier Guards from Wellington

Barracks to Horse Guards and back.

In December 2007, several of our Flute players donned Desert Combats and joined the Corps of Drums of the Mercian Regiment at their Welcome Home from Afghanistan Parades in Nottingham, Derby and Worcester. During the first three months of 2008, we provided Drum and Flute instructors for the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards and the Royal Anglian Regiment, teaching their young, and not so young Drummers the finer points of playing their instruments to a standard acceptable for Public Duties, this we achieved, and our efforts were very much appreciated by the Drum Majors and Commanding Officers of the relative Battalions. Our Music Instruction work is carried out with the full knowledge and

co-operation of the Army School of Ceremonial to ensure continuity with the current School curriculum. We will of course remain available to repeat this sort of help as and when required, particularly as Battalions return from Afghanistan.

Although our membership is healthy, we are looking to recruit more Veteran Drummers, particularly from the Scots, Irish and Welsh Guards, from whatever era, but

especially those who have left the service in recent years. Our overall quest is to keep our unique type of Military music from passing into the realms of history. If you are interested to pick up your instruments again please contact :-

Peter Taylor on 0118 979 3372.
email :-

peter.taylor65@btopenworld.com

Hon Secretary, The Guards Division Corps of Drums Association.



INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES



Q781 Team

Developing The Afghan National Army

Lt Col Guy Bartle-Jones, Welsh Guards

In Oct 09 I found myself back on a Tri-Star destined for Kandahar but ultimately to Kabul for yet another tour in Afghanistan. On this occasion to take on a Staff Post in the US 2nd HQ namely Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan or CSTC-A for short. Having recently returned from Op Herrick 7 with 1 COLDM GDS I was current enough to waiver OPTAG and Chillwell Individual Reinforcement Cadre.

Therefore pre-deployment training consisted of a series of briefings in PJHQ and a quick afternoon handover with my predecessor in Chillwell. From my time on Herrick 7 I had had some dealings with CSTC-A, and on a previous tour in BRITFOR with its forerunner Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan. Essentially CSTC-A operated outside NATO-ISAF but within a US chain of command. It provided all the resources, training and equipment to build the Afghan National Army (ANA) – its lead nation task as part of the 2002 Bonn Agreement, just

as UK was lead nation for counter Narcotics, Germany for Police, Italy for Judiciary reform and Japan for DOR (disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration). Unlike UK, Germany and Italy, the US had thrown considerable resources and finance at its task and was to all intents and purposes delivering – something you could not say about the other countries! However on arriving in Oct 08 I found that CSTC-A was under huge pressure to expand the ANA programme and grow it faster. At the same time the US had assumed

responsibility for Police Development as the German efforts had failed dismally to re-train, equip and professionalise which was in effect a localised militia, extremely corrupt and had the potential to derail the ANA programme as the police alienated the local population. The Afghan National Police (ANP) was a significant burden on the Americans drawing manpower and resources away from the ANA programme particularly as there appeared little appetite to assist the police programme from NATO countries. This was the state of play in Oct 08.

CSTC-A is located in Camp Eggers at the heart of the government and military institutions both for the Coalition and Afghans. It was one of the first HQ established in Kabul and borders the UN complex and the President Karzai's Palace. The Ministry of Defence and General Staff HQ is a short walk away. Part of my

role running the ANA development programme was to ensure greater ANA General Staff ownership and to that end I mentored Brig Gen Noori who ran the Directorate for Operations, Readiness and Mobilisation within the G3 branch of the General Staff. Like many of the Senior Officers he was very much a graduate of the former Soviet run National Army. His 3rd boss the Director of Operations Lt Gen Karimi was the exact opposite, being a Sandhurst graduate in 1968 and Platoon Commander Battle Course trained. I had first met Gen Karimi in 2004 when he had helped me arrange the use of the famous Bala Hissar fort as the venue to hold a Blue-Red-Blue lunch. Being the Director of Operations was as you can imagine an extremely busy job and he had now been there for the last 8 years. However, despite being Pashtun he had an excellent relationship with the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) Gen Bismillah Khan. Gen

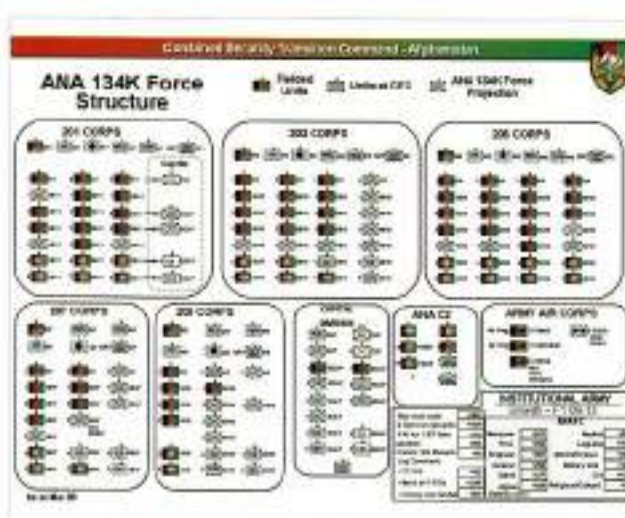
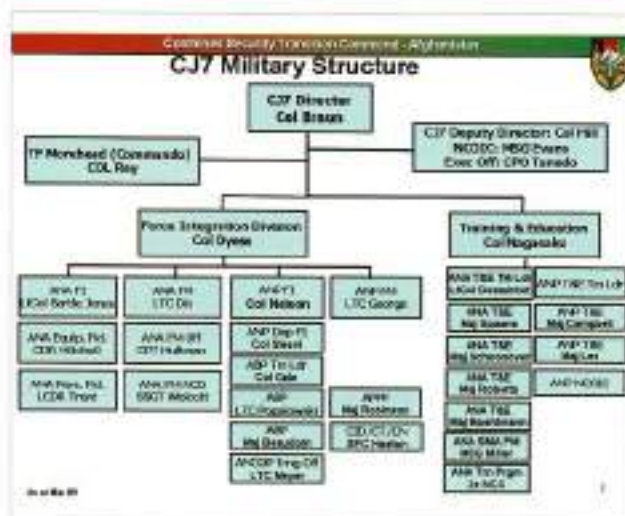
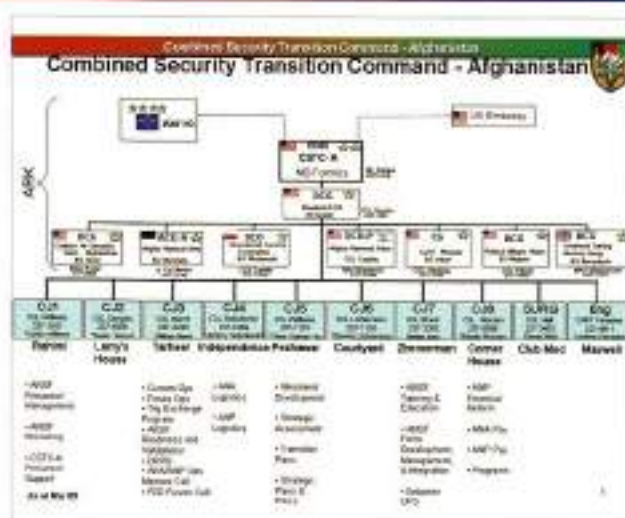
INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES

Bismillah Khan was very much a soldier's soldier and former Mujahideen leader and an inspirational and charismatic leader to the ANA. However as a Tajik his relationship with the Defense Minister Wardak, another Pashtun, was if nothing else limited and prone to doing the opposite of what the Minister may direct or merely sabotage it before it got off the ground. To help overcome these relationships each senior Afghan was appointed an O6 (full bird) US mentor and their efforts coordinated by a senior Canadian mentor. Corraling the efforts of the mentors became key to creating synergy and unity of purpose amongst the Afghan leadership and to overcome tribal resentment and sheer stubbornness.

If you thought the dynamics of the Afghan Headquarters was difficult, it was nothing compared to those in CSTC-A. Trying to work how the HQ functioned and who played what role was a challenge in itself. CSTC-A's primary role is the developing and training of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), having migrated from the Army mission to the additional missions for the Police and other security forces. As such it was set up with the traditional functional branches of C1 to C8 as well as additional branches for Cj Engineers and Cj Surgeon each with their own ANA and ANP teams (see Diagram 1). Each branch headed by a US O6 (except C5 headed by a UK O6). However sitting above these organisations were a series of 1's responsible for a specific area which all the Cj functions may have a supporting role in. For the development of the ANA

I worked closely with the Deputy Commanding General (DCG) responsible for Programmes; the Assistant Commanding General (ACG) for ANA, the Comd of the Combined Training Advisory Group (CTAG) and the (DCG) for International Security Cooperation (ISC). Essentially, DCG for Programmes controlled the budget and also doubled up as a Chief of Staff of sorts. The ACG ANA mentored the ANA in strategic planning with CTAG mentoring the Afghan National Army Training Command to deliver individual training and collective training for new units to deploy to the Field Army with ISC sourcing equipment donations. Each of these 1's came from a different nationality: DCG was US, ACG ANA – Canadian, Comd CTAG – British and DCG ISC – Polish! As you can see a complex multi-national environment in which to work and further complicated by CSTC-A's relationship with ISAF. Comd ISAF was dual hated as Comd US Forces of which CSTC-A was a supporting command with CSTC-A controlling the budget for all ANSF.

In this complex headquarters the engine house for most ANSF development was C17 (see Diagram 2). Its mission was to '...in partnership with the government of Afghanistan, mentors, synchronizes, coordinates, and executes operational and strategic planning and production to build ANSF capability in the following areas: Force Development and Integration, Training and Education...' Its structure broke down into a Force Integration Division and a Training and Education Division.



INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES

In reality the ANA and ANP sections were effectively two distinct branches. The subtle difference between the 2 organisations was that the ANA was being fielded and grown, while the ANP was already established to strength but under considerable programmed development. There was little overlap with the ANP section but some projects for specialist ANSF units were worked jointly.

So what was my role in all of this? As Chief ANA Force Integration with a small team of: a US Navy Commander, a US Navy Lieutenant Commander and two civilian contractors we had to generate and field the ANA and integrate all the key staff functions to grow the force: manning, equipping, training, mentoring and providing facilities. This involved coordinating: CJ7, CJ35, CJ4, CJ7 T&E, CTAG, ISC, CJ Eng, CJTF Phoenix (US Embedded training teams (ETTs)) and ISAF DATES (Department for Training and Equipment support who coordinated ISAF Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs)), as all had an input into the fielding process. On top of fielding ANA units we were also responsible for introducing new equipment programmes for the ANA. The 3 major programmes we were involved in introducing were: Up Armoured High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs); NATO weapons (M16s personal rifle, light, medium and heavy machine guns M249, M240B and M2) and vehicle mounted Symphony Electronic countermeasures. The training programmes for these equipments were coordinated by the Training and Education

branch of CJ7. This was not without its problems. The central training plan concept that had evolved had taken no account of the difficulties and realities of training deployed units, not least getting them back to Kabul with limited strategic lift. In the end the plan had to be unraveled and training decentralised as the only realistic means of delivery. This presented significant challenges to the Corps to bring units out of operations to re-train. The total budget for these 3 programmes came to just over \$1 billion – a far cry from running the Battalion PRI!

With the Force Fielding the majority of units trained were Infantry Kandaks (Battalion equivalent) that were generated through a tried and tested process that saw individuals having completed the basic soldier, NCO and Officer courses coming together at the Consolidated Fielding Centre for 10 weeks of collective training with their mentor team (ETT or OMLT) to form a Kandak and then to deploy to their allocated Corps. Problems arose when either the Afghan General Staff or MOD or ISAF wanted to change the plan to re-direct kandaks elsewhere as this effected who mentored them and whether there were facilities available as the facilities plan worked from the Fielding Plan. The only work around solution was to build tented camps when the plan changed. The other Fielding issue was that most Infantry kandaks would be fielded by end of 09 and the more specialized units would be coming online such as Route Clearance Company's Combat Support Kandaks, Combat Service Support

kandaks, Engineer Battalions, Corps Support Battalions and Quick Reaction Force Armoured Companies. However these units had been designed on US similar units but were not necessarily a good fit for the Afghans. The concept of employment for these units either did not exist or were taken straight from US doctrine and there was no real plan in place to deliver them to the field with only the basic training and then sending contracted training teams to deliver more specialised training later on. Similarly the specialised equipment for these units was not necessarily synchronized with the fielding programme. Therefore fielding concepts had to be developed and the fielding plan more closely synchronized with equipment procurement and training delivery. The final make up of the ANA is depicted in Diagram 3 (with units in the Afghan Flag deployed and those in grey yet to be fielded).

Another anomaly of how CSTC-A was set up was that despite having the role of force fielding I was involved in a number of projects that involved deployed units and formations that fell to

CJ7 Force Integration to resolve and plan. Firstly reconstituting a the counter Narcotics Infantry Kandak (CNIK) that had been hastily created in May 08 to provide outer cordon protection to the Ministry of Interior's Poppy Eradication Force (PEF) it had deployed to Helmand after the poppy eradication season had finished and ended up remaining at supporting 3/205 Brigade as an additional infantry kandak. It had seen its fair share of fighting in the Upper Gereshek valley and in Nad-e Ali but was badly in need of re-equipping, training, and new leadership to prepare for the 09 poppy season. Unfortunately CNIK was not an established unit on the ANA order of Battle and as it did not come under any of the Corps and in effect worked directly to Chief G3 in ANA General Staff. The Americans referred to it as 'the re-headed step child'. Secondly the other major project was the standing up of the Capital Division to take responsibility for Kabul Province and re-aligning 2 Infantry kandaks from the Headquarters Security Support Brigade (HSSB) who also provide the



Leaving Gift to CJ7

INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES



Observing training facilities at Darulaman

Presidential and MOD guards. This involved creating a new Divisional Headquarters and taking over a site at the Kabul International Airport that belonged to the Air Corps but due to delays in the new build to the Air Corps new site, the Division could not be stood up until such time as the Air Corps moved out. Linked to the stand up of the Capital Division was shifting 201 Corps from its largely Kabul focus to concentrate on the South and East of Kabul Province and moving the Corps Headquarters from its location at Pol-e-Charki to a new location in Nangahar at Gamberi. However the site build

was way behind schedule and the Corps Commander was not in any rush to move!

Meanwhile through considerable national political efforts from the countries in Regional Command South and the arrival of General Pretreus at CENTCOM there was considerable pressure to come up with potential options for re-focusing ANA combat power to the South. There was no doubt that the majority of operational activity was in the south but there was still a steady stream of incidents in the East and things were getting worse in the West. Effectively all Corps were crying out for new ANA

units. Therefore I was tasked with drawing up options for increased ANA manpower to the South and drawing it away from the other Regions. At the same time this was going on we were asked to draw up plans to expand the ANA from its growth path to 132 000 to one of 250 000. The current plan had already been cut back to be delivered from 2014 to Dec 2011 and the US administration were considering having the 250 000 complete by 2012! This required some more radical suggestions but the biggest implications being on equipment and infrastructure for barracks and the training regime being able

to deliver the necessary quality. All these were under consideration at my time of leaving in April 09.

CSTC-A was a fascinating place to work particularly alongside the Americans. The pace of change was tremendous but there is no doubt that any 'exit strategy' for ISAF lies in developing the ANA into a credible force that can stand on its own. It will take time particularly for the Afghans to develop the more specialist capabilities and to rebuild their infrastructure. Let us hope the international community will have the patience to see it through!

INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES



A Piece Of Regimental History Comes To Light - In America

By Roy Lewis

In April 1918 a German offensive was mounted on a 50 mile front from Arras to St. Quentin. Three German armies faced the 3rd and 5th British armies but the enemy failed in one of its primary aims, to divide the Allies and reach the Channel ports.

Among the many Joneses in 1st Battalion Welsh Guards in that action was 1651 WT Jones, then 25 years of age, whose home address when he enlisted in June 1915 was Clive Street, Cardiff. He suffered two wounds, the second on the 12th April 1918, rose from the ranks having been acting CQMS in April 1917 and survived the war. As it is today Jones was a common name in the Regiment and 220 served in France and Belgium between 1915 and 1918, seventy-five of whom

were wounded, some more than once. Fifty-six were killed in action or died of wounds or sickness while one Jones was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and fourteen the Military Medal.

In March 2009 Mr Edward Wil of Saint Charles, Missouri contacted Dai Tilley, President of the North American Branch of the Welsh Guards Association and sent him a notebook he had found in a set of old books and papers relating to the Great War.

The tattered notebook consisted of drawings and poems by patients at No. 12 (St. Louis) British Army General Hospital in Rouen, France, and one of the pages was contributed by a Sgt W T Jones, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards dated 19th April 1918, a copy of which is included with this article.

"This drawing denotes the place of my birth, Taffy's the nickname, and causes some mirth and though they make fun I'm proud and do long to return to my home, in the land of song."

"Don't think this is rot it is not so there is good and bad wherever you go but chums from U.S. I'll shake by the hand as well as from England, Scotland and Gallant Ireland".

Sgt W.T. Jones 1st Batt. Welsh Guards 1914-18

With very little information to work on and bearing in mind the numbers of Welsh Guardsmen called Jones, it was very difficult identifying Sgt WT Jones from his namesakes listed in CH Dudley-

Ward's book, "History of the Welsh Guards" which was published in 1919, and which incidentally is still available.

However thanks to the experience and assistance of L/Sgt Mark Morgan at RHQ, it is now thought that 1651 WT Jones of Cardiff is the man who drew the Regimental Crest in the notebook of April 1918.

In any event it is a remarkable story and thanks to the interest of a resident of Missouri, and instant action by Dai Tilley, another piece of Regimental history has come to light.

Missouri is called the "Show Me" state, traditionally because its people have a reputation of mistrusting everything they see and hear, but Mr Will has shown us the way to preserve historical records. Its largest city is St. Louis, which by coincidence is the name of the military hospital in Rouen. It was there that British wounded put together a little book now resting in the archives of the Regiment Sgt W T Jones joined ninety-five years ago.

GALLANT HEROES
The Soldiers Poem

By Roger Simmonds

*In a far off foreign land fighting evil through gods right hand,
On the sea, the air, the land
Liberation for all is planned
Never giving up and standing strong, giving up their lives to
Right the wrong.
Loved ones praying that it won't take long
To have them home where they belong
Liberation seems absurd and freedoms just another word to
those who's crushed beneath the giant's feet.
But help lies in the soul and strong hearts reach their goal
And giants tumble to their maker meet
And after all the fighting's done and all the battles won, our
Brave ones home again with us at last
For our heroes behind still in our hearts and in our minds
Don't let their sacrifice lay in the past*

INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES



Left to Right: Mr Grant Harper, Mr Arthur Bland and Mr Roy Cymbley
all veterans from World War two.

65th Anniversary Of The Liberation Of Cagny

RQMS W J Williams

This year we were kindly invited by the French for the 65th Anniversary of the Liberation of Cagny (Operation Goodwood) on 17th-19th July 2009. It was meant to be a Household Division trip but only the Welsh Guards Association veterans and Major Tony Brady of the Irish Guards were able to make the trip.

It was an early start for our veterans, departing at 05.30 hours from London for Portsmouth to catch the 08.00 ferry to Oustrem (Caen) where the sail across was very smooth and with our veterans looking forward to staying with our French hosts.

We arrived 5 hours later and were met by Jean Paul Hauguel representing the Mayor's

Parlour and was then were taken to the Mayor's Parlour to meet our French hosts with some snacks and drinks.

The next day we were taken to Pegasus Memorial Museum for the morning and again we were looked after by the curator who gave our veterans a gift after watching a new Normandy landings video. The afternoon and early evening was then

taken up by our veterans attending a small service at The Guards Armoured Memorial, Cemetery and Church where each of our veterans laid a wreath at each location on behalf of the Regiment and the Association.

They then received a badge from the Mayor and as ever, our veterans did us so proud, humbly modest and dignified but sprightly and good humoured, despite their years.

they played their part impeccably.

A very different part of the day was in the evening where we went to the village hall for a six course meal and was thoroughly entertained by French singers and dancers bringing back the memories and laughter of the good times during the war. The French showed us remarkable generosity and with great style!

Echoes Of The 2nd Battalion

By Roy Lewis

Researching into the Regiment's history is a very interesting experience. Adding to the Regimental Archives is the principal aim, but meeting Welsh Guardsmen of all ages and periods of service is a privilege and a pleasure, especially when they have lost touch with the Regiment. In 2009 three former members of the 2nd Battalion were contacted and visits made to their homes in Porthcawl, London and the Isle of Wight.

Two of them, Alan Appleby and Bryn James, fought in the first actions of the 2nd Battalion in May 1940, covering the evacuation of the Dutch Royal Family from the Hook of Holland and eight days later the rearguard action at Boulogne. Both got back from Holland but Bryn was captured at Boulogne

and spent five years as a prisoner of war.

2656525 Alan Appleby of Surrey was mentioned in Despatches for his part on the fighting in Boulogne. He had been a Drummer in the Coldstream Guards but then transferred to the 2nd Battalion Welsh Guards just before war broke out.



Alan Appleby 2009

INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES



Robert Cleveland-Stevens with the "Phoenix" muzzle cover

2735248 Bryn James of Glamorgan joined the Regiment in December 1939.

A third former member of the 2nd Battalion visited in 2009 was Robert Cleveland-Stevens who left Oxford University in February 1940 to join what his father described as the "the most efficient and most civilised of all Regiments". He lives in London and recalls his close friend, Rex Whistler, the famous artist whose death he witnessed in Normandy which he described as "a terrible personal and Regimental loss". He commanded 13 Troop and his tank was named Phoenix. Rex Whistler painted the end of the canvas muzzle of the tank's gun depicting Phoenix rising

from the ashes. After the war the troop presented it to their Commander.

The Guards Armoured Division, formed in 1941, included the 1st Battalion as Infantry and the 2nd as an Armoured Recce Battalion. As Major Ellis says in "Welsh Guards at War" those selected for the 2nd "had almost everything to learn". Alan Appleby soon adapted and became skilled in tank gunnery and wireless and was promoted to Sergeant and tank Commander in Pickering where the Battalion trained prior to Normandy.

As the war was about to end Robert Cleveland-Stevens was wounded near Hanover when a mortar shell struck the back of



13 Troop, 2nd Battalion - Normandy 1944

his neck. He could not celebrate VE Day because he was in hospital in Celle but was then well enough to go with his Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Windsor Lewis, to a vineyard which his mother's great grandfather had bought in 1823 and which still produces excellent wine.

Hechtel is visited every year on the Battlefield Tour and Alan Appleby joined the very large Welsh Guards party in September 2009 to celebrate the 65th Anniversary of its liberation. He had a special reason for going there because he was taken prisoner in 1944. It was also in Hechtel that he was awarded the Military Medal.

Bryn James, like other prisoners of the Germans, suffered greatly, often surviving on a bowl of soup and three slices of bread a day. From the day he was liberated to the present time Bryn has a respect for bread! He escaped from a camp in Prussia while on a working party but was recaptured, but with the Red Army advancing from the East and the Western Allies from the East, hopes of liberation rose.

Most of the British, Commonwealth and American prisoners were sent to camps in Eastern Germany and Poland, far from home and neutral countries which made it almost impossible for them to attempt escape. Secret radios kept them informed of the rapid advances of the Allies but the war was by no means over for them and their troubles had not ended.

The Germans moved all prisoners to the West and away from the Russians. Under the Geneva Convention it was a duty of those holding prisoners of war to remove them from potential battle zones providing it did not put their lives in even greater danger. The prisoners were not to be subjected to "dangers and hardships substantially greater than would result if they remained at the place of imprisonment." In what has been called "The Last Escape" the prisoners were in more danger and suffered more hardship than they would have endured had they stayed in the camps.

Thousands were force marched in a severe winter without proper medical care and with very little food. The resultant mistreatment and hardships

INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES



Bryn James - 2009

endured by the prisoners was later condemned and was the subject of post-war trials. It is thought that between 2500 and 3500 British, Commonwealth and American prisoners died on the marches.

Bryn James had already spent most of the war as a prisoner and he and others like him found the march an even greater ordeal. He marched 700 miles and everyone was desperately hungry. One day while trying to pick up scraps of food he was hit with a rifle butt and has a notch in his lip to remind him. Alan Appleby marched 400 miles and slept in snow covered open fields, but 65 years later expressed no strong feelings about the Germans or the treatment he received, saying simply, "There was a war and that's the way it was. They couldn't have given us what they didn't have themselves."

Bryn lost a lot of weight while in captivity but quickly recovered. One medical report read, "He will quickly settle down in civilian life," and he certainly did. He started playing rugby with Aberavon and won a place in the combined Aberavon/Neath

XV that played the touring Australians in the 1947/48 season. He turned professional, joined Whitehaven and played for them against the Australian Rugby League tourists.

It was in Whitehaven that he met his wife and after ending his sporting career they moved to South Wales where Bryn, a brick-layer, worked on housing sites. At the time of meeting them at their home in Porthcawl they had been married 58 years. Alan also trained as a bricklayer when he came home and became a building trades instructor at a prison on the Isle of Wight where he lived for 37 years. When he and his wife were met at their home in Freshwater, Alan said it was his first contact with the Regiment since 1945.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to listen to Bryn James, Alan Appleby and Robert Cleveland-Stevens recalling their experiences and especially those of the 2nd Battalion which was formed in April 1939 and went into suspended animation in July 1947. It only existed eight years but it was enough to influence and mark their lives forever.



13 Troop enter Brussels guided by a Gendarme.
P for Phoenix Commanded by Billy Cleveland-Stevens - September 1944

• Footnote:

Full accounts of the interviews with the above are now in the Regimental Archives. There are other Welsh Guardsmen yet to be discovered and every effort should be made to find them so that their experiences are recorded. What they have to

tell is part of our history but there is something else, like the three Welsh Guardsmen mentioned in this story they will find their old friends again, whether by personal visits, by telephone or e-mail, and will enjoy being part of the Welsh Guards family once more.

The Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race 10th April, 2009

By Captain Andrew Noyons

I first heard about the infamous Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race whilst sitting in the Sahara Desert half way through the 22nd Marathon des Sables. Just the very thought of sitting in a boat that was cold and wet, had certain obvious attractions when compared to the soaring temperatures and blistering feet of Africa... so, I suppose, there and then I mentally signed up for 125 mile course and 77 portages; the world's longest non-stop canoe race!

The race is a quintessentially English, and completely pointless, phenomenon. It is not a complete descent of some mighty river, nor is it an epic journey from one great City to another. Rather it is the result of a rail strike in 1920 that caused four revellers to bet that they could beat a horse and cart

from Devizes to a traders market at Westminster. By 1950 this race had become resurrected as an official sporting event that Paddy Ashdown himself won in 1964. To fit the nature of the event I had to find a suitably mad partner, and Captain James Westropp fit the bill perfectly.

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Training started in earnest in November with short paddles along the Thames with Richmond Canoe Club. However, it soon became apparent that balance and fear of falling in are not mutually inclusive, as a fear of the latter prevents any ability in the former. But luckily all seemed to be progressing well and Christmas soon turned into early February and then, disaster struck when 'Wes' slipped on a piece of ice outside Victory College, Sandhurst (ironically, whilst I was away skiing!) and broke his leg! Putting sympathy aside for one moment, this cowardly trick of extricating himself from the race was not lost on me, as it left me without a partner and only eight weeks to go before the race.

These growing constraints at home were proving near insurmountable challenges in themselves. Now all I had to do was to find a boat, a partner, a support crew and learn how to paddle. A few days after Wes' 'accident' I was put in touch with Jules Bray who spontaneously volunteered to step into the fold. After a few weeks of training in the boat and a lot of swimming in the Thames, we started to put our heads together concerning the paperwork of the event, routes, tidal timings, logistics and support crews. Indeed, a critical part of our preparation was a spreadsheet passed down to us by some DW veterans. We made some alterations for our own needs and this enabled us to factor in our projected time on canal, additional flow on Thames and tidal Thames, times for portages and breaks – all of which allowed us to plan when and where our support crews would meet us along the course.

Without this level of detail and planning we would have failed. In fact, on marathon races such as these competitors rely heavily on their support crews, who feed, water, encourage and sustain paddlers over the course of the race. It takes a lot of logistical planning, map reading and tea making from the support crews, but without them the paddlers simply could not compete to a decent level.

Anyway, race day finally arrived and the ultimate preparations took place on the Devises Wharf, fine tuning the boat, going to the loo repeatedly, nervously checking out the competition and enviously cursing the tips and tricks of our rival canoeists who had modified their kit in ingenious ways. We also had a sighting of James Cracknell who seemed slightly more on top of his game than Jules and I, so we ignored him!

Jules and I cautiously set off at about 7am and shortly after the start we encountered 'Saddam the Swan' – infamous for attacking unsuspecting paddlers. We spotted him and carefully paddled passed the hissing beast with its menacing raised wings, when suddenly we heard the beating of its feet on the water as it made a desperate attempt to sink our aspirations before they had barely taken flight. Luckily Jules, who plays No 8 for London Scottish, handed it off fairly effectively with his paddle! A near escape from what could have been a rather premature and embarrassing end.

The weather conditions were at both ends of the scale, sunny one moment and blizzards the next, but it was the wind that sapped our strength and morale and left us feeling particularly

sorry for ourselves, and the encouraging words from our support crew of 'nobody forced you to do this' left a somewhat bitter taste in our mouths. Body heat soon disappeared and hypothermia became a real concern. Falling in would be potentially disastrous and would certainly finish our race.

During the race problems came and went, and tensions between Jules and I escalated and diffused in equal measure, and every portage in sight was a life line allowing us to stop paddling for a few minutes. We approached our portages with the air of the amateur and usually crashed into the side and dambered out bedraggled and wet, rather than gliding along the side, hopping out in a well rehearsed synchronised movement as demonstrated by our competitors. At various points of the race we both felt quite sick what with the disorientating feeling of hallucination and the constant motion and rocking of the boat, but day soon turned into night. Although there was an undeniable palpable excitement for the night section I, actually, truth being told, felt quite intimidated by the pitch black of the rural river, the growing tiredness and difficulty of the map reading. This all made the boat was a very quiet place for a couple of hours but actually, the order of the day was grit, determination and stamina and we pulled through without too many problems.

On my map board tapped to the bow of the boat I started ticking off major milestones: Newbury, Henley, Bray, Reading and then we arrived at Teddington where the Thames turns tidal and it was only seventeen miles with

the flow to Westminster Bridge... or so we thought. For some innocuous reason the tide had been 'switched' off purely, so we thought, to irritate the Noyons Bray team. And rather than kicking back and steer the boat to victory we had to drag it out through West London with our leaden arms.

It was at this point that the sheer vastness of the Thames became apparent when passing under the imposing Victorian bridge structures and passing famous river landmarks. As ever, we started ticking off the bridges working through Richmond, Chiswick, Barnes and Hammersmith and then into Battersea and Chelsea and finally the Palace of Westminster was spotted. Never far from a drama and just to keep everyone guessing, we were nearly tipped out of the boat about 200 meters short of Westminster Bridge by a tourist pleasure cruise but by the luck of the willing crowds we held on, and paddled on tentatively the closing stretch and under the bridge. We were finally lifted out of our boat by two cheerful fellows in dry suits and directed up the steps on the South Bank of Westminster Bridge, and met by a very cheerful and dry James Westropp and James Olzowski who had both done a great job as our support crew.

My advice for anyone wanting to attempt this race would be do not underestimate the complications of training with a partner, a boat, a car and roof rack and tide timings BUT definitely have a crack and try and do slightly better than Jules and I... but always remember that the great Sir Ranulph Fiennes failed to finish so you are competing with the greats!

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Branch and Guests displaying Lottery cheque outside Hechtel Town Hall

Visit to Hechtel – September 2009 Ogmore Branch

By 23523201 Mike Jones

Once again this year we made our fourth visit to Hechtel on what has become a biennial trip. Thankfully we were again successful in obtaining a Lottery Grant which enabled us to make the four day trip, including the evening meal on our first night for under £100.

We left Bridgend at 0700 hrs on Friday 11th September 2009 and made the tortuous journey via the Motorway System to the Euro tunnel Terminal in Folkestone by lunchtime. We had fairly an uneventful journey to Hechtel, arriving there at about 1930 hrs local time and met at the Welsh Guards Square by our Associate member, Bob Vranken, who has just recently retired from the Belgium Army and has again been our guide whilst we have been out there.

We drove to our hotel and after a quick 'wash and brush up' it was down to the dining room for dinner. As usual the food was excellent and afterwards we spent an excellent few hours in the bar with our hosts.

On Saturday morning after breakfast we made our way to the Military Cemetery in Leopoldsborg to lay a 'Poppy' wreath on the memorial and one

of our ladies, Mrs Hazel Evans laid a Cross at her father's grave. He died there during the battle for Hechtel. Whilst there we met up with Lt Col Jacques Delande who had been at one time the CO of Camp Beverlo and had allowed some of our members to billet in the barracks. He had expressed a desire to become an associate member of the Ogmore Branch so whilst there I presented him with the appropriate Certificate and Membership Card, for which he was most grateful.

After laying our wreath and crosses and paying our respects to the fallen we made our way back to Hechtel to a recently refurbished bar called 'Little Caen' where we had tea, coffee and home made pastries, delicious! When we came out of the bar there was a two horse drawn covered wagon waiting to take us on a guided tour of the monument to Major Gibson associate member Bob Vranken.



Han Sec - Presenting Honorary Branch membership certificate to Lt Col (Retd) J Delande, Belgian Army

Other sites were visited where various actions had taken place, and atrocities against the civilian population had also taken place during the battle to liberate Hechtel. The tour took about an hour and then we returned to the 'Little Caen' where lunch was served. After lunch we presented our hosts with a Union Flag, a Regimental wall plaque and other items of militaria which were very well received, and placed in strategic points in the bar.

After lunch we left by coach for the village of Ophoven where at the jetty we met up with our boat for a trip up the canal to the town of Thorn in Holland where we were once again to sample the delights of the Pancake Factory, that is a menu of about 400 different flavoured outside pancakes. It is amazing how many said that they could never manage them but still did! We returned to the boat and then were taken back to Ophoven to meet up with our coach and return to our hotel for our evening meal, not many opted for the 3 course evening meal.

Sunday morning after breakfast we set off for Hechtel to meet up with Captain Graham Taylor and his party who were on the Battlefield Tour and the Swansea

Branch who were also out there doing their own thing, quite a gathering. We met up at the Town Hall and were issued with arm bands for the VIP luncheon and play which was to follow. We then accompanied the Belgian Legion Standard bearers and townspeople as they marched to the Town church. There we attended a very moving service in the company of the Town Dignitaries and at the end of the service, as is customary the Welsh Anthem was sung by the choir and members in Welsh.

We reformed outside the church and then marched to the civilian cemetery for a Memorial service to the victims of the atrocities carried out by the occupying forces.

Our column formed up again and marched to the newly constructed 'Garden of Remembrance' where the Sherman tank which had stood on the crossroads in the town has been relocated. Here the Mayor of Hechtel and Colonel Tom Bonas both gave glowing tributes to the bravery of both the Regiment and townspeople alike and wreaths were laid both by the Dignitaries and Association representatives alongside the tank whilst the 'Last Post' was played.

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Branch members at Leopoldburg Military Cemetery

To cap a busy morning, I met up with the Mayor at his parlour after the parades and presented him with a Bridgend Town Plaque. A Bridgend town tie and a letter of greetings from our Town Mayor. Our Chairman later presented him with an ornamental Welsh Dragon suitably inscribed to commemorate our visit.

Lunch was served in the recreation centre and in a marquee decorated out for the occasion. The meal was delicious and on completion we were ushered into the auditorium to watch the play. What followed was a moving and tearful account of the battle of Hechtel, re-enacted by over 100 men, women and children and made all the more realistic for us the audience by the fact that there were people sitting next to, or around us pointing out relatives of the survivors or those who had perished at the time. Many tears were shed by the audience, Welsh and Belgian alike. Finally we made our way back in to the Marquee where presentations were made to the Mayor and formalities over, we quickly gathered a hastily formed choir of all those who could sing or thought they could! Our audience were most appreciative of our efforts and some nice comments made. The bar was

distributing bottles of beer with the Welsh Guards logo and with Hechtel super-imposed on the labels, imported from Wales. As can be imagined these were well received and I and many others brought at least one home as a souvenir of our visit. In the late afternoon we bade farewell to our hosts and the coaches left with our separate parties to return to their hotels.

For our final evening, indoor skittles had been arranged in our hotel. We presented the manager with a regimental wall plaque before the festivities began and then we proved how competitive we can be, even at our age on the rink. This was a great success and enjoyed by all and proved a fitting finale for what had been a marvellous weekend.

After breakfast on Monday morning we said our farewells to all concerned and duly made our way home via Euro tunnel and arrived home safely on Monday evening. Just one question seemed to be on everyone's lips and that was when are we going again. Well wait and see is the answer to that. I do know that as long as we receive the welcome we do from the townspeople of Hechtel we will make the effort to go out there.



John Stone 'holding forth'

Welsh Guards to the Fore At 2009 Florida St David's Day Banquet

By Jay Thornton

The Welsh Guards played a leading role in helping make the annual St David's Day Banquet and Celebrations at Sarasota, Florida, a resounding success.

A message of fraternal greetings on behalf of the Regiment from Colonel Tom Bonas, Regimental Adjutant, was read by former Lance Sergeant John Stone (Prince of Wales's Company and RHQ).

Colonel Bonas highlighted the illustrious history of the Welsh Guards, both operationally and on ceremonial occasions throughout the world. He also referred to the highly active Regimental Association and its North American branch.

"Guardsmen from the principality have fought with courage and distinction in two World Wars and other campaigns internationally, earning many medals for bravery. Our Battalions have been awarded impressive numbers of Battle Honours which are borne with pride on our Regimental Colours.

"Today, the Regiment has

frequent calls upon it to bring its skills and fighting spirit, using the very latest technology, in many areas of conflict throughout the world" Colonel Bonas wrote.

He also referred to the 1st Battalion joining the Battle Group in Afghanistan. "A country in which the American military already faces daily dangers with great courage."

Colonel Bonas pointed out the exceptional quality of the musicianship of the Regimental Band, which during a tour of America a couple of years ago, had performed at the Van Weese Centre, Sarasota, which the band report said "Had one of the most spectacular views from the stage door, providing a stunning prelude to the show."

John Stone then gave a presentation, as guest speaker, in which he referred to being on Royal Duties at Buckingham

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Singing Welsh Arias at Sorasata

Palace, St. James, Windsor Castle etc as well as street lining on The Mall on the occasion the HM The Queen's Coronation in 1953.

He was persuaded – albeit reluctantly – to demonstrate how marching on sentry duty was carried out. "It's not easy to do at the age of 74 what you were able to perform at the age of 19!" he quipped.

On a more serious note, he spoke of the high levels of training, in the field and on the parade ground, necessary to achieve the high standards demanded in order to be a Welsh Guardsman.



Diane Stone with Welsh Guards memorabilia on display

The evening, held at the Heritage Oaks Country Club, was attended by Americans of Welsh extraction, many of whom had traveled hundreds of miles to be present.

The Welsh Guards theme was augmented by a display of Regimental memorabilia and photographs which attracted much interest and flattering comments. John Stone and his wife Diane also took the opportunity to sell a number of wrist bands supporting the Welsh Guards in Afghanistan.

Replying to Colonel Bonas's message, Mrs Pam Edmunds, President of the Gulf Coast Welsh Society thanked him for his kind greetings on behalf the Welsh Guards. "The historical background you included was very interesting. Our banquet was most successful – it was a memorable evening of good food, good company, and of course good music."

Mrs Edmunds added: "John Stone did a wonderful job of educating and entertaining at the banquet. The members thoroughly enjoyed his speech. His wit and charm were a large part of the success of the evening."



Buckingham Palace 5th May 1965

Provenance of the Colours (Welsh Guards 1965)

By Steve Fisher

Presented by the Swansea & West Glamorgan Branch to The Collegiate & Parish Church of St Mary's on the 8th June 2009.

The Colours that you see in St Mary's Church Swansea were laid up on the 16th September 1982. Since that date there has been no information of what our Colours represent. Since leaving the Welsh Guards in 1999 Karl Trenchard has laid the Association wreath at the Falklands memorial windows, below the Colours, every Remembrance Sunday. It occurred to him that the general public would not know what these Colours represented. So last year decided that something needed to be done about this.

He researched the origin of military Colours and then focused his attention to the history of the Welsh Guards Colours hanging in St Mary's Church. After searching the internet and confirming some facts with RQMS Warren Williams at RHQ he came up with the information that you see on the framed board below the Colours and Falklands windows. This has been

checked and approved by our Regimental Adjutant Colonel (Retd) Tom Bonas BA. Karl thought it might be a good idea to add some photographs of the Queen presenting the Colours to the Battalion in 1965 and then St Mary's Church receiving them for safe keeping in 1982. These photographs were supplied by RHQ.

With all this information/photographs to hand, Karl put the display together. It was then brought to life with the photographic and presentation skills of Major (Retd) Charles Carty MBE TD. This was then framed by 'House of Frames' Swansea. Whilst all of this was going on there was the problem of where to display this. On Remembrance Sunday 2008 Karl and Steve Radford spoke to the Revd Andrew Vessey after the Service who told them that it would need special permission from the Church authorities to put something on the wall and also there were other memorials to the

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The Colours 1st Battalion Welsh Guards 1965 - 1982

Falklands on the wall situated beneath the Colours which posed a problem. Looking over to the right Karl and Steve noticed a music stand near the wall. What a great idea!!! So a music stand with a Welsh Guards drape was obtained from RHQ. For presentation purposes the stand was sand blasted and powder coated by 'Hastie's Coatings' of Swansea.

We hope that this will keep the many, many visitors to this wonderful Church informed of what those two 'flags' hanging either side of the Falklands memorial windows really are.

The following information is the text (Provenance) and

photographs that are displayed in the frame. Also included is a picture of the framed information and drape.

Colours are memorials to the great deeds of a Regiment and the symbols of its spirit as expressed in these deeds. In 1751 a British Army regulation prescribed that there would only be two Colours in each Regiment. The First or Sovereign's Colour and the Second or Regimental Colour. At this time Colours were taken into battle and became a rallying point for those soldiers who served in their Regiment. Many of those battles would then be Borne on those Colours.



St Mary's Church, Swansea 16th September 1982

Above are the Colours of the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, which were presented to the Battalion by HM Queen Elizabeth the Second on the 5th of May 1965.

They were originally to be laid up in St Mary's Church on the 28th of April 1982; however, the Battalion was tasked to prepare for 'Operation Corporate' in the Falklands Islands, a short but bloody war in the South Atlantic with Argentina. British forces including The Welsh Guards were victorious and the Battle Honour 'Falkland Islands 1982' is emblazoned on the Colours that replaced these.

On the 16th of September 1982, soon after their return from the whole Battalion removed their combat uniforms and changed into their more familiar red tunics

and bearskin caps and marched through the City of Swansea with bayonets fixed, band playing and these Colours flying to St Mary's Church and passed them on (Laid Up) for safe keeping to the Church and the people of Swansea.

The Queen's Colour is on the left of 'The Falklands Memorial Windows'. It has a crimson background with a dragon passant at its centre, the emblem of Wales. Beneath the dragon is scrolled the Regimental Motto 'Cymru Am Byth'. On the Colour is Emblazoned 20 of the Regiments 48 Battle Honours.

This Queen's Colour was 'Trooped' on The Queen's Birthday Parade in London (Trooping the Colour) in 1965 and 1973.

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Steve, Karl and Me

The Regimental Colour has a Union Flag background which shows allegiance to Sovereign and Country. It has a Company Emblem at its centre and the same 20 Battle Honours as the Queen's Colour.

As you pause and look at these Colours, try to imagine the courage, hardship and sacrifice of the soldiers who fought for these honours of the Regiment and Country.

-Many paid the ultimate sacrifice-

The Welsh Guards

Formed

26th February 1915

Regimental Quick March

The Rising of the Lark

Regimental Slow March

Men of Harlech

Regimental Motto

Cymru Am Byth

(Wales for Ever)

"A moth-eaten rag on a worm pole it doesn't look likely to stir a man's soul"

"Tis the deeds that were done 'neath the moth-eaten rag' when the pole was a staff and the rag was a flag"

*British General
Sir Edward Hamley (1824-1893)*

This presentation was part of the 'Commemorative Service for the South Atlantic Medal Association 1982 Falklands War Veterans, Wales Branch' which is covered in a further article elsewhere in the magazine.

We as a Branch are very proud and honoured to have been able to do this. We thank Karl Trenchard for his dedication, enthusiasm, and many hours of putting this together, so that it brings to the attention of the people of Swansea and many other visitors from our country and overseas what these Colours really mean. Not just two "flags" hanging on the wall.

Harry Price 1909 - 2009

By Roy Lewis

The year 1909 was a very special one. Old Age Pensions were introduced in Britain, Bleriot made the first cross-channel flight, Peary reached the North Pole, Henry Ford began production of the Model T car - and Joseph Henry Price was born in Pontardawe.



Harry Price, July 2009

where it could. In the tiny village of West Cappel what was left of No. 2 Company held off a strong enemy attack in a chateau. Harry was wounded in the shoulder and taken prisoner, an ordeal that lasted five years.

The Infamous forced march of Allied prisoners from East to West in the winter 1944/1945, mentioned elsewhere in this magazine, was described by Harry as, "terrible, deep snow and no food".

Harry celebrated his centenary in the Llys-y-Tywysog Nursing Home on 25th February 2009. He was probably the sole survivor of the action at West Cappel in May 1940 and although his eyesight and his hearing were, understandably, not very good, his mind was clear and his memory fresh.

In July members of the Swansea and West Glamorgan Branch of the Association made the first of several visits and presented Harry with a Welsh Guards plaque. Wearing his Regimental tie, Harry still had the bearing of a Guardsman and was greatly admired by those who cared for him at Llys-y-Tywysog.

If 1909 was a special year so was 2009 when Harry Price reached his century and was reunited with his Regiment. But sadly on September 12th 2009, Harry passed away, a gentleman and a Welsh Guardsman to the end.

It was the year Edward VII died and was succeeded by King George V who was Colonel-in-Chief of the fifteen year old Fifth Regiment of Foot Guards when 2733170 Harry Price, 21, joined them in Carmarthen in December 1930 to serve three years with the Colours and nine on the Reserve. Two other Pontardawe men who left the village to join the Welsh Guards in the Thirties were 2734193 Howard Griffiths and 2733133 Arthur Harris.

When war broke out 1939 Harry rejoined the 1st Battalion and went with it to Gibraltar. On Armistice Day 1939 the Battalion moved into France with Harry formerly a Jam Boy, now in No. 2 Company which was destined to take part in an historic action in May 1940.

After fighting in and around Arras the Battalion withdrew to the coast, holding up the German advance when and

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Commemorative Service St Mary's Church, Swansea

By Steve Fisher

Commemorative Service held at The Collegiate and Parish Church of St Mary's on the 8th June 2009 for the South Atlantic Medal Association (SAMA82) Wales Branch.

For the third year running Chris Duggan and Rob Nichols organised the above commemorative service. The Church service was very well attended with 72 veterans. Guests included the H.M. Lord Lieutenant of West Glamorgan D Byron Lewis Esq CStJ FCA and the Lord Mayor Councillor Alan Lloyd.

Captain Peter Robinson (Recruiting Officer Wales) was also in attendance with two of his team in tunic order and was a credit to the Regiment. This little touch of colour gave the day that little something extra as the people of Swansea love to see their own Regiment standing in all their glory which as we all know is just one side of what we do. The other side, being in war zones fighting in harsh conditions.

The Act of Commitment:

On behalf of those who served on RFA Sir Galahad (subsequently scuttled at sea as a war grave), RFA Sir Tristram and HMS Glamorgan and all who lost their lives in Operation 'Corporate', South Atlantic Campaign 1982.

It was a very moving service especially when Rob Nichols read out the names of those that died all those years ago. There was time to reflect when the song 'Brother in Arms' was played. May they rest in peace.

Also part of the service was the 'Reception and dedication' of the Provenance board. This is the information of the two Colours hanging either side of the Falklands windows. There is a separate article on this with photos elsewhere in the magazine.

There was also a special moment when a framed Falkland Islands Governors flag was presented to Revd Andrew Vessey. The flag was dug up in the grounds of the Governors residence which was buried for safe keeping during the war and was presented to Chris Duggan on his visit to the Islands in 2007.

Revd Vessey who gave a very heartfelt and meaningful service said that he will find a special place for this within the Church.

The words on the plaque are:



(L to R) Lord Lieutenant, Chris Duggan, Revd Andrew Vessey, Lord Mayor, Rob Nichols and Sava Hopkins

This Falklands flag was presented by Mr Alun Huckle (Governor of the Falklands Islands) to Mr Chris Duggan (Chairman of the Wales Branch of the South Atlantic Medal Association Falklands War veterans) on 13th November 2007. The flag was found buried in the grounds of the governor's residence in the Falklands Islands in October 2007. It is believed that it was buried for safe keeping during the Argentinean invasion of the Islands in 1982.

After the Service everyone gathered at the Cross Keys for drinks and a meal. There were a few who had booked into the local hotel for the night. There were many stories told but in our company was Jane, widow of Kevin (Des) Keoghane, (Mortar Platoon). Jane was there with their son Phil and husband. Also there was Janice Griffiths, widow of Gareth Griffiths 22.

There was the sister whose brother passed away in the 90's, Smudger Smith 32. Karl Trenchard told me that he was

able to show her a picture from the gallery on his mobile phone of a Guard of Honour in The Royal Chelsea Hospital 1982 where Smudge could be clearly seen. His sister had not seen this picture before and it brought a tear to her eye. Karl then blue toothed that picture to her mobile for her to treasure. Karl's words were 'this really is what it's all about'.

I think those words sum it all up completely. It was a day to remember and honour those that gave the ultimate sacrifice. To get together and carry on the comradeship of not only the veterans of the Falklands war, but of all veterans, and their families, of the Welsh Guards and to keep friendships alive.

Chris Duggan and Rob Nichols deserve a big thank you for organising this special 'Commemoration Service'. They worked hard on our behalf so that we could remember and honour those who did not return home with us to their families.

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Remembrance Sunday

Address given by Lt.Col D C Milner

Late Welsh Guards, Guards Chapel 8/11/2009

This year five Welsh Guardsmen were killed in action in Afghanistan. Each year we return here to the Guards Chapel to remember all those Welsh Guardsmen who have fallen in the service of their Sovereign and their country.

This Chapel is the spiritual home of the Household Division of which we are a part. The original Chapel opened in 1838, was largely destroyed by a V1 Flying Bomb during the morning service on Sunday 18th June 1944 - 121 people were killed and many more injured. Only the apse survived and the cross and the candlesticks on the altar today were there in 1944, the candles still burning. The choir screen behind me is entitled "Passive Standard" - it represents the Household Division on parade. The other is called "Active Standard" and represents the Division on active

service. The many colours laid up here, some dating back to the eighteenth century, remind us of the many battles since 1680 in which the regiments of the Household Division fought with considerable distinction. It is our responsibility to measure up to their example and to maintain their standards.

The Regiment's baptism of fire came on 27th September 1915 at the Battle of Loos, within six months of our formation on Saint David's Day that year. The battalion was part of the Guards Division and its advance under heavy fire "with the steadiness

of men on parade" was reported in The Times "as being one of the most glorious and impressive sights of the war". The Regiment was fully occupied on the Western Front for the remainder of the Great War and proved itself a worthy member of what was then called the Brigade of Guards.

Seventy years ago the Second World War began and the three battalions of the Regiment served with distinction in North-West Europe, Tunisia and Italy. Since that war the Battalion has seen active service in Aden, Northern Ireland, the Falklands, the Balkans, Iraq and this year in Afghanistan. Those serving in these places again proved themselves worthy of the title Guardsmen and all that that means. Active service imposes long periods of separation for families and for them the strain of knowing that loved ones may be killed or wounded. We are very grateful to our families for their fortitude and support across the years.

It is our privilege as members of the Household Division to guard the Sovereign. This means that everything has to be done to the highest possible standard - we constantly pursue excellence whether on parade or on operations. The Guards Division has its own special ways of doing this - attention to detail, high standards of discipline and turnout and, most importantly, looking after our soldiers properly. Our high standards are recognised by the rest of the army, although not all would admit it, but they do wonder how we achieve them. The Major General recently wrote to all officers and warrant officers reminding them of the "Guards

Way" of doing things and many of you will have read his essay in the spring edition of the Guards Magazine.

I remember Bobbie Joyce when a Company Sergeant Major in Egypt explaining to new recruits joining his company that "you'll find the standards here are not very high, they're excellent" - suitably embellished. Earlier this year I was crossing the Mall on my way to lunch with people who had been with me at Sandhurst many years ago. I saw the Band returning to barracks from St James's Palace after guard mounting, not playing. They were very smart and several of my colleagues remarked very favourably on their marching and bearing. On 18th October a party of guardsmen was invited to watch Cardiff City play and if you look at the Appeal website you can watch the video of them marching on to the pitch; their drill was immaculate as if they had just come off public duties. Yet a few days earlier they had been in action in Afghanistan, where they were fighting a more intense war perhaps than any other in the history of the British Army. The Battalion was under attack on one thousand four hundred and sixty three occasions (1,463) and sent out three thousand, two hundred forty-two (3,242) patrols during its six month tour. The Commanding Officer, Colonel Charlie Antelme, said, as it drew to a close, that "It has been a long and at times difficult summer. The commitment of these men, their bravery in the face of horrifying danger and the humility and humour with which they conduct themselves has been inspiring to witness. The threads of Agincourt,

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Rorke's Drift and Monte Piccolo remain unbroken – Welshmen shining among their comrades in the defence of the nation". There are many here today who served in Afghanistan. We old soldiers will be proud to march with you after this service to the Guards Memorial.

Today we remember with solemn pride all those who were killed in action in two world wars and since. This year we remember especially the five Welsh Guardsmen killed in Afghanistan together with a Coldstream Guardsman, a reservist from The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and two Estonians all serving in the Welsh Guards Battle Group. Colonel Charlie, in an interview with Wales News, paid tribute to "the support we have received from our families and friends, from Wales and from the country far and wide (which) has kept us going and has been magnificent". The Regiment, past and present, has closed ranks and is looking after those

who have lost husbands, partners, fathers and sons, and those wounded, whom we must not forget and whose lives may be changed henceforth. Some may be affected mentally in the future and their welfare is just as important. We can all help to support the Regimental Appeal recently launched to raise funds to support the dependants of those killed and the welfare of those wounded. We can also replace our "Support the Welsh Guards in Afghanistan" wristbands with the new ones.

We will shortly hear the words of Lawrence Binyon and the Last Post as we stand in silence to remember with pride those who have fallen in battle serving in or with the Regiment. Let us remember also the four Grenadiers killed recently including the Sergeant Major. When the Reveille sounds let us renew our determination to uphold everything that the Regiment and the Household Division stands for.

65th Anniversary of the Liberation of Hechtel. Swansea Branch Battlefield Tour of Belgium 10th – 16th September 2009

By Steve Fisher

Planning for this special trip to Belgium to celebrate the 65th liberation of Hechtel started in mid 2008. We were very fortunate in obtaining £5,000.00 of lottery funding which came from 'Awards for all Wales'. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Capt (Retd) Graham Taylor who gave me his expert advice from his many years of running the Association's Battlefield Tours. I would especially like to thank Karl Trenchard for his dedication and enthusiasm in helping me to organise such a specialised itinerary



Coach displaying Branch Board

We started this trip on Thursday the 10th of September 2009. On board a 'Diamonds Holidays' coach were 20 members and wives. Please note our Branch board on the front widescreen.

Celebrating their 43rd wedding anniversary on that day were Peter and Pauline Williams (300). We presented to them a lovely bottle of champagne and cake to celebrate this fantastic achievement. It was a glorious summer's day and we made our way to Folkestone to catch the shuttle service. This was a first experience for many including myself as most had travelled 'on' the water rather than 'under' it to Calais. Our first night was spent in the Novotel in Ypres. We took in the local sites, had a lovely relaxing meal with a glass of red or two and slept soundly that night ready for the following morning.

The next day we had a guided tour of the Dunkirk museum which was very informative and full of memorabilia. After which we had lunch in a restaurant called 'On the Beach'. This was fantastic as we all sat on the veranda overlooking the Dunkirk beach. Unlike back home this was so relaxed and each course was well spaced

out that we could have stayed there all afternoon just chilling. Being in Dunkirk was a very poignant and special place to be for Pauline Williams as her father was a veteran of Dunkirk. He served in the Royal Army Service Corp and as a result of one of his trips back home from war to Wales; Pauline was born 9 months later. Every year her father, Harry, went back there with the Dunkirk Association and his one wish was to have his ashes scattered there. He died in 1989 and his family fulfilled his wishes by scattering his ashes on the beach some of which were put in a container within the stone wall. Pauline's mother, Beryl, died in 1997 and her wish also was for her ashes to be scattered on the beach. The family did this and also put some ashes in a container and placed it next to her husband Harry.

After lunch we had a guided tour of West Capel which is where the Welsh Guards saw action. What was very emotional and moving is where we visited 'La Plaine du Bois' in Esquelbecq. This is where on the 28th of May 1940 the German troops tried to block the town of Wormhout, a

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La Plaine au Bois Memorial site

strategic route to Dunkirk. One hundred soldiers of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, Cheshire Regiment and the Royal Artillery were taken prisoner and kept in a barn situated in a meadow at a place called 'La Plaine au Bois' where a massacre took place. This site of memory evokes the massacre of the 80 British and 1 French soldier.

The victims of the massacre are buried in the Commonwealth Military Cemetery of Esquelbecq and the local cemetery of Ledringham and Wormhout. Please visit their site for further information on www.esquelbecq

That night @ 2000 hrs we took part in the 'Last Post Ceremony' at the Menin Gate. Our Branch standard very smartly and proudly by Derek Williams and also a wreath was laid by our President Major (Retd) Glyn White MBE. The picture you see is us preparing for the ceremony as I do not have one of the actual moments. Please visit their site for further information on www.lastpost.be That evening we all sat down to a group evening meal.

The following morning (Saturday) we met up with

Marshal our Ypres tour guide. He then took us into the 'In Flanders' Fields' museum. This was well laid out and made one very humble. Marshal then gave us a very informative and interesting talk about the history of Ypres and of the Menin Gate. Ypres is a lovely, clean and historic town. Please visit our site for further information on www.leper.be After a very pleasurable lunch and a visit to the local market we made our way in glorious sunshine to Mechelen. That evening we met with Alan Appleby and his three sons. Alan is actually a veteran of the liberation of Hechtel. Alan was born in Surrey June 1918. He joined the Coldstream Guards as a boy soldier in 1932 and then transferred to the 2nd Bn Welsh Guards in 1939. Alan saw action with the Irish and Welsh Guards group that went to the Hook of Holland to cover the evacuation of the Dutch Royal family in May 1940. Just over a week later when defending the Port of Boulogne he was mentioned in despatches for his actions there.

When the 2nd Bn became armoured he quickly adapted and achieved the rank of Sgt in 1944 where they trained in Pickering in preparation for the



Menin Gate

Normandy Landings. As Tank Commander of No 1 Squadron he led the tanks which liberated Brussels and then moved onto serious fighting in Northern Belgium and the Battle of Hechtel. Here he earned the Military Medal for bravery as the first tank in to face re-trenched German forces. His tank was hit and he escaped but was later captured and transported to Sagan in Poland. Early in 1945 like thousands of other Allied prisoners he was marched for weeks through winter snows with no supplies or medical support ahead of oncoming Russians right back across Germany to eventual liberation by Patton. It was such an honour and privilege to have with us a veteran of not only the War but of the liberation of Hechtel itself. We salute you Sir!!

On the Sunday we set off for the main reason of this trip which was to celebrate the 65th liberation of Hechtel. I know that this will be covered in more detail elsewhere in this magazine but as someone that has never been there I was truly amazed by the whole day. The start of the formalities was the procession of a few hundred led by the band/drums to the Church service (Mass) at St

Lambert's Church. Just over 100 were from Association members and wives who included Capt (Retd) Graham Taylor and the Ogmore Branch. We visited the graves of the local cemetery where you could see the photos on the headstones of those murdered villagers who suffered so awfully under the control of the Germans. As a mark of respect with other dignitaries Major (Retd) Glyn White MBE laid a wreath. From there we marched to the new monument where wreaths were laid to honour all those that paid the ultimate price. Major (Retd) Glyn White MBE also laid a Branch wreath there.

We were spoilt and treated with so much respect by the Mayor and villagers. From the silver chandeliers on each table to the very tasty food, flowing wine, staff service, all was second to none. Even at the end of the afternoon there were nibbles and drink. No expense spared. A play was on by the Royal Theatre Company 'Berk and Broom' to show the villagers side of the war which is often untold. This was very emotional especially where they re-enacted the execution of the 12 men. On a personal note it was shown that a mother had cut her son's

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Alan Appleby seated on the right

trousers, who was part of the group that would be executed and was standing next to his father, to make him look like a boy and plead with the Germans to let him go which they did. This man was there with us which brought history to life. Major (Retd) C Carty MBE TD presented to the Mayor of Hechtel an official Swansea plate which was donated by our Lord Mayor of Swansea. Our Mayor also wrote a personal letter to the Mayor of Hechtel.

After which we travelled back to our hotel for a relaxing drink and to contemplate such an emotional and historic day. This will remain in our hearts and memories for ever.

The Monday was a rest day not only for the driver but for members to chill and to take in the sights of Mechelen. That evening we had a great meal which was fantastic and a chance to get everyone together in a relaxing atmosphere and to chat about the experience so far of the whole trip.

We had an early breakfast the following morning as we had arranged to meet our tour guide Bob Vranken back in Hechtel at 0900 hrs. We started off by visiting the Beringen Bridge. Next was Leopoldsburg British

War cemetery where Alan Appleby laid a wreath with Derek Williams our standard bearer.

We then visited the very informative Military Museum K-Blokken where we had lunch out of mess tins. Food doesn't quite taste the same as on bone china. Good memories though.

After lunch we visited an execution area where our ladies laid little poppy crosses in memory of those that were executed.

We then visited the Lommel German Cemetery. This was absolutely massive with each headstone holding two bodies head to head.

After which we then went back to Hechtel cemetery where we could take in the full atrocities that happened all those years ago. After watching the play on the Sunday and where they took the part of those individuals it was very moving to actually see their names and faces on the headstones.

I was presented with a lovely Belgium flag which will be hung in pride of place in my 'den' in my garden. The ladies also presented Vee, my wife with lovely make up in appreciation for her putting up with me



Presentation Mayor Raf Truyens

whilst I neglected her while planning this trip.

The following morning (Thur) we departed Mechelen for the journey home to Swansea.

It was a very special 6 day Battlefield tour of Belgium which will be forever remembered both for the

country and the history of what was suffered in both world wars by the Armed forces and civilians alike so that we can enjoy the freedom that we have today. We owe so much to these men and women that they must never be forgotten. May they all rest in peace.



Presentation of Belgium Flag



Leopoldsburg War Cemetery

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Band of Middle Aged Men!

No Country for Middle Aged Men: The Three Peaks Challenge 4-5 October 2009

Captain Paul de Zulveta, Late Welsh Guards

I remember attending Lt Col Rupert Thorneloe's funeral with a sense of almost incredulity. A week before, Sean Birchall's funeral had also taken place at the Guards' Chapel, and less than a month earlier the Welsh Guards family had already come together for the funerals of a young officer, Mark Evison, and L Sgt Tobie Fasfous.

As we followed Rupert's coffin, borne with pride and quiet dignity by the regiment's senior non-commissioned officers, I whispered to Nigel Hanbury, a friend and former regimental colleague.

"Shall we get a few of us together and see if we can do the 'Three Peaks Challenge' for the regiment's Afghanistan appeal?"

Nigel nodded, a half smile crossing his face.

To my right, I caught the eye of Alun Powell, universally known as O1 and my first platoon sergeant (now a Major) when I joined the battalion in Berlin in 1977. Outside the chapel I shook Alun's hand and, after sharing our thoughts on the sadness of the day, asked him if he, too, would like to do the 'Three Peaks Challenge'.

"Certainly up for that, Paul," Alun replied, "but as long as you are nowhere near the map".

I chuckled, and in an instant my mind was back to the early autumn of 1977 and a fiord near Kristiansand at the tip of southern Norway. I had taken the platoon adventure training. It was my first test as platoon commander and I was determined that our first day spent canoeing in the fiord should be without mishap, and that Alun should witness the calibre of his new platoon commander. I had overlooked laminating the map and had taped it, rather haphazardly, to the bow of my canoe. Within a few minutes it had become a soggy mass of indecipherable features. I didn't give it too much thought thinking to myself, well, a fiord's a fiord and the way out

could not be clearer. Two hours later and my 'command moment' had vanished in ignominy. After a brief exchange of 'pleasantries', Alun and I never looked back. It was the beginning of a lifelong and affectionate friendship.

The Three Peaks Challenge is as spirited an adventure over 24 hours as you can hope to find. At first glance it seems relatively straightforward. You have to climb Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon within 24 hours. That is 25 foot miles, 10,000 vertical feet and 507 road miles. But the spirit and adventure lies in the element of chance. You can be fit as a butcher's dog and be driven in a McLaren F1 by Stirling Moss, but precious hours can slip from your grasp through a traffic jam, roadworks on the M82, poor

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Left to right: Nigel Hanbury, Author, Rhydian Vaughan, Julian Peel-Yates, Sandy Malcolm, James Farquharson. Kneeling: Alun Powell, Robin Malcolm

planning, the twang of a hamstring, or a series of map reading bumbles.

Along with Nigel Hanbury and Alun Powell, the rest of the team for the challenge, all former regimental colleagues, quickly fell into place: the Regimental Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel Sandy Malcolm; Robin Malcolm, Colonel Sandy's younger brother, whippet thin from a decade on the Japanese equities desk at CSFB; James Farquharson, mutual godfather and a companion on a failed attempt to climb Mt Aconcagua in Argentina in 2000; Julian Peel Yates, my oldest and closest friend and our former recon platoon commander in Berlin; and without reservation, the most important man of all, our

driver, cook and all round good egg, Rhydian Vaughan. The writer Martin Amis said in his book 'Experience' that 'you can only truly like someone when they show you their failings'; and so it was with all of us, an almost effortless sense of companionship of years spent serving with, and knowing each other - boots sometimes against the current and sometimes with the spring tide behind us.

We assembled as a team in Fort William on the evening of Friday, 3rd October. We planned to climb Ben Nevis the following evening beginning our ascent an hour before last light. A deep 'low' hanging over north west Scotland announced itself in the early hours of Saturday

morning bringing with it winds of up to 90mph on Ben Nevis' summit. At breakfast that morning, we giggled nervously at what BBC weathermen would now refer to as 'heavy pulses of rain'. The wind whipped up Loch Linnhe in front of our eyes, the spray and white froth as one. The clichés 'wiser counsel prevailed' or 'lost window of opportunity' did not even have to be said. We decided to delay our start by 15 hours.

Fort William, like a once glamorous divorcee who finds herself relegated from Chelsea to Fulham, certainly makes the most of itself. 'Concurrent activity' we used to call it in the Army, and so we lost no time in buying superfluous kit: 'well, I could see this looking quite

sharp at the Highland Games in Braemar next year,' before we retired to the Rob Roy public house and a warming fire. We whiled away the hours with the gentle gossip, twittering and reminiscing that old soldiers with a common bond like to do.

Early Sunday morning was stunning. The autumnal colours with that peculiar blend of russet, green and Han blue characteristic of the Highlands at that time of the year were spectacular. Just before we set off at 8.30, Alun, who had also been platoon sergeant to James and Robin, briefed us on how he saw the walk panning out. Nothing in corporate or family life quite captures the symbiotic relationship between a good non-commissioned officer and a

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The middle aged man at the summit

young officer, and Alun's presence was as reassuring to us all now as it had been 30 years ago.

In just under three hours we were all at the summit of Ben Nevis. The last 1200 feet had been snow and ice. My summit 'treat', a Snickers bar, was rock solid. We could only give ourselves a couple of minutes of quiet reflection whilst gazing at the wonderful views towards the Torridon hills, before the jarring descent.

We got to the bottom by 13.45 and were on our way by 13.55. It was full speed ahead for Scafell Pike. But not quite. Our minibus was speed governed to 62 mph, and this on top of the vagaries of Sunday afternoon traffic around Glasgow after a Celtic v. Rangers derby. Rhydian rose to the level of events as indeed did Julian, co-driver and conversationalist if Rhyd's concentration began to falter. According to Alun, the back of the bus began to look like a "young officer's room". We stopped briefly at Gretna Green services for a shake down and Burger King Whopper. The latter was unwise, a pleasurable moment on the lips perhaps, but a poor companion during the ascent which we began just after 20.00 hours.

Julian described Scafell Pike as a 'daft mountain' and he was absolutely right. There is no reason that you should ever want to climb it, except of course, it is part of the Three Peaks Challenge and England's highest mountain. It was like being on a week's

Julian described Scafell Pike as a 'daft mountain' and he was absolutely right.

exercise at Sennybridge training area at its wettest, condensed into four and a half hours. We all found it gruelling as we stumbled our way from cairn to cairn, the beam from our head torches barely making a dent in the wall of murk. We were indebted to Julian who led and map read quite beautifully, always taking the time to tell us where on earth we were and at what altitude. The casual banter, which had characterised our ascent of Ben Nevis, gave way to our own silent thoughts on "what on earth was I thinking of when I agreed to this wheeze?"

We got down to Rhyd's piping hot soup by 00.35 and within 15 minutes were on our way to Snowdon. Rhyd's was fuelled up on Red Bull and the Satnav began issuing commands and counter commands that Marshall Rodolfo Graziani would have been proud of during the Italian army's defence of Tobruk in January 1941. Julian kept awake and, once again, steadied the 'caravan' as we moved south.

We arrived at Pen-y-Pass at the foot of Snowdon at 05.35 and began our climb five minutes later. We had seven miles and 2,400 feet to go by 08.30 to complete the challenge. I remember reading about Ranulph Fiennes' ascent of Everest and his belief that, after a certain age, all you can do is 'plod'.

We did not, however, leave anything to chance and each of us, in his own way, got 'match fit'. Julian and I, remembering the old adage, "time spent... walked up Scafell Pike and Snowdon a fortnight before."

I did remind everyone of when I was sacked as cross country officer in Berlin by my commanding officer (now General Lord Guthrie) when we were beaten by everyone at a match including the Berlin Women's Police team. I might allow myself a wry smile now but I still bob about at his words to me in commanding

officer's memoranda: "de Zulueta, poodle faking in a tracksuit carrying a clipboard is not what I expect from my cross country officer." I told my colleagues that 'poodle faking' on a stairmaster at their local gym was not much better.

As we reached the obelisk on the summit spur where the Pyg and Llanberis paths meet, I found myself thinking about a man who had taught me to drive on the barrack square in Berlin over 30 years ago. He was from Connah's Quay, Flintshire, and had that kindly, patient disposition so typical of men from North Wales. His name was Malcolm Wigley, and he died five years later aged 31 on the Sir Galahad during the Falklands War. We reached the summit at 08.15, some 23hrs 45mins after we had started.

And so we made our way down to Pen-y-Pass in that wonderfully relaxed state of weariness, relief and well being that comes after a tiring physical and mental effort. Rhydian was there, along with Michael Williams-Bulkely, a former regimental officer and local landowner, ready to serve up an unusual breakfast – surprisingly good – of champagne and ravioli with tabasco sauce.

We felt just a little proud that, although what we had achieved could in no way mirror the sustained courage and sacrifice of the regiment in Afghanistan, it was we hoped, a small gesture of brotherhood. As I write, our walk has raised around £40,000 towards the appeal.

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A Medics view on Operation Herrick 10

By Gdsm Fatchu, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards

I am Gdsm Fatchu, Regimental Combat medical Technician 2 with the Prince of Wales's Company 1st Battalion Welsh Guards. I began the tour of Afghanistan on Herrick 10 on the 14th of April 2009, attached to my parent company, the Prince of Wales's Company. The Company first deployed to FOB Argyll in Nad-e-Ali in the Helmand Province, tasked with the important role of supporting the fledgling district Governor as well as the mentoring of Afghan National Security Forces in the area.

This role also involved the holding and provision of security for the town and its environs which at the time could best be described as volatile. The Prince of Wales's Company quickly settled in to their role, conducting local patrols as well as Shuras – Meetings with the District Governor and opinion leaders to discuss matters of concern. On average, One Platoon patrolled round the area three times a day to provide a sense of presence and brutality at the hands of the Taliban. This quickly bore fruit as the district centre became a busy hub for business.

My role as a medic was clearly cut out. I was to act as the first point of contact and to provide first aid and immediate life saving measures for troops on the ground. It was not to take long before my expertise would be called upon. I remember on one particular patrol a JTAC soldier went down with heat illness as a result of the scorching heat and I was summoned to provide first aid. I managed to provide the required treatment and soon the soldier was back with the rest of the platoon.

Not only did I provide medical care for the troops but I was very much a rifleman and was involved in the thick of most of the action that the infantrymen are renowned for. I can recollect one incident when my platoon came under intense attack from enemy forces, north of Argyll. This was to be the platoon's first

perhaps remain properly documented in Company history was the famous Tanda OP. It was a Brigade effort to close down PB Tanda, which was located further south of Argyll and manned by a platoon from Number Two Company, Welsh Guards. One platoon were tasked with providing left and right flanking security for the "Barma" team clearing the main supply route to PB Tanda. I vividly remember that one kilometre short of our final destination; the platoon came under heavy attack from the rocket propelled grenades as well as small arms fire from both flanks. The platoon managed to suppress the enemy after six hours of continued fighting involving artillery and air support. That was not to be the end of an extremely difficult day; four

Afghanistan – that this was my first major deployment, that I had literally scraped through the medics course at Keogh barely three weeks ago, in fact there was no room for flapping. Those guys needed my help. It was my real chance now to bring all the skills that were honed into me for six months to bear on those unfortunate guys who had been injured. I was well up for the task. It is important to add that the troops on the ground that day were magnificent; before Sgt Parry 19 and I got there the casualties had been recovered from the wreckage and then categorized into those that needed the most treatment first, making my job a lot easier.

The second half of the tour was the Prince of Wales's involvement in OP Panchai Palang (Panthers Claw). Again, the Company was tasked with the ever important role of securing key crossing points along the Shamalan Canal in the KAT TRIANGLE. The various platoons were then tasked to capture and hold strategic crossing points which the Taliban were using as access points into their important stronghold of Babaji. The company once again came out tops and was able to accomplish those objectives. However, this was not to be without significant challenges. I still remember one particular incident which was to test the resolve of two platoons.

It was a quiet evening at crossing point 9 and all the boys were in good spirits after receiving their much awaited "Morale mail and parcels". However, the buzz was to be short-lived as the compound which two platoons were

“For me this incident was to be the real test of my medical skills: this was where all the training kicked in.”

of many contacts with the enemy and all the guys were desperate to come out tops. I was not any different and wanted my fair bit of the bragging rights! So instead of getting my "head down" like other medics would do, I let a couple of rounds off in the direction of the enemy fire. More of the guys were well impressed to see the medic letting some rounds off and was to set the tone for the rest of the tour.

Another incident which will

hundred meters short of the third Viking troop carrier vehicle in the convoy was struck by an improvised explosive device resulting in two casualties. One of the casualties suffered severe head injuries whilst another sustained burns to the back and lower legs.

For me this incident was to be the real test of my medical skills: this was where all the training kicked in. I had to forget all the things that went through my mind on the flight to

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occupying came under sporadic fire resulting in the injury of one member of the platoon who was on Sanger duties at the time. Luckily that day, LCpl Pimlott RAMC was with the platoon. I was on hand to assist him in the treatment of the severely wounded colleague. Again all the treatment kicked in the soldier got the best possible treatment before he was evacuated to the Camp Bastion.

It was indeed a grim day for not only members of two platoon but the company as a whole. With the ever professionalism the platoon was able to put the incident behind them and cracked on with the task. Not only did I deal with severely wounded casualties but I also dealt with primary health care needs of my colleagues. Problems which I could not deal were referred to the medical officers at FOB Shazad. It was a very fulfilling tour for me in that I was fortunate to serve along side personnel from the other cap badges especially with medics from the RAMC. This enabled me to learn new skills and also different ways of doing certain tasks.

My multi faceted role also meant that I was not a medic all the time; I had the privilege to do all the task of an infantry man serving on the frontline.

Prior to the beginning of the tour I was selected to attend the six months Regimental combat medical technicians course at the Defence Medical Service's adequately and equipped me with all the skills I would need in my role as a platoon medic for the demanding tour of Afghanistan a resounding success. I will recommend the course to other Guardsmen or Infantry who have interest in First Aid. I started off with no medical experience whatsoever but was to gain within the space of six months all the skills and expertise that are required to serve as a frontline medic.

I am back in barracks in Aldershot as a Guardsman and doing all good stuff that they are renowned for. From now until 2012, I will be undertaking further training to improve on my skills as a medic. I am already relishing the opportunity to once again serve my company on Herrick 16 in a few years time.

In addition I knew that my appointment wouldn't start for a few months and I had, for the first time in many years, a period where I wasn't in demand or needed.

So I volunteered to deploy on Op Herrick 8 with the Royal Irish Regiment, who were the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) Battle Group. The job was very demanding but totally satisfying, seeing the Afghan National Army (ANA) grow professionally daily was very rewarding and had a great impact on me. This tour also had a twofold effect, which gave me a certain amount of credibility with the soldiers I would be providing Welfare for during their time on operations, but I would also be better prepared to give honest and informed answers to the families both in Aldershot and in Wales.

The provision of welfare in the armed forces has changed considerably over the years, the old image of the 'Families Office' is a distant memory, the reality now is fast paced and incredibly complex. We no longer deal with just the odd housing complaint and unit moves (although they still feature heavily) we now see more single soldier issues which vary from relationships, debt, child care and mental health. We also deal more than ever with the gate keepers of these soldiers, the Mams, Dads, Grandparents and partners who have very little understanding of what it is their soldier actually does.

With this backdrop after my return from Afghanistan I had to prepare for what proved to be our most demanding operational tour for many years.

Luckily I had a very experienced team to assist. CSgt 'Jiffy' Myers who had two other tours and five years experience in the welfare office, has been my right hand man throughout this time. LSgt Elliot Maslen also had been in the office for two years and had an operation under his belt, and LSgt Sarah Wotton has been invaluable to our office; she is a hugely experienced soldier who has two tours of Iraq and one in Afghanistan behind her, and on an FTRS contract and being married herself to a soldier, provided a level headed reality check to many of our wives. Finally working behind the scenes is Val our ever present receptionist who runs front of house and our marvellous drivers, John and the two Pat's, who have the difficult job of transporting families of our injured to and from hospital and to varying appointments.

With the team in place and preparations complete, culminating with the hugely successful families' day in February, which was attended by the Prince of Wales, the Battalion deployed to one of the same areas I had been working in six months before, Nad Ali. We very quickly found ourselves dealing with the first casualties, some non battlefield injuries but coming with the same emotional problems for the loved ones back home as those wounded in action. As far as they were concerned their son had had an injury from Afghanistan and that caused more anxiety in an already trying time, the tension that families feel while we deploy is unimaginable, we as soldiers have no understanding of that feeling. We deploy with our best

FROM POSTING GRENADES TO POSTING LEAFLETS

A Unit Welfare Officers view on Operation Herrick 10

*Captain Darren Pridmore
1st Battalion Welsh Guards*

After completing 22 years in the Welsh Guards and proudly commissioning in April 2008, I knew my first appointment would be the Unit Welfare Officer. I also knew that the Battalion were about to be warned off for their tour to Afghanistan during the summer of 2009, Operation HERRICK 10, and that I would not be deploying with them.

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friends, well trained doing the job we love, we have the chain of command looking out for nearly all our needs and are sure that we will be taken care of if anything happens to us. On the other hand our families mostly live away from camp, have little or no experience of Army life and are unsure of who to turn to if they have a question or problem. Add that to the uncertainty of operations the infrequent calls home and limited internet, the media telling stories of kit shortages and poor equipment, the fear then becomes all consuming.

As a rear party and particularly as the welfare team we had to deal with this fear on a daily basis, we had become the only point of authority that many families and soldiers had, rumours, gossip and Facebook became regular topics of conversation. But the one thing that all had in common was the total pride and humility in their loved ones actions, the resilience of all those I met or talked to has humbled me and my team. They have had to become single parents in most cases, run the family finances, the car servicing and MOT, school runs and shopping trips. They have read stories to their children, checked the homework and held down full time employment, they have also had to travel miles to the unknown and see their loved ones in hospital with traumatic and life changing injuries, and always with the same sense of modesty and unassuming spirit that I have seen in many soldiers but had not expected in their families.

The same can be said about our families who have sadly paid the ultimate sacrifice, meeting

with them has had a profound effect on me, I have been brought in to their lives unexpectedly and unwanted and I wish I could have met them in happier circumstances. I feel privileged to have met them however and witness their bravery under the most difficult of situations. We as a regiment will never forget the sacrifice of our Officers and Soldiers who have been killed in action, but I will also never forget the loved ones left behind and their courageousness.

We have had some happier times during this tour with many visits and trips organised by the office and SWAGS (Service Wives and Girlfriends Support) to Thorpe Park, Lego Land, the beaches of the south coast and even a short break to Hastings. We had many BBQs and Sunday lunches so they could all get together and share their thoughts and help each other out. They have all been wonderfully supportive of each other and are now readying themselves to help, where they can, the Grenadier and Coldstream families living in Aldershot. We also had a huge welcome home concert kindly arranged by the British Forces Foundation (BFF) the celebrities gave all their support for free and entertained us for over two hours. We had Catherine Jenkins, who is a trustee of the BFF, Ruth Jones and Rob Brydon of Gavin and Stacy fame, Craig Campbell a Canadian comic and the Saturdays who proved very popular with the men!

Having already served in Afghanistan and experiencing some tough and harrowing incidents last year and then going through the most emotional period of my career

in the welfare office, I feel proud of the regiment who fought so bravely and those who had to stay behind to enable that fight. Having now done both a rear party and a tour of Afghanistan back to back, the contrasts are not so different I have experienced a rollercoaster of emotion and

fatigue during both, nothing could have prepared me and my team for the scale of events that we have dealt with over the last few months, back here at home but the sense of achievement has been tangible and a certain satisfaction for a job well done.

WARRANT OFFICERS' UNIFORM CHANGE

BY RQMS Warren Williams



INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES

Warrant Officer Plume

On Saturday 13th June 2009 during the Trooping of the Colour, Garrison Sergeant Major Mott OBE of Headquarters London District, Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant Williams of Regimental Headquarters and Bandmaster Frost and Band Sergeant Major Kirk of the Regimental Band wore the new Warrant Officers' Plume of the Welsh Guards.

It was authorised by the Army Dress Committee along with a Silver Warrant Officer Cap Badge and a newly designed Locket Union for the Sword and Buff Belts which are currently in production. These changes were introduced to distinguish Welsh Guards Warrant Officers from other Non Commissioned Officers, making them instantly more visible and enhanced as well as bringing our Regiment into line with the Coldstream Guards and Grenadier Guards.

The plume is made from goose coquille with each feather cut to a point and is 9" long with a hook at the top and approximately 3" in thickness which is of similar pattern to the Welsh Guards Officers pattern of 11" in length and is coloured white green white. The Plume is made by Jaffe et fils Ltd and was introduced by Garrison Sergeant Major W.D.G. Mott OBE.

Warrant Officer Cap Badge

The Cap Badge is of Silver design and made by Ammo & Company. It has the same specification of the Brass



Cap Badge with 8 leaves on the Leek. This is currently approved and waiting for the first cast.

Warrant Officer Locket Union

The locket union was designed by Charles Webb and Aubrey Bowden both from the Army Dress Committee and retired officers and with input from the Regimental Adjutant, Garrison Sergeant Major Mott, Regimental Sergeant Major Monaghan and Captain Pridmore who originally put the request forward for change of the locket union. The new design sees the Belt loops slightly change with a rococo design, similar to the Scots Guards and Grenadier Guards Warrant Officer Locket union. The left buckle will remain silver dipped and the right buckle will be brass, however the centre Welsh Guards Crest will be blue in colour around the writing and red coloured behind the leek. The Leek itself will be superimposed on top in silver. This is currently approved and waiting for the first cast.

Wrexham Memorial

By Major J Felix Richards



I noted an article in last June's *Mars & Minerva* from South Atlantic South Wales Medal Association Secretary on the proposal to erect a monument to all the Welshmen who were killed in the Falklands War. The first of its kind in Wales.

Whilst not wishing to be churlish or to rekindle ancient enmities between Gogs (N.Wallians) and Hwntws (S.Wallians) I am a Canolwr (Mid Wallian) myself, and should like to point out that a monument to the fallen was planned, erected and dedicated in June 2003. It is located in a beautiful setting

next to the RWF Memorial in Bodhyfryd, Wrexham. It was erected with very little political or extraneous help. This was done largely through the good offices of Captain Chris Hopkins HMWG, Secretary WG Falklands Association whose father Glyn, a Korean veteran, served with me in 4 RWF.



INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES



Left to right: Brian Elvett, Ken Roberts, (Beans) Mark Davies, (SMA) Adrian Hinder, Chris Hopkins, (M) Vaughan-Jones and Jim Price

The memorial also includes the names of three Welsh Guardsmen, members of G Squadron 22 SAS involved in the helicopter loss.

I am invited every year, as a member of the Welsh Guards Association, to a Memorial Service on the loss of RFA Sir Galahad, which is held on the anniversary of the sinking. We later pay homage and respects with Last Post and Reveille at the memorial. Afterwards wreaths are laid, but none from the SAS Association, because no one is aware of it HQ SAS.

I discussed this with Chris Hopkins, who was all in favour

of it, and I obtained the consent, blessing and a wreath from Colonel Keith Edlin and the SAS Association. This I duly laid this year but the press photographer sloped off after taking a photograph in the churchyard, before the wreath laying which I enclose.

After the ceremonies we adjourn to proximal War Memorial Club for a reunion and reception, after all the tension, sadness and grief is over. Here we relax and imbibe only we Taffs can. All our tribal and regional feuds and foibles Gog v Hwntws are forgotten and the hours are given carousal and song.

Whilst the media and the public are generally very aware of the excellent work that the military have been doing in Iraq and continue to do in Afghanistan, they are generally less aware of the tireless work done by Military Medics in the UK (especially those at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine at Selly Oak) as they nurse injured personnel after their return from theatre. That may be due to the quiet, unselfish way in which they do their work, but is also due to the cloak of secrecy that the Government throws over the number of wounded personnel returning from theatre and the proportion that, tragically, cannot be saved.

As you can imagine, the constant flow of injured personnel, and the proportion who sadly succumb to their wounds, leave a mark on the unsung heroes in the UK medical establishments. Despite their professionalism, many of these guys and girls struggle to keep their morale up under the unremitting workload.

They do not benefit from the little luxuries and morale-boosting visits and activities that the troops in theatre get, nor do they benefit from a homecoming parade and welcome after 6 months away. Rather, they face the unremitting challenge of trying to rebuild broken lives day after day with little recognition. We would like to do something about that.

In order to achieve our goal and to give it some true meaning, we would like to hear from the people who have had experience of these unselfish medics. So that is why I am here to appeal to anyone who is prepared to help us to recognise the achievements, and to boost the morale, of our unsung UK

medics. Whilst we appreciate that these will not have been great times for you, we would be grateful if you could spare us a short while to let us know about your experiences.

We feel strongly about helping to get recognition for the hard work that UK military medics are doing, and are keen to contribute towards lifting their morale. We would be very grateful for any help that you could provide.

You can reply to:

kizziejarvis@hotmail.com

Or Post to:

**7 Newport Road
Chepstow, Gwent NP16 5BA**

Questions

What hospitals/facilities did you experience?

How do you feel about the treatment you received from the Medical Staff?

Was there anything that you personally thought could have made it better for you? (Apart from not being there obviously!)

Was there any one person who stood out from the rest for you? If so, Who? And Why?

Apart from what your Regiment already does, is there anything you would like to see done with regards showing appreciation to all the staff?

If you feel you wish to say how long you were there and why/what treatment you received that is fine and will be kept in confidence but if not you don't have to.

In a nutshell I would like to know about your experiences and get your ideas for anything we can do to try and show our appreciation for the UK Military Medical Team.

Afghanistan Recognition for Medics

By Kizzie Jarvis

My name is Kizzie Jarvis and I am part of a small group of people who are trying to get wider recognition for the hard-working, and often overlooked, Military Medical Staff that treats our wounded Servicemen on their return from Afghanistan. We are not a large organisation, but our aims are just as important to us – and we hope that they are important to you too.

Welsh Guards Regimental Accessories



Item 1



Item 2



Item 3



Item 4



Item 5



Item 6



Items 7 & 8

Item 1	
<i>Polo Shirt Blue/Red/Blue</i>	£15.00
Item 2	
<i>Pocket Fob Watch with Crest</i>	£48.50
Item 3	
<i>Cuff Links with Dragon</i>	£ 7.00
Item 4	
<i>Cuff Links Regimental</i>	£18.00
Item 5	
<i>Ice Bucket with Battle Honours</i>	£ 25.00
Item 6	
<i>Golf Umbrella</i>	£15.50
Item 7	
<i>Statuette HSC China</i>	£135.00
Item 8	
<i>Statuette with Crest</i>	£15.00

Welsh Guards Regimental Accessories



Item 9



Items 10 & 11



Items 12 & 13



Items 14, 15 & 16



Items 17



Item 18

Item 9	
<i>Hip Flask with Crest</i>	£20.70
Item 10	
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Item 17	
<i>Tankard with Crest</i>	£20.50
Item 18	
<i>Tea Towel with Battle Honours</i>	£4.30

Welsh Guards Regimental Accessories



Items 19, 20 & 21



Item 22



Items 23 & 24



Items 25 & 26



Items 27 & 28



Item 29



Item 30

Item 19	<i>Brigade Tie Silk Non Crush</i>	£11.00	Item 26	<i>Guardsman Badge</i>	£2.50
Item 20	<i>Brigade Tie Silk</i>	£13.70	Item 27	<i>Blazer Buttons Large</i>	£1.70
Item 21	<i>Brigade Tie Polyester</i>	£ 7.00	Item 28	<i>Blazer Buttons Small</i>	£1.63
Item 22	<i>Wall Plaque</i>	£17.00	Item 29	<i>Handkerchief with Crest</i>	£2.40
Item 23	<i>Key Fob</i>	£ 12.30	Item 30	<i>Watch Strap</i>	£6.50
Item 24	<i>Cap Badge</i>	£3.50			
Item 25	<i>Guardsman Badge</i>	£3.80			

Welsh Guards Regimental Accessories



Item 32



Items 33 & 34



Item 35



Item 36



Item 37



Item 38

Item 32	
<i>Brigade Scarf</i>	£13.70
Item 33	
<i>Bow Brooch</i>	£4.00
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<i>Lapel Pin Badge</i>	£4.00
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Item 38	
<i>Diary</i>	£5.00
Item 39	
<i>Regimental Calendar</i>	£7.77



Item 39

The Regimental Diary 2010 and all Regimental accessories can now be purchased from:

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WELSH GUARDS SUMMER BALL GLANUSK PARK ESTATE, CRICKHOWELL – 17th & 18th JULY 2010

Ladies and Gentlemen, as you are all aware, Brian Elliott, Harry Legge-Bourke and myself, together with our Entertainments Team are holding a Summer Ball in the grounds of the prestigious Glanusk Park Estate over the weekend 17th & 18th July 2010

The intention is to get as many Welsh Guardsmen and their families together for a great get together, with loads of entertainment for the children and plenty to do for the adults also. We very much hope that you and your family will be able to join us at, what will prove to be, a very memorable Welsh Guards event.

Entry to the Estate is by ticket only - which also doubles as a meal ticket (so don't forget to bring them with you). Tickets are attractively priced at £10 for an adult ticket and just £3 for children. Cheques for tickets should be made payable to "The Welsh Guards Afghanistan Funds" and should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope (SAE) for the tickets to be sent to you. Please also state how many tickets (adults & children) you require.

Please contact me for tickets at:

Home Address: 219 Tyle-Teg, Clydach, Swansea SA6 5EF

E-Mail: 105Piccadilly@btconnect.com

Telephone: (Work) 0207 4953957, (Mobile) 07974419620, (Home) 01792 843089

www.welshguardsreunited.co.uk

There may be a requirement for Welsh Guards Association Branches to run a coach to the event, in which case it would assist greatly if tickets could be purchased for the entire group in one go. There will be ample space within the Estate for coach or bus parking.

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This is due to the fact that my husband has served with this regiment for twenty-two years and the brave soldiers deserve support and consideration.

Thank you for your support

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Roads To Nowhere

A South Arabian Odyssey, 1960 – 1965

John Harding

Today part of the Republic of Yemen, Aden has long passed British consciousness. Yes it was Queen Victoria's first imperial acquisition and, for 128 years, a vitally important British strategic base and commercial staging post. In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Britain was still predominant foreign power in the idle East, but in 1967, overwhelmed by an acute sterling crisis and a failure of political will, the Labour Government under Harold Wilson abandoned Aden. This precipitate withdrawal left the newly formed Federation of South Arabia and its peoples to the mercies of rival national socialist revolutionaries, who, after a period of bloody civil war, established, with Russian backing, the Arab world's only Marxist-Leninist tyranny, and left a twenty-seven-year legacy of impoverishment and repression.

Roads to Nowhere is a candid account of the author's experiences as a young British Colonial Officer who served in South Arabia during the critical years leading up to Britain's headlong departure. It describes a bizarre world of outsize colonial characters and desert adventure, during Aden's moment of glory as the "Hong Kong of the Middle East". It analyses the problems caused by a flawed Federal constitution unequal to its avowed purpose of bringing Aden and its hinterland to independence in an orderly fashion, and the fatal mismatch between Aden's politicians and the traditional tribal rulers. Along the way, we are treated to tales of tribal feuds and dissident skirmishes, the strengths and weaknesses of feudal rule, intelligence and internal security failings, frustrated reconstruction schemes, the establishment of Radfan's first administration, and the valiant efforts of the British armed forces to hold the ring.

Written with a sharp eye for the tragicomic, and ranging deftly between the political and the personal, this is above all a book about individuals, both British and Arab, and how they interacted as they tried to make the best of their impossible predicament.

John Harding

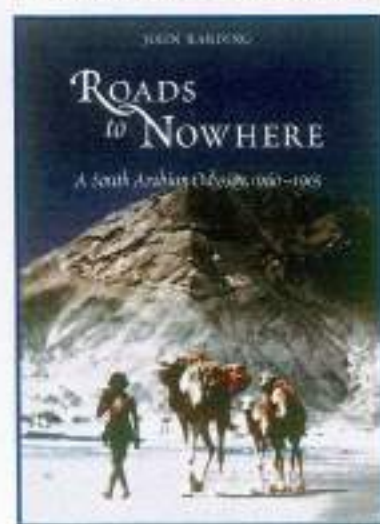
Born in 1934, John Harding joined the Colonial Administrative Service in 1959, after National Service with the Welsh Guards and Cambridge. He served in South Arabia from 1960 to 1965 as an Assistant Adviser in the Eastern Aden Protectorate, an Administrator in Aden, and a Political Officer in Lahj and Radfan. After Arabia, he emigrated to Australia, returning to Britain to resume a full-time legal career with a City of London law firm. Formerly a Vice President of the Alpine Club, he has written and lectured extensively about mountain adventure. Married, with three daughters and numerous grandchildren, he and his wife now live on the Gower Peninsula in Wales.

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WELSH GUARDS COLLECTION



The Welsh Guards Collection

Established 1995.

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Tel 01606 593953

Direct Museum line
07531395310

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stanevans67@hotmail.com

Doesn't time fly when you're enjoying yourself someone once said, and how true that is. It is now the fifteenth year since the Welsh Guards Collection was first conceived back in 1995. From a few pieces of uniform and some odd squad photographs we can now be proud of a collection of Welsh Guards memorabilia and ephemera which numbers over 2,000 and a photograph archive dating back to our formation in 1915 which is second to none. In fact the envy of most other military Museums I have visited.

I can remember quite clearly the day Colonel Brian Morgan and I were offered the premises at Park Hall in 2001, we wondered whether we would be able to fill the old coachhouse with the items which were at that time on show in a converted garage in Winsford in Cheshire. The feeling of fear and excitement I felt when he gave me the nod and suggested we "go for it." We had inherited a Victorian building that had in recent years housed a collection of classic motor vehicles so it wasn't quite derelict just an empty void.

Where would we start?

A request was put out to the local branches for help with any skills that could be brought to the site. The response was amazing. Painters, Plumbers, Electricians, Carpenters and general dog's bodies (I refer to my own lack of skills) turned up armed with overalls and a massive bag of enthusiasm. People like Barry Peet, Ken Jones 66, Captain Chris Hopkins, Terry Chambers and of course the present team who have worked tirelessly and still do to the this day. Colonel Brian Morgan,

probably one of the longest serving Welsh Guardsmen ever with 38 years unbroken service, Graham Binnie, Ex Signals, John Williams 83 Ex 2 Coy, Norman Edwards Ex 3rd Battalion, Brian John Ex Guards depot, The Rev, Ben Parry Ex boy and POW Coy, Terry Roberts 48 Ex Drummer boy or should I say "Dell Boy" and of course the new boys Tony Crisp and Gerald Tilston, both National Servicemen. Unfortunately through ill health Terry is no longer able to assist us at the Museum but still pops in from time to time with the latest news.

I remember the days when we thought we would never get it finished, like trying to paint the walls white during the freezing days while the walls were dripping with condensation,

trying to repair the forever

WELSH GUARDS COLLECTION



leaking roof. I think of Chris Hopkins who spent several days in a darkened room scraping down an old barrack room locker with a razor blade and some worn out sandpaper until it was as smooth as his toecaps. When out of hours the only toilet we had was a bucket strategically hidden in the sentry box? The ups and downs, the setbacks and disappointments. But there was always that wonderful special banter that most of us hadn't experienced for years it was almost like being a recruit again when times seemed impossible but we all got through it. There have been scores of people mostly ex and serving Welsh Guardsmen who have not been able to help physically but have dug deep and helped us out financially, people like the late Derek Whiting who would call in every few weeks to ask us what we needed and if we did need something, it was there the very next day. Derek was one of very many who helped financially and I mention him because he is no longer with us and there

have been others who wish to remain anonymous so I won't embarrass them in this editorial, people from not only all parts of the British Isles but from the continents far and wide, I'm sure they know who I mean. Without all that pain, support and effort we could never have got off the ground but with it, we were never going to fail. Thanks to you all you should feel very proud.

It was hoped we could have an official opening on February 26th 2001 (The anniversary of our formation) but unfortunately having run ourselves ragged to get everything done on time we were blitzed with the foot and mouth epidemic which ravaged the farming community here. When we did eventually open we were blessed with a warm October day where the Regimental Band performed a splendid review in front of the Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, the Regimental Adjutant Charles Stephens, the President of the Association Brigadier Johnny Rickett, Several Local

dignitaries including the Mayor and Mayoress of Oswestry and lastly and most importantly 400 members of the Welsh Guards Association branches up and down the country.

Our number of visitors continue to rise year on year even through this recession we are still very popular with the public who continue to come. We have a register of visiting Welsh Guardsmen and over the last twelve months during 2009, 64 first time visitors and their families have graced our doors plus our regulars who visit several times a year just for a chat and to see what's new.

By the time this is released we hope to have in place a special display of our successful tour of Afghanistan thanks to the artifacts given to us by serving members and Regimental Headquarters. Again I hope we will inherit so much in the way of artifacts and items that once again I have the headache of how to display it to its best vantage.

One of our latest displays is to the service of the late Col Carol

Mather MC. In his early days he transferred to the Scots Guards who were forming the all new 8 Commando which was phased out later to become one of the originals who formed the SAS along with another famous Welsh Guardsman Jock Lewes. After leaving the SAS Col Mather was attached to the 8th Army and was Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery's personal L.O. for many years through the second world war before returning to the Battalion. His book

"When the grass stops growing" makes for fascinating reading.

Two other newcomers to the display are "13" the unlucky defaulter spending time behind the genuine cell door from the Guard room at Caterham (1877 - 1995) and "Curly" (who is desperate to get on a drill course) and sits there bulling his boots for 7 hours a day. (does he remind you of anyone you knew?)

Lastly as we all get older you may find you have a little spare time on your hands and are at a loose end, why not come along to the Museum and lend a hand, I'm sure we can find something of interest for you and who knows maybe you would like to volunteer to become one of the regular staff and become a guide. Either way we would all love to see you.

Stan Evans, Curator



IBB & IJLB ASSOCIATION



Association Members



Unveiling Ceremony

The Infantry Boys Battalion and Infantry Junior Leader Battalion Association (IBB & IJLB Association) Memorial Weekend 6th/7th June 2009

By Graham Fowler, Scots Guards

The Infantry Boys Battalion was formed in 1952 at Plummer Barracks Plymouth and relocated to Park Hall Camp Oswestry in 1960 and reformed as the Infantry Junior Leader Battalion under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Frank Coutts KOSB, it remained in Oswestry until the raising of the school age to 16 in 1975 when it then moved to Shorncliffe and disbanded with Defence cuts in 1985.

The concept of the battalion was a 7 term programme modelled on the 1960 and early 1970's Royal Military Academy Sandhurst two year course during the first year a mixture of recruit training, education, adventurous training, and the second year emphasis being placed on all infantry skills so that by the time the 7th term was complete a Junior Leader was capable of teaching drill, skill at arms, map reading, signals, and tactics up to platoon level and should have adequate leadership training to lead an infantry section on joining his Battalion and would be academically qualified up to the rank of Warrant Officer.

The unit's impact on the British Infantry was profound. In the 70's and 80's a visit to any Sergeants Mess of any Infantry Battalion would bring one into contact with many former Junior Leaders from IJLB. Many of the Juniors went on to achieve Commissioned Rank.

There has been an IBB & IJLB Association for over twenty years with a very active internet forum www.ijlb.co.uk.

In September 2007 I was asked to form a small sub committee at the AGM of the IBB & IJLB Association consisting of the Association Secretary, Ken Nicol ex Gordon Highlanders and myself to raise the necessary funds to build a memorial for

the Infantry Boys Battalion and the Infantry Junior Leader Battalion and that we should look forward to a date in June 2009 to unveil the memorial at the Battalion's spiritual home in Oswestry. As I left the meeting I thought to myself what have I committed to?

On the fund raising side we wrote to every Foot Guards RHQ's and Infantry Association and units and corps that drew from the Infantry such as Special Air Service, Small Arms School Corps and the Army Air Corp.

We also emailed or wrote to every single member we had on our internet forum database of past and present members of the Association asking for a contribution some 8354 emails and over 600 letters. During the fund raising appeal period which lasted approximately 18 months we managed to raise the money required for the cost of the memorial.

It was planned that the unveiling of the memorial would be incorporated with a reunion weekend which would start on the Friday with an Inter Company Golf Match at the Gobowen Golf Club and on the Saturday there would be a gathering at the Oswestry Rugby Club (the old Officers

Mess at Park Hall Camp) followed by a formal memorial dinner in the Oswestry Assembly Rooms on the Saturday evening which used to be one of the gymnasiums situated next to the Guards Company accommodation. This was to be followed by the Association exercising its right to march through Oswestry on Sunday as the IJLB had been granted the freedom of Oswestry to the Battalion back in 1971, followed by a drumhead service where the memorial would be unveiled. Then there would be a return to Barracks followed by a curry lunch and beating the retreat.

We managed to obtain an Infantry Band, the Prince of Wales Division and, through HQ Land Forces, The one problem left was who to command the parade, we knew we would have at least 7 LE Lieutenant Colonels, some 50+ Majors and Captains and several hundred ex Warrant Officers and Senior Ranks all with different Regimental customs for our parade, so we approached the Garrison Sergeant Major London District, Bill Mott, as it was felt his seniority and knowledge of many of those taking part would ease the many rivalries between some

IBB & IJLB ASSOCIATION



Eyes Left

50 different Regiments on parade and what an excellent choice it was. The Garrison Sergeant Major was a superb ambassador for the Guards Division with many a participant comparing him favourably with Jan Hooper and Dusty Smith Coldstream Guards who were best remembered the Drill Sergeant and Regimental Sergeant Majors of the IJLB in the 60's and 70's.

Our guests of honour for the Saturday night Dinner and Parade were to be the Mayor of Oswestry and Brigadier Frank Coutts KOSB who was the first Commanding Officer of the Battalion. However, sadly Brigadier Frank died in the October 2008. We consequently asked Lt. Col. Sir Malcolm Ross GCVO OBE Scots Guards to be our guest of honour. Not only was he a family friend of Brigadier Frank and knew how strong the bond was between Brigadier Frank and his Junior Leaders; Sir Malcolm had also been the Company Commander of Guards Company

Oswestry in the early 70's.

As the memorial weekend drew closer we carried out a series of recs with the Town Clerk of Oswestry, the Garrison Sergeant Major and our Padre, Norman Setchell. Norman had been an ex Junior Leader himself at Plymouth and Oswestry enlisting in the Queen's Own Buffs who later ordained in the Church of England then re-enlisted into the Royal Army Chaplain's department. He then left the Army again in the late 80's and took up work as the Padre for a National Health Trust. We are very lucky to have as our Padre one of our own.

The weekend of the event arrived with warnings of heavy rain in

the West of England and Wales. This, however, did not dampen our spirits on the Friday night and the remainder of the weekend.

On the Saturday all members met up at the Oswestry Rugby Club for a few hours in the afternoon. We then met for the formal dinner that night. An excellent speech was given by both the Mayor of Oswestry and Sir Malcolm Ross who gave an amusing speech giving us some of his memories of Brigadier Frank Coutts and his own period with the IJLB. Needless to say once the dinner had finished tales of Z Company Chirk Aqueduct, Snowdonia exercise pipeline, Jan Hooper, Dusty Smith continued long into the night.

"The sun shines on the righteous" there was no sun, so maybe he was right!!

On the Sunday morning we rose with great trepidation on the weather, it was wet. After an early morning walk through/talk through with the Band Sergeant Major and the Garrison Sergeant Major the heavens really opened. However, as we formed up some 300 members of the Association on the Guildhall Square prior to the march, the rain then eased and we could almost hear Jan Hooper saying "The sun shines on the righteous" there was no sun, so maybe he was right!!

After 45 odd years the drill of the Association was still impeccable and the response to the Garrison Sergeant Major's word of command, crisp and sharp. The memorial service followed the traditional remembrance service with the Association members reconfirming the Oath of Allegiance taken on their Passing Out Parade all of those years ago. Four wreaths were laid representing the four Garrisons the Battalion had served in and a two minute silence was held for all those members of the IBB & IJLB who gave their lives for this country.

It all went off well and we returned to Barracks giving eyes left to our principal guests the Mayor of Oswestry and Sir Malcolm Ross and this was followed by the curry lunch back in the Assembly Rooms in Park Hall Camp. However, the rain defeated us and the beating of the retreat was cancelled.

A memorable weekend thoroughly enjoyed by all. Any ex Junior Leader or member of staff who would like to join the IJLB Association please contact me on gffowler@blg.co.uk or tel no 07778 354 188 or go to www.ijlb.co.uk



Mandy Wakely receives a solid leek brooch at the WGR Summer BBQ from the Management Team for spearheading the windband campaign on WGR.

Welsh Guards Reunited

By Major (Retired) Martin Browne BEM

Served September 1976 to February 2009

'The Leek' Forum Moderator, Welsh Guards Reunited.

The award winning Welsh Guards Reunited (WGR) website, (website excellence Silver prize awarded in January 2009 by a panel of webmasters), constructed and coded by Mike Cummins (1WG Drums Plt 1978-1988) has grown from strength to strength in the three years of its existence. Mike, who has an interest in computer programming and experience of the internet, coupled with a passion for the Welsh Guards, had identified a requirement for a website, moderated by like minded people, which could be used to reunite and inform Welsh Guardsmen, regardless of rank, age, background or location. Members consist of serving and retired Officers, NCOs and Guardsmen, family, friends and occasional visitors. WGR's oldest member is Alan Appleby who is 91, whilst the youngest is a serving Welsh Guardsman who recently turned 18, the common bond of service or an interest in the Welsh Guards is all that is required.

Although previous attempts have been made at creating a Welsh Guards specific website they had not been particularly successful. That was not to be the case with WGR. Within six months of Mike setting it up, he had 120 members registered and realised 550 members in the first year. Attracting 1,600

members in year two and 2,000 members as at September 2009, a constant flow of new members at a rate of 25 per week, every week will ensure that the popularity of this site will continue to grow. With over 2 million hits since inception, the unique service provided by WGR is unquestionable.

It is important to realise that WGR was not set up to compete with the Welsh Guards Association (WGA) but simply to offer Welsh Guardsmen an alternative option for staying in touch. Indeed many WGR members are staunch members of both the WGA and WGR, enjoying the camaraderie afforded locally by belonging to a geographical WGA Branch, whilst also enjoying the wider, national and international camaraderie offered by belonging to WGR. WGR has active members in Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, South Africa, Spain, Germany, France, Malta, Peoples Republic of Congo, Barbados and Iraq. Both complement each other perfectly and WGR encourages this. Indeed WGR goes to great lengths to support and advertise the WGA and has a dedicated section to actively promote the Association, moderated by Mr Steve Fisher, Secretary of the Swansea Branch WGA.

The introduction of Welsh Guards Reunited Radio (WGRR) in 2007 served to broaden the appeal and interest of the site and has become a very welcome popular addition. Owned and maintained in a most professional manner by Allan Rogers in Shropshire and assisted until recently by Kim Moon based in Australia (again demonstrating the international flavour and reach of WGR), WGRR has proved an extremely popular section of the website, broadcasting every day with live music, requests and radio interviews.

WGR has become the communication medium of choice for many retired and serving Welsh Guardsmen and their families. Simple to use and navigate from the comfort of your own home, whether posting up to date news and views in the vast catalogue of forums or simply chatting in real time within the "Banter Box" to friends old and new, WGR has become a lifeline for many. As WGR is financed entirely by voluntary donations there are none of the annoying pop up advert banners you get on other sites and WGR is not beholden to anyone but the users of the site. Within the site there is a membership database containing the contact details of all those who have registered and as the title of the site would suggest many Welsh Guardsmen have been reunited with comrades they had not seen in many years and the site contains excellent testimonials of happy reunions, the following are just a few of the many testimonials:

** This site has done it again. After 35 years I met up with Dave (Timber) Woods and his good lady Julie but the meeting was in France in the Dordogne where we had arranged to meet and have a lunch. The meeting place was at another WGR members home, my baby sister Pammy and her husband Bob's place and what a lovely setting to have a reunion in. We had our lunch and the jaws were aching from all the talking and the eating and Timber brought along some photos of the guys we served with nice to see them all*

WELSH GUARDS REUNITED



looking so young but in reality we have all got a bit longer in the tooth – Mike Dunphy,

• I feel as though I belong somewhere again as being in touch with old comrades even through a computer gives me more purpose in life. It's a brilliant site, I'm glad to have you guys to talk to. Well done Mike for setting it up and to all who have contributed (i.e. Historians, jokers, photographers) in fact everybody. Mike Wakely

• I (or rather Google) found this site on the 21st Dec 2007 just after eleven in the morning. I registered so I could check out the photos. Within an hour or so, I'd met up with Chris Duggan, Allan Rogers, Neil Chamberlain, Karl Trenchard, Knocker Knowles and Paul Dummer all from my time served. I also met new friends Steve Beard, Stuart Owen and of course Ray Skinner. Since then I've caught up with a lot of old friends and made loads of new ones. This is a great site and one of the best things that happened in 2008. Jack Jones 11

• Thanks to WGR, I'm late for work every morning and loving it. Since I was introduced to WGR I am now reliving my time in the Regiment and meeting some great guys. 53 years after I stepped off now seems like 53

days and even though our time zones are way apart (I am in Australia) I still manage to catch the guys for a chat and an up date on events. You have changed my lifestyle now believe it or not, so thanks from the bottom of my heart. Gwynfor Pritchard 15 OAM

• Within 1 day of my request to visit Len, Sherman, a serving L/Cpl went to see my uncle at the Royal Free Hospital. Up 'till then, he had refused the operation that was his only hope. That visit so touched him that he will have the operation tomorrow. To that fine serving NCO, you did a wonderful thing for a sick, elderly comrade. God Bless you. Dr David Sinclair, Canada

Although primarily set up to reunite Welsh Guardsmen wherever they may be in the World, WGR has fast become a focal point for all things Welsh Guards. With a small management and administrative team backed up by a dedicated and hard working promotional team and entertainments team, WGR has revitalised the interests of many retired Welsh Guardsmen who are willing to do all it takes to support the serving element of our Regiment in any way they can. For instance, the WG Afghanistan Wristband appeal has benefitted from over

£3000 raised by WGR; credit and debit card donations, Adrian (Swill) Hinder and Allan Rogers raised over £700 during a 3 Coy reunion arranged and organised on WGR, and the WGR Summer BBQ, held on John Bonnewell's Farm in Pembrokeshire, which attracted nearly 400 people, a slot on the BBC Wales News and mention on BFBS radio, generated a cheque for £1000 towards the campaign.

The fund raising does not stop there. WGR members are also using the site to arrange and organise a series of sponsored walks, one walk planned up Pen-y-Fan with another from Merthyr Tydfil to Highcross, to raise funds in support of the Regimental Headquarters led initiative the "Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal". In addition to raising funds and awareness, WGR members have also been actively involved in sending approximately 100 "shoe box" size parcels to TWG personnel in Afghanistan, generated and coordinated by postings on WGR. From feedback received by the site, these have been most welcome and appreciated by the Battalion and really do demonstrate that no matter where TWG is sent, they are never far from the thoughts of past members and families. We could not possibly mention by name every one of our fantastic members which makes the WGR site so special, there are far too many of them, but it would be remiss of me not to mention the tremendous efforts made by Mrs Mandy Wakely who, to date, has sent 12 shoe boxes full of home made Merthyr Tydfil (branded WGR) Welsh Cakes to serving members of TWG in Afghanistan and is a staunch supporter of all we do – thank you.

One of the more emotional, less appealing, but very necessary tasks carried out completely voluntarily by WGR personnel is representation at funerals and, whilst the Battalion has been deployed on operations, repatriations of our comrades Killed in Action. Every single member of WGR would wish to show their respects at every funeral and every repatriation if they could, but as that is not possible, it is reassuring to know that WGR, coordinated and planned through the website, will "always" be represented alongside the WGA at these solemn occasions.

Whether you are looking for old friends, searching for family history or simply just want to stay in touch, it matters not that you may have served many years ago or just yesterday, in the Band or in the Battalion, or not at all. Register today and become a part of history. WGR really does bridge the gap between generations of Welsh Guardsmen and their families and provides a fast, efficient, cost effective and up to date means of staying in touch. If you have not done so, then visit the site and take advantage of all it has to offer:

- Video Section containing over 500 Member contributed videos.
- Photo gallery containing over 10,000 photographs.
- A massive games section containing over 1,700 free "flash" games. Users can play for free or by using their WGR iPoints. This makes us one of the largest free gaming sites on the World Wide Web. WGR also boasts a casino section where members can play for iPoints.
- Employment section for members to search a large section of jobs.
- Over 75,000 posts for members to get involved in and comment.
- Guestbook. The Guestbook is a place where non members (as well as members) can leave a comment.
- WGR Book of Condolence.
- WGR has teamed up with Forces Reunited to bring its members a shop containing military style equipment and memorabilia.

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

2009 has been a proud but extremely sad year in the history of the Regiment. They did a fantastic job in Afghanistan, but at a terrible cost, losing seven men who served with or attached to the Battalion, including the Commanding Officer.

Association members rallied forth with tremendous support at all repatriations through Wootton Bassett and attending subsequent funerals, whilst Standard Bearers travelled many miles around the country to honour these brave men.

I am extremely proud to be part of this family, and thank members for what they did during these difficult times.

The Biennial Dinner at Ludlow, St David's Day at Merthyr Tydfil and other events such as the Darts and Shooting, Golf and Race Days continue to flourish, and helps to advance the camaraderie, although it would be good to see new faces.

It is hoped that St David's Day in 2010 will be celebrated with the Battalion at Aldershot, which will give us the opportunity to salute our men. Let's make sure we are well represented!

Branch Secretaries work extremely hard in keeping the Association alive within their areas, arranging Lunches, Dinners, Dances and various other events, so please continue to give them your full support.

Finally I wish to thank you all for the support and cooperation shown me throughout the year, and wish you and your families good luck and the best of health in 2010.

Brian Keane
Secretary General



Standard Bearers outside Guards Chapel 2009

Aberdare Branch

(Formed 1951)

President: Simon Rhodes Esq.
Chairman: John Coleman (22217873)
Treasurer/
Secretary: Michael Williams (2335233)
33 Tre Gwilym, Cwmbach
Aberdare
Mid Glam CF44 0AA
Tel: 01685 877786

The annual Branch report becomes more difficult as the years roll by since the members appear to participate in less and less activities. Age is probably the biggest problem since there does not appear to be younger members interested in supporting Branch functions. Younger men are now spending more time with family pursuits, which are commendable, but leaving less time for meeting fellow Guardsmen. I am sure this trend is not just with our Branch, but it makes life difficult when trying to arrange various events. It would be good to see a young volunteer turn up at our meetings with new ideas and help instil some much needed enthusiasm - maybe next month!!!

We attended St David's Day celebrations at Merthyr Tydfil this year, since the Battalion were about to be deployed to Afghanistan. After an excellent service in the local Parish Church, we marched, with great panache, behind the Welsh Guards Band to the new Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Centre, to enjoy a buffet and a wonderful reunion with fellow Association members. As usual, beer and chat flowed freely for the remainder of the afternoon.

Our meetings continue to be held at 8pm on the first Tuesday of every month (except Bank Holidays) at the Aberdare Rugby Club. If there is anyone in the vicinity at that time, we would be more than pleased to see you, and I can promise you a fantastic welcome.

We welcome the return of the Battalion from Afghanistan after their operational tour. They had the most difficult task, and we are all proud of the way they conducted themselves in very difficult circumstances. Sadly this came at a terrible cost in injuries and loss of lives. We Will Remember Them.

Finally I must thank the 'faithful few' for their continued support, and also the office at Maindy Barracks as well as RHQ Wellington Barracks for their help and guidance.

I look forward to seeing you all in 2010, and hope some of you will make that extra little effort to come to a couple of meetings.

BRANCH REPORTS

Cardiff Branch

(Founded 1919)

President: Colonel C J Dawney
Chairman: David W Parry (22831847)
Treasurer: Alex H Webb (22370877)
Secretary: Bill Morris (22217619)
 39 Gareth Close
 Thornhill
 Cardiff CF14 9AF
 Tel: 029 20611241
 e-mail: billmo02@talktalk.net

At the time of writing this report, I am busy preparing for the 90th Anniversary Dinner to be held in Cardiff on Friday, 23rd October, 2009. This Dinner will be subject of a report in the next Magazine.

Change to the Committee Due to the work commitments our Vice Chairman, Mr Brian Elliott, 24385846, has been forced to stand down. We thank him for his commitment to the Branch in recent years, and I only hope that it will not be too long before he is able to take an active part in Branch affairs. Mr Terry O'Shea, 2407142, has been elected as Vice Chairman.

Branch Affairs: We still continue to meet on the first Monday of the month at the United Services Mess, Wharton Street, Cardiff. New members are always welcome. In addition to the aforementioned, and in order to cater for those members who are working and unable to attend on a Monday, we hold another meeting on the second Friday of the month, again at the U.S.M. Again, new members are welcome to attend either or both meetings.

The Branch was well represented at the St. David's Day celebrations in Merthyr and a good time was had by all. Later in the same month, the Branch were well represented at the Biennial Dinner held at Ludlow Racecourse, we returned home to Cardiff in the early hours of the morning after a most enjoyable evening.

The Branch was able, this year, to put two teams into the Dart and Shoot competition, and I now await the official result. I do believe we were quite successful!!

As with most Branches we lose members year on year and we can only extend our most sincere condolences to the families and friends.

We also extend our best wishes to all those members of the Branch who have not enjoyed the best of health lately and wish them a speedy recovery.

Finally, on behalf of the Branch, may I extend a very warm "thank you" to Major Cultram and Brian Keane at Maundy Barracks for their help during the year.

East Glamorgan Branch

(Formed 1920)

President: Lt. Col. D C Macdonald-Milner
Chairman: Howard Main (23577106)
Treasurer: G R Grant (23523127)
Secretary: Ken Haines (23523287)
 Trevone, Duffryn Road
 Rhydfelin
 Pontypridd CF39 5RU
 Tel: 01443 662248
 E-mail: marianne.haines@ntlworld.com

The year began well with a trip to Chorley, Lancashire in order to lay a wreath on the memorial stone to the Falklands which is situated in Layland. The trip was a huge success with excellent food, accommodation and company. We also took some guests with us, namely, Mr & Mrs Mike Jones, Ogmore Branch, Mr & Mrs Jimmy Manning, Merthyr Branch, Mr & Mrs Brian Keane, Secretary General, Peggy Jones, widow of Trebor (The Druid), Eileen Chapman, widow of Ron, and Mr & Mrs Barry Chambers, Ogmore Branch. A big thank you must go to Major Keevil (Retd), and Glen of the local British Legion at Chorley for making it such the success it was. They organised a Piper as well as a Welsh Minister (from Mountain Ash) for the ceremony, which was then followed by a buffet lunch.

On the return journey the following day we stopped at the Welsh Guards Collection at Oswestry. We did not have a great deal of time to look at everything, but it is well worth a visit. A big thank you to Stan and the boys for showing us around.

March 1st saw Branch members celebrating St David's Day at Merthyr Tydfil, which was once again a very good day. It was nice to see Dai Bowen and his family in attendance, as well as lots of old faces who seem to 'crop up' from time to time!

Next up was Imber Court on a very hot day in June. We managed to fill a bus with the help of the Ogmore Branch, making a total of forty nine members and guests. There was a slight mishap involving Peter Hughes as he tried to find his way home - he should really pick his path a little better, since he had a nasty fall - and he was not even tipsy!

I was unable to attend the Darts & Shooting competition at Nesscliffe Barracks in September, but the feedback I had was that it was one of the best ever, with special praise for Brian Keane, for the organisation, and for keeping the bar going on his own. WELL DONE BRIAN. Thanks also must go to Captain Ben Parry for the Shooting arrangements.

Congratulations to everyone who participated, especially to the combined team of North & South Wales for winning the Darts - it makes a nice change from Monmouth and Swansea!

I would like to say a big thank you to our Standard Bearer Ron Hambley for the work he puts into the Branch, nothing is too much trouble for him, is always immaculately turned out and is never

BRANCH REPORTS

heard to complain about anything.

Our meetings continue to be held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month (7.30 for 8pm) at the Institute Club, Geliwasted road, Pontypridd, which is approximately 50 yards from the Army Recruiting Office. There is some parking available.

Finally a huge thanks and good luck to W/O Warren Williams and Magsy on their retirement and to all at Maindy Barracks for everything they have done for us during the past year.

Llanelli Branch

(Formed 1974)

President: John Harding

Chairman: Alan Davies (22217919)

Treasurer: Vernon Jones (22217890)

Secretary: Alan Cunningham (24125105)

197 Cockett Road

Cockett

Swansea SA2 0FH

Tel: 01792 554151 (Home) (Work: 07976971336)

E-mail: alan.cunningham1@ntlworld.com

The year started when, in April, we received the very sad news of the sudden death of our President Sir David Mansel Lewis KCVO, BA, JP, of Stradey Castle Llanelli. Sir David had been our Branch President for many years and had given us loyal service and support throughout this time. Branch Members attended the funeral and lined up on the path leading to the Church. Our Standard Bearer was in attendance.

Branch Members also attended the Memorial Service for Sir David at the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks, London in July.

Sadly we lost another member, William Owen Williams (2740291) in August.

Branch members also attended the funeral at Llanelli of Major(QM) Richard (Dick) Williams (2735387/468171) who had been residing in the area with his daughter. We offer our sincere condolences to the families and hope their happy memories sustain them through the coming months and years.

Earlier in the year we had to change our Meeting venue to the RNA/British Legion Club in Swansea Road, Llanelli. We continue to meet on the last Tuesday of the month (7.00 for 7.30pm)

We continue to hold our Sunday Lunches. Can I thank all the stalwarts who attend every month and ask those of you who have not attended a meeting for some time to make an effort – it's good to keep in touch.

Thanks must go to all who support the Branch in various ways.

Branch members attended the Bi-Annual Dinner at Ludlow earlier in the year.

The Branch was represented at the Darts and Shooting Competition at Nesscliffe Barracks, Shrewsbury on the 26th September and we thank Brian Keane for arranging the day and the bar facilities for the evening.

We thank our Transport Manager Mr Roy Copson for his services in arranging the conveyance of members to our functions.

Thanks also to our Standard Bearer Mr Roy Burgess who has attended at Wootton Bassett on many occasions during the year as well as the funerals that were held in the area.

The Branch would like to give a warm welcome home to the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards from their successful tour of Afghanistan.

To all our members and their partners who are not in good health, we send our best wishes for a speedy recovery. May I also wish them, and our fellow Branches a healthy, happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.



Llanelli Darts and Shooting Team Nesscliffe Barracks 2009
Left: Eric Roberts, Harry Herman, Roy Burgess, Roy Copson, Vernon Jones, Walter Smith, Lance Benson

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

Tel: 01423 879326

E-mail: jeffheenan-wgalb@hotmail.co.uk

Welcome to the New Year, our best wishes go to our serving, as well as our retired comrades, we hope you all have a prosperous, healthy and wealthy New Year.

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, CBE, Welsh Guards.

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Our meetings in 2010 will be:

- Friday 5th February 2010:
7pm Annual General Meeting London Branch
- Friday 2nd April 2010: First Friday Meeting
- Saturday 1st May 2010: Ladies Lunchtime Party
- Friday 11th June 2010 12noon: AGM Association/Troop meeting
- Friday 3rd September 2010: First Friday meeting
- Sunday November 2010: Remembrance Sunday Details from RHQ
- Friday 1st October 2010: First Friday Meeting
- Saturday 3rd December 2010: Lunchtime Christmas Party

***Please note that our meetings now start at 4pm
- lunches at 12 pm.**

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.

Our former President, Major General Peter Leuchars CBE sadly passed away in July 2009. Even after he retired as President of the Branch, he and his wife Gill continued to support us at our various meetings.

Sadly other members have also passed away in the past year, our thoughts and condolences go to their loved ones, their names are entered in the Memoriam section of the Magazine.

A Commemoration service was again held at Imber Court Metropolitan Sports Club on a beautiful sunny day on 27th June 2009. Our thanks to RQMS Warren Williams who organised the event. Members of East Glamorgan Branch also attended.

We held an additional 2 lunches in 2009, in February and October, at The Royal Hospital Chelsea, in The Long Bar, with the In-Pensioners, by Kind Permission of the Sgt. Major Bob Appelby CG. We also shared two fantastic afternoons with the London Branch Coldstream Guards.

Founders Day Royal Hospital Chelsea



Left to right: Richard Doughty BEM, Doug Wilcox,
Ex RSM Harry Webb, Jeff Heenan, and Keith Mordcau.

The main gates at Wellington Barracks are now manned by civilian security guards, please ensure that you notify the Hon. Sec. if you are attending the meetings, and carry your membership cards with you. The Garrison WOs' & Sgts Mess are now staffed by Sodexo staff.

During the year we have been able to sponsor various charities. Thank you on their behalf for your kind support. Donations and subscriptions always welcome!

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 the 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.

Our sub meetings continue in Bristol / Bath, and the contact for the meetings is Alan Ridgewell, (22217347), Bridge View, Nettle Bridge, Oakhill Nr Bath BA3 5AA. Tel No: 01749 840538. They now meet at the Royal British Legion in Staple Hill. Thanks to Alan for organising these meetings.

Ron Perrin (2741152) can be contacted on 01323 840754 for details of meetings of The Guardsmen's Club in Eastbourne. Many thanks to Ron for his hard work.

We had another very beautiful Race Day at Ludlow in 2009, and recommend more members to attend. Our thanks go to Captain David Davies for all the hard work in organising what is now an established excellent event.

Our 2009 Christmas Lunch was again well attended, allowing our members to enjoy themselves during the afternoon, dining, dancing and cavorting, enabling them to be home before lights out. Unfortunately we have to restrict the numbers to 80, so recommend early booking for these events.

During 2009, the Branch was represented by several members at the funerals of the Welsh Guards who were tragically killed in Afghanistan; our thoughts are with their families and their colleagues they left behind. Our yearly thanks to Brian Keane and Major Keith Oultram at Maindy Barracks and RQMS Williams at RHQ for all the help and assistance during the year.



BRANCH REPORTS

Merthyr Tydfil Branch

(Formed 1953)

President: Captain Harry Legge-Bourke

Chairman: Grant Harper (2734772)

Treasurer/

Secretary: Jimmy Manning (2741804)

Flat 5

108 Haydn Terrace

Merthyr Tydfil CF47 9UX

Tel: 01685 383567

Well, here we are again. Another year has gone by so quickly, although it has been a tragic one for the Regiment and the families of those who gave their lives in Afghanistan. We are all relieved they are now home safe with their families, enjoying a well deserved rest, and being able to recuperate after such an arduous deployment. Our thoughts and deepest condolences go to the families of the seven brave Guardsmen who did not return.

We have been quite fortunate this year, managing to sign up a few new members, although they are not of the younger generation. Our average attendance at our monthly meetings varies between twelve and sixteen, so we are holding well, although obviously it would be great to see some old and new faces.

The Branch has been quite busy throughout the year, starting with St David's Day at Merthyr Tydfil. This venue always appears to be extremely popular, since it has good access roads. The Welsh Guards Band sounded superb in the church, and we all felt especially proud to follow them for the 'march past'.

We had a fairly good turnout at the Biennial Dinner at Ludlow Race Course, but the food was disappointing. I think a new venue needs to be looked at for the future.

The Darts and Shooting Competition at Messcliff Barracks was probably the best we have had. There was good accommodation available, excellent food, and plenty of it. Captain Ben Parry did a marvellous job supervising the Shooting, and Brian Keane did not stop the whole time we were there, running the bar single handed, ensuring we all had an ample supply of liquid refreshments – of which we were all more than satisfied. To make the weekend complete, the combined North and South Wales team won a few cups!

During the last few months, the Branch have helped boost the Afghanistan Appeal by holding various raffles, and Social evenings, as well as selling hundreds of Welsh Guards wrist bands (which can be seen being worn by half the population of the town!) Thank you all for your excellent support.

We continue to hold our Social Evenings at the Railway Club in the town, on the third Saturday of every month, and would be delighted to see you. Our meetings are held at the Ex-Servicemen's Club, Lower High Street on the first Monday of every month, commencing at 2000 hrs. Please come along if you are in the area.

Midlands Branch

(Formed 1953)

President: Colonel S.C.C. Gaussen

Chairman: R.C. Jaynes (2739272)

Treasurer/

Secretary: Keith Bartlett (23523202)

6 Athelstan Road

Battenhall

Worcester WR5 2BW

Tel. No: 01905 355233

Twelve months go by before one realises and it is time once again to report on Branch news.

It is often very difficult to write an article relating to the Midlands Branch. This is due to the fact that we cover such a wide area. We are unable to arrange regular meetings because of the distance people have to travel. However, we do manage to meet up twice a year at our two Annual lunches.

This year we are pleased to report that we have two new members of the branch.

They are 22673868 P. Bayliss and 24347533 Mike Parsons. A warm welcome to them both and hopefully we will meet up with them at one of our forthcoming events.

Our Secretary was unable to attend the St. Davids Day festivities at Merthyr Tydfil, but I am pleased to report the branch was well represented. The weather was very kind, the meal was excellent and worthy of the highest praise.

Our Christmas lunch at the Whitehouse Hotel, Worcester, on the 16th November 2008, was well attended. This was only our second and they have been very successful.

Our official Branch Lunch was also held at The Whitehouse Hotel on Sunday, 19th April, 2009. We continue to have quite a reasonable turnout, but rely on other branches and guests to swell our ranks. We were well looked after by the Hotel staff which helped to assure that we had a successful day.

The next Branch Lunch will once again be held at the Whitehouse Hotel, Worcester, on Sunday, 18th April, 2010, so please remember to put it in your diaries. We will also be organising a Christmas Lunch at a time, date and venue to be announced.

It does not seem right somehow, to be talking about happy times knowing what the lads have been experiencing in Afghanistan. We can just hope that they all return to the UK in October, without any further casualties.

We take this opportunity to thank members of the Branch for their continued support and our thanks also go to the Secretary General Brian Keane and all at Maindy Barracks, for their help throughout the year.

BRANCH REPORTS

Monmouthshire Branch

(Formed 1920)

President: Captain W de B Prichard**Chairman/** Alan Mountjoy (23929747)**Secretary:** 6 Beechfield Avenue,
Hangoed
Caerphilly CF82 7NF
Tel: 07841 655512

After the events in Afghanistan the Branch approaches its 90th anniversary feeling closer to the serving Regiment than ever. Members gave their support to the Battalion in several ways, financially, by wearing the wrist band which was also worn by their families, and on one occasion by undertaking a sponsored walk from Merthyr Tydfil to Newport. It was just one event in the 'Support The Welsh Guards in Afghanistan' campaign but particularly important as it raised funds.

Among the large number who bravely set forth were Alan Mountjoy, Malcolm Davies and Steve Liversidge who were not at their best the morning after but were pleased, and surprised, they had not "fallen out." Their feet, like all of ours, were made for walking, but it was a long time since they had done route marches and they deserved to be excused blanco and breakfast parades.

Since 1960 the Branch has held a men only Annual Reunion Dinner, and since 1980 it has been held at The Angel Hotel, Abergavenny where we hold monthly meetings every second Thursday in every month, except in February when we hold the AGM in Abergavenny Town Hall, and in May and October when we meet at The Capel Hotel, Bargoed. The meetings are mini Reunions and very enjoyable, but a bigger attendance is required. We cover a very large area and it is difficult for members to attend everything, but we have a great example in loyalty shown by Mervyn Delve who comes over from Gloucestershire.

Our President has been the exile farthest from home over the past year. His business took him to the wilds of Siberia, 1000 miles east of Moscow, but of late he has reduced the mileage and has been in Kiev. He arrived home in time to preside at the Reunion in October when other exiles and members of other Branches added to the atmosphere on Halloween which prompted ghosts of the past to be remembered, certain Sam't Majors and a lot of funny stories.

This year we will stage our 50th Reunion of the modern era and it will also mark the 90th anniversary of the Branch. There will be plenty to enjoy locally and nationally, including St. David's Day with the Battalion. The first Branch social occasion is on Thursday 11 February 2010 when the Mayor of Abergavenny will give us a Civic Reception after the AGM and on Sunday 16 May we have our Spring Lunch at the Maes Manor Hotel, Blackwood. We hold two lunches a year and they are very popular.

Behind the scenes a lot of work is necessary, and is carried out, to keep the Branch running smoothly and members should appreciate what is being done on their behalf. The officers and loyal helpers like Ron Oliver of Abergavenny do more than their duty, while we also appreciate those who cannot attend functions and meetings but who send donations to help the Branch funds. Mr. Alan Griffiths of Abergavenny has sponsored us for several years and the main income comes from raffles at meetings and functions.

When the Branch was rejuvenated in 1960 there were hundreds of Welsh Guardsmen who joined in Association activities. That is no longer the case, but we have a duty to maintain our standards and our numbers and will do so. We ended 2009 with the Battalion home again, and we start 2010 more determined than ever to do our bit for the Regiment in our Branch area, while enjoying ourselves in the bargain!



Chairman Alan Mountjoy with the Monmouthshire Branch Trophy winner and Welsh Guards Sportsman of the Year, Lance Corporal Melvyn Lewis

Rugby has always played an important part in the Regiment's sporting history and the 1st Battalion's first of many Army Cup final victories came just eight years after the Regiment was formed.

In the 1920s two serving Welsh Guardsmen were capped by Wales, W C (Wick) Powell and T E Rees, and many have played for the Army in the Inter-Services tournament which has played a prominent part in British rugby in recent years.

The 2009 Welsh Guards Sportsman of the Year and winner of the Monmouthshire Branch Trophy is a prop forward, 25033123 Lance Corporal Melvyn Lewis who Captained the Battalion XV.

He was presented with the Trophy at the Monmouthshire Reunion Dinner, just a few weeks after his return from Afghanistan. He has played eight times for The Army and three for Combined Services and is clearly a player with a bright future in the game.

BRANCH REPORTS

Montgomery/Shropshire Branch

(Formed 1950)

President: Mr R Plowden**Chairman:** J O Williams (23860183)**Treasurer:** Lt Col B D Morgan MBE**Secretary:** Captain R J D Parry

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As another year flies by so quickly, it is time to produce notes of what has been happening with the Branch during the last twelve months. In February we held a St David's lunch at the Henllan, which is a few miles to the west of Welshpool. We are always extremely well looked after with an outstanding meal, and this year was no exception.

It was during the summer period that our President for the past thirty three years decided to call it a day, and 'hang up his boots'. Captain Sir Beville Stanier Bt was the second President of the Branch – his father, Brigadier Stanier being the first. It will be sad to see him move on as he has been a dedicated President for such a long time. To act as a reminder of his tour of duty, we will continue to battle it out for the 'Stanier Trophy' annually on the golf course in the Association Golf. We welcome Mr Roger Plowden as our new President and look forward to the pleasure of his company, together with his good lady, Helen, during his tour. Roger served with the Battalion in the 70's with No3 Coy in the Grand Central Hotel in Belfast, which the Battalion took over during their tour.

The summer lunch was held at the Wroxeter Hotel near Shrewsbury in July. We were delighted to have as our guest, Captain Christopher James OBE, who served with the Battalion during the late 60's, and also Brian Gillow OBE, a member of the local council, who served with the Irish Guards. The lunch was very well attended, and a superb afternoon was enjoyed by all. To end the day, members of the Shrewsbury Male Voice Choir entertained us with a selection of songs, as a taster prior to the Welsh Guards Band Concert, which takes place at St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury in October.

In September, the 'Stanier Trophy' was played for at the Chirk Golf Club, and the match was won by Jim Haycock, a member of our Branch. Well done Jim, congratulations are sent from all members of the Branch.

Following quickly from the Golf was the Association Darts and Shooting competitions, which was held at Nesscliffe Training Camp. The attendance was good and the Branch were fired up to win some silver. We have not been performing too well of late, so this was going to be our year to concentrate on the shooting. Lt Colonel Brian Morgan MBE won the Gerry Greenstock Cup for the over 70's, which took us all by surprise since Brian certainly does not look that old! The Branch also won the 'Shooting' team trophy with the help of Brian Morgan, Dave Myatt and brothers Trevor (09) and Gordon (91) Williams. Many congratulations and well done to you all for

participating, and many thanks to other members who attended; Norman Edwards, John Williams (83), Mike Corfield, Bob Jones (12), Norman Shaker, John Bates, Jim Haycock and David Head for logging all the statistics during the Shooting. The Darts did not go so well, and after a 'bye' in the first round we were then beaten by a better team after battling for what must be the longest match ever in the history of darts – well it certainly felt like it!

In October we will be looking forward to a Band Concert with the Shrewsbury Male Voice Choir at St Chad's Church in Shrewsbury. As this is the Band's main effort in raising money for the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Fund, we hope it will be an outstanding success, and very well attended.

We now look forward to the safe return of the Battalion from what I would imagine was a 'very challenging tour of duty', with many returning from their experiences, grown men, some with tales to tell while others who wish to keep them to themselves. Feel proud, you all did a marvellous job, and have earned a well deserved leave.

The Branch thanks all the Association members in the Cardiff office for their help and assistance given over the past year, and look forward to working together during the coming twelve months.

May we wish all Serving, Association and Branch members a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year, and look forward to meeting up again soon.

North of England Branch

(Formed 1946)

President: Major K Oultram**Chairman:** Tom Homan (2379289)**Treasurer:** Alan Simcox (23908718)**Secretary:** Bill Elliott (23908639)

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We were all saddened with the news of the tragic loss of life that was suffered by the Regiment in Afghanistan and in remembering with pride, L/Sgt Tobie Fashous, Lt Mark Evison, Major Sean Birchall, Lt Colonel Rupert Thomeloe, Private John Brackpool and Guardsman Christopher King of the Coldstream Guards who lost their lives in the conflict. The Branch extends to all their families and loved ones and to the Regiment their deepest sympathies and condolences. There are many other Regiments who have suffered losses of personnel so we afford those same sympathies and condolences to all their families and loved ones too. May those who have fallen rest in peace.

The year of 2008 ended on a very sad note too for the Branch with the loss of two very popular members. 22831834 Barry Peet who passed away on the 8th December 2008 after a long and courageous

BRANCH REPORTS

fight against cancer and 22831746 Mick Wilson who passed away on 26th December 2008 after what must have seemed a life long fight against the enormous difficulties that faced him since being medically discharged from the Regiment in 1976.

Regrettably our sad losses continued into 2009 when we paid our respects again, this time to 23523269 Harold Worsley, 2737916 L/Sgt Robert Lewendon, Major John Burchell a former Branch President and most recently 23877341 Sgt Brian Turley.

Barry and Harold were regular attendees at the meetings and despite their illnesses continued to attend the Sunday meetings. Mick, although living in Essex regularly supported the Branch especially at the Christmas Luncheons which he hadn't missed in years.

Barry, Harold and Mick will be remembered mostly for the care and concern that they always showed to others and for their infectious senses of humour. They have been sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers remain with Marion, Carole and Eitel and their families, and to the families and loved ones of Robert, Major John and Brian.

On a much brighter note the Branch was delighted to welcome new members. 2740995 Reginald Crump and 23877287 John Traynor two local lads who regularly attend the meetings and 22831855 Michael Crow from Alberta, Canada and 23877366 Dai Rice from Aberdare. To Reg, John, Mick and Dai we welcome them aboard.

The Branch said a temporary farewell to 23523212 Gerald Tilston who had been the social secretary over the past 7 months but unfortunately has had to stand down in order to return to Southern Ireland to concentrate on business matters but hopefully once they are all concluded will return to us early in the New Year. Gerald set about the job as social secretary with gusto and enthusiasm and it is hoped that will be the same on his return if he takes up office again. We thank Gerald for the tremendous work he did and wish him well in a successful conclusion to his business affairs.

In the absence of a social secretary there has not been much movement on the social scene with the elderly members preferring to settle for the monthly midday meetings to catch up with old friends and new news. This is quite understandable and with the average attendance of the meetings over the last twelve months being 29 members it is very pleasing to see those figures maintaining a goodly number. The Branch still meets at the Cheshire Mess at the Chester Castle on the last Sunday of each month except for August and December and all are welcome. The meeting commences at 12.30 hours. We once again extend our grateful thanks to Alan Jones who runs the Mess and to Captain Pickering for allowing us the use of the premises.

Although the social events have dropped off somewhat the Christmas Luncheon and the Stockport St. David's Day celebrations are still very popular and go from strength to strength. The Christmas Luncheon held once again at Cheshire View in Christleton was again a great success and the St. David's Day Dinner at the Davenport Park Hotel, Stockport was said to be the best one yet. Both of these events were very well attended and the committee's of

Chester and Stockport extend their grateful thanks to all those that helped on the day and a special thank you to all who came along to give their support. Your support is vital to the success of these events and to the continued success of the branches concerned so please keep up your excellent support.

Members of the Stockport Branch did enjoy a trip to the battle areas of Bruges in April of this year as the enclosed photograph confirms. They also enjoyed their annual dinner dance which is held each year in October at the same venue as their St. David's Day Luncheon. There were 61 friends that attended who made it a very successful evening and the grateful thanks of Mel and Rita Ackroyd are extended to those friends whose support is invaluable.

23879355 Joe Cameron took up the duties of Branch Standard Bearer at the July meeting and was thanked by all concerned. Joe has been the Standard Bearer for the Irish Guards branch at Birkenhead for about ten years so it is good that we have a man of experience to take over this very worthwhile and important job. Joe's first engagement was at the funeral of Sgt. Brian Turley and he performed his duties in an excellent manner. Thank you to Joe.

Our congratulations are extended to Keith Bonehill and his wife Tessa who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in September. A thoroughly enjoyable day was spent with family and friends.

There are many members of this Branch and throughout the Association and members of their families too who are suffering with sickness and illness so we wish them all a speedy recovery and hope that their return to better health is not too far away.

Finally the secretary of the Branch 23908639 Bill Elliott is standing down at the AGM of the Branch in October 2009 for family reasons and would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Branch in particular and members of the Association in general for the help and support that he has received whilst in office. He would like to extend those grateful thanks to the staff at RHQ and AHQ for their continued support and wishes them all well. On behalf of the members of the Branch we wish you all a very happy and peaceful New Year.



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North Wales Branch

(Formed 1936)

President: J Harrop Esq. MBE**Chairman:** G. Binnie (24060777)**Treasurer:** M Mears (2740728)**Secretary:** Dave Webb (23523061)

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Well yet another year passed away and time once again to do my report on Branch activities for the last 12 months. It all started off with our Christmas Draw Lunch at the Llandrillo College. Unfortunately our President was unwell and unable to attend, so Howell Hughes our Honorary Vice President stood in. He presented F. Hudson with the John Harrop Cup for the highest score by a Branch member in the Shoot held at Llanelli. The first Prize in the Draw went to Derek Whiting's son Crispin - unfortunately this was to be Derek's last parade, but more about him later.

Everyone was then up for St. David's Day with the Battalion in Aldershot, but unfortunately this was cancelled because of the pending posting of 1W.G. to Afghanistan. It was a mad scramble cancelling accommodation and coach. A quick committee meeting came up with St. David's Day here in North Wales where we were able to coax the Lord Lieutenant Trefor Jones to present the Leeks after the Church service, conducted by Canon Berw Hughes. The church was full to capacity, with standing room only for late comers. We were honoured to have C/Sgt S.Shield before his posting to Afghanistan with us and the Lord Lieutenant, assisted by our President, gave him his Leek.

St David's Day was followed by our 73rd Annual Dinner held at the Bod Erw, and what a day it was, with plenty of banter, good food and a fine flow of Amber nectar. In his speech, our President thanked The Lord Lieutenant for attending and distributing the Leeks, and then touched on the subject of Afghanistan, wishing all the Battalion a safe and successful tour. He thanked C/ Sgt Shield and his wife Karen for attending the Lunch.

Later in March saw the Branch on the road again to Ludlow for the 24th Biennial Dinner held at the Racecourse. We settled in at the Travelodge and made our way to The Squirrel for lunch, only to be met by a host of Association members already dining - it ended up in a mini session! The Commanding Officer R.S.M. Thorneloe M.B.E. and Regimental Sergeant Major Monaghan were in attendance at the Dinner, even though they had to be at Lynham to see some of the Battalion off to Afghanistan the following morning. After the Dinner many of us ended up back at The Squirrel, until the early hours, reminiscing and singing.

In May the Branch went down to Wootton Bassett for the repatriation of L/Sgt Fasfous. Ten of us, including the Branch Standard, made the

500 mile round trip. A special thanks to Terry (Meryns Coaches) for making it a pleasant journey on the coach. We also attended his funeral held at Pencoed nr Bridgend with the Branch Standard. At the end of the month it was a trip up to the Guards Chapel London to attend the funeral of Lt. Mark Evison. His mother, in her Eulogy, mentioned Gdsm Gizzi from Rhyl, who was there at the service although injured (well done) The Standard was again on Parade.

The end of June was the Repatriation of Major Birchall, followed by the funeral in the Guards Chapel London. 67 Evans (Stan) and I represented the Branch. Standards were on parade with Stan, to his credit, carrying the North of England Standard, to help out our neighbours.

July was a dark day for the Regiment when Lt. Col. Thorneloe, the Father of the Regiment was repatriated. 56 Evans, 67 Evans, Terry Mooney, Mike Dunphy, Tom Hornan, and I made the pilgrimage to Wootton Bassett, which was a really moving experience. We also attended the funeral in London meeting up with our old friend Reverend Willy Pryor: our Standard was once again on Parade.

The Association A.G.M. this year was the last for R.Q.M.S. Williams and L/SGT Morgan so in appreciation of their support to the Branches of Merthyr, East Glamorgan and North Wales, we purchased Silver cuff links which were presented to them by Colonel Bonas.

The Branch sent 54 shoe boxes to P.O.W. Coy, 2 Coy and 3 Coy in Afghanistan, which were distributed to the members of the respective Coy's who had not received a parcel. I received an email from CSM Topps 2 Coy and also a letter off Ann Jones AM for the Vale of Clwyd, thanking the Branch for supporting the lads.

It was great to meet up with Dorothy Jones (34) on the Battlefield Tour which was the 65th Anniversary of the liberation of Hechtel. For those of you who have not done one, it is a great tour, and anyone interested should get in touch for next year. I took the Standard, which was paraded at all the wreath laying ceremonies at Diest, Hechtel, Arras and Izel le Hameaux. It was an honour to be amongst the Belgium and French Standard Bearers.

Darts & Shoot - please sit down before you read this! 1969 saw the start of this competition and for the first time in 40 years North Wales have WON the Association Darts Cup by forming a combined 'B Team' with Merthyr, beating Cardiff. A big thank you to the Merthyr Bomber Jimmy Manning for joining us. He had the highest score, plus finishing it off with a double 16: truly a Magic Moment. Thanks to all from the Branch who attended and made this possible.

The Branch this year, like the Battalion, has lost a lot of good members to the 'Regiment on the other side'. Derek Whiting, Richard Parry, Harold Williams, W.H.Owen, R.Jones (57), T. Roberts and our Hon. Vice President John Jones (34), and just been informed, 2733828 C.O. Everett, who served 1934/1943(94yrs). May they all Rest in Peace. Nos Da

The President, Chairman, Secretaries and committee would like to thank all members for your support throughout the year and wish you and all your families a Merry Xmas and a prosperous New Year.

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Thanks also to all the Team in Cardiff and H.Q. London for their support to this Branch

Branch Meetings: Bulkeley Arms, Menai Bridge last Thursday of the month 2000hrs

Rhyl Ffordd Denwan Pub first Thursday of the month 2100hrs

Ogmore Branch

(Formed 1982)

President: Lieutenant-Colonel R.L. Traherne

Chairman: Ray Gorringe. (23585533)

Secretary: Mike Jones. (23523201)

Treasurer: 40 Garfield Avenue

Litchard

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Our AGM took place in January as is now customary, and luckily for us, our entire Committee were re-elected en bloc again. A sign of a contented Branch we hope.

In February some of us went with the East Glamorgan Branch to Lancashire for a Remembrance Service to the fallen in the Falklands. The Memorial is a large Slate Block which contains all the names of the fallen in the Falklands War. We had a cracking weekend and it was interesting to note that the Padre who conducted the Service came from Aberdare, and with a Welsh accent broader than most of us.

On March 1st 2009 a large contingent of our members made their way to the St. David's Day celebration in Merthyr Tydfil. The Church Service was most impressive and the church was packed to the doors. After the service the march to the Recreation Centre behind the Regimental Band was challenging for many, but in the main most of us made it. In the Recreation Centre it was a series of Hello's to all and sundry as you met up with friends, many you had not seen for quite a while in some cases.

The Secretary and Paul Mockett, MBE, (22217125) also attended the Association Biennial Dinner at Ludlow Racecourse. They met up with many old friends and had an enjoyable evening. One thing I would advise though, when you book a "double" room, ensure that there are twin beds first - enough said?

On 18th April 2009 we held our Annual Dinner Dance once again in the Masonic Hall and there was a healthy attendance of 90 plus sitting down to Dinner, before enjoying and dancing to the music of our musician. Our Guests were the Mayor of Bridgend and Consort and Captain Andy Plews, MBE from Warminster.

During May, June and July we represented the Branch at the repatriation and funerals of the 3 Officers and 2 NCOs killed in Afghanistan at Wootton Bassett, Wellington Barracks and Bridgend

and Pencoed. The 2 NCOs, L/Sgt Tobie Fasfous and L/Cpl Dane Elson both come from our Borough which brought home the pain and rigours of war closer to home.

In June, courtesy of East Glamorgan Branch again, some of us went up to Imber Court to join up with London Branch for the Remembrance Service for the Flying Bomb victims in 1944. Afterwards we went over to Windsor for the afternoon and spent an hour or so on the river before returning home, a good day out.

On Sunday 5th July we were invited by our President to his home near Cardiff and 30 plus of us took up the offer. We were entertained by Lt/Col and Mrs Traherne as well as one of his charming daughters and we are indebted to him for his generosity.

On 31st August a coach load went up to Dering Lines, Brecon for this years Ghurkha Durbar or Open Day. There was a variety of activities taking place and most popular of all, Ghurkha Curry on sale - there were queues to the food tents all day!

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly our trip to Hechtel on the weekend of 11th to 14th of September, possible because we obtained a grant from the Lottery Fund. We travelled out on the Friday morning through Euro Tunnel and arrived at our Hotel just in time for the Evening Meal.

On our first full day out there we visited Leopoldsbury Military Cemetery to lay a "Poppy" wreath on the Cenotaph and for one of our ladies to lay a cross on her father's grave as he was killed there during the liberation battle. Back to Hechtel we then visited a newly re-furnished bar called "Little Coen" where we had a coffee break before touring the town in a 2 horse drawn covered wagons before returning to the Bar for lunch. We also presented the Landlady with a Union flag, a Regimental Plaque and other militaria which was placed strategically around the bar. In the afternoon we took a canal boat into Holland to the famed Pancake Factory. They have a menu of over 400 selections so you really spoiled for choice.

On our second day (Sunday) we attended a morning Church Service in the town church together with the Swansea Branch and the Association Battlefield Tour who had also arrived. There followed a Reception given by the Mayor of Hechtel and then a very moving Play re-enacting the Liberation of the town by the Welsh Guards. Over 100 actors, men women and children took part. We then joined with some of the other parties to form a hastily assembled choir and gave some rousing renditions of Welsh favourites for our hosts. That evening we had the use of our hotel's skittles alley and had a competitive time before retiring to bed. We returned home the following day through the Channel Tunnel to arrive home early evening tired but cheerful after an outstanding weekend.

We shall be competing in the Darts and Shooting Competition this year but unfortunately will not have a full team of eight, which is rather disappointing considering the size of our membership.

Our Annual Remembrance Service this year will be in Nolton Church on Sunday 18th October 2009 and will be particularly relevant due to the loss of 2 of our local lads in Afghanistan.

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Inevitably during the year we have lost some members and the following have passed away: 2741064 Derek Cantello, 23908644 Brian Hillman and 22217902 Clive Woodward. Our sympathies go out to their families.

The Chairman, Secretary and Committee would like to thank all their members for their support throughout the year and also the Ladies Section for all their assistance at our meetings and functions.

We continue to hold our Monthly Meetings at the The Highwayman Pub, Caefatri, Bridgend every Second Monday of the month. All are welcome to attend.

We wish all our members a Very Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year and send our thanks and best wishes to all at the Cardiff HQ

Pembrokeshire Branch

(Formed 1957)

President: Major I B Ramsden MBE

Chairman: Arthur Ealres (2741413)

Treasurer:

Secretary: Trevor Warr (2740352)

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Every year it becomes more difficult to know what to report from the Branch. In the past we had little difficulty since we took part in many events. We think of the wonderful times we had supporting the Presentation of New Colours at Buckingham Palace, and trips to Windsor Castle – really great times enjoyed by all. Unfortunately most of our 'old Faithfuls' are now in their seventies and eighties, and, as with old age, comes health problems, although I must emphasise, before I am put in the book, that this does not apply to everyone!

The Christmas Draw last year was very successful, which helps to keep the Branch solvent. It was noted that our President, Major Ramsden, carried away a 'full armful' of prizes!!! Many thanks to all those who sold and bought tickets.

The Branch supported the Darts and Shooting competitions at Llanelli last year but failed to travel to Nesscliffe Barracks at Shrewsbury, due to the distance involved. It's a pity a few younger members are not interested. I have been reliably informed that it was an excellent weekend.

Our Annual Reunion Luncheon was again a great success with an excellent venue, décor and food. A total of forty one members and guests sat down for the meal, including three or four widows, who still support the Branch in any way they can. We have decided to rename our lunch as our Annual Reunion Luncheon since we will no longer be holding an evening Dinner. It has been found that our older members no longer enjoy going out at night.

We were delighted to welcome one of our oldest members, Sid



Photo L-R: Col Tim Bonas, Sid Elsbury (2734113), Major Ramsden
Annual Reunion Luncheon 2009

Elsbury (2734113) age 92, and his three sons to our Luncheon once again. Sid was a pre-war and 2nd Battalion man, wounded in France. He still lives on his own, and appears to be coping extremely well. Jim Hanson (2739150) and his wife Joyce also managed to support us, in fact they seldom fail. Unfortunately Earl Lloyd George and his wife were unable to attend this year due to ill health. I believe he is the only 3rd Battalion gentleman left on our membership list. Other members who failed to attend due to ill health were, Peter Saunders (22118668), 'Snowey' Beard and his wife Joyce (2739053), Ivor and Beryl Smith (2739053). We wish them all a speedy return to good health.

In July, Welsh Guards Reunited organised a Family Day and pig roast at (24129607) John Bonniwell's farm near Pendine, and understand it was a nice day. Even though the weather had not been too good that week, and the ground was rather soft, it did not deter some brave souls from camping out for a couple of nights. Well done to the organisers, and of course, thanks to John.

The Regimental Band played in the Bishops Palace, St David's Cathedral during June, but unfortunately it was not advertised, and therefore the Branch was unable to support them. There appears to be a breakdown in communications along the line, which I suppose does happen sometimes!

For those of you who served in Palestine, there is a book called 'A CAPTAIN'S MANDATE PALESTINE 1946-1948', by Philip Brutton. We would like to obtain a copy, so if any reader can help then please let us know. It gives details of the Battalion from the time they arrived in Haifa, and mentions Captain Kearsley, Major General P R Leuchars (decd), RSM Rees (decd) to name but a few. Also places such as

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Tiberias, Nazareth, Nablus and many more – what memories for those who served at that time.

Branch members have been busy selling wrist bands for the Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal, and I wish to thank everyone for their support. It is reminiscent of 'Our Boys Fund' during the 2nd World War, which was supported by many towns and clubs etc. It was such a thrill to receive a P.O. for 5 or 10 shillings, which meant more often than not a meal of egg and chips in the Naafi.

Sadly the Branch lost two members this year, namely Glyn Evans (22217390), age 75 who died in May, and the second was one of our founder members, Bill Lloyd (2740198) age 82, who died in August. Bill was President of the Haverfordwest Royal British Legion and a member of our committee for almost 50 years. He had a great send-off from the Branch, the RBL and the Fire Service, in which he had served for many years.

Our thoughts and sincere condolences go out to both families.

We have a few active members in the Branch, not usually mentioned. If you recognise anyone and would like to get in touch, then please contact me.

Harry Lovering (2741419), Mike Davies (22217891), Paul Fennell (24185199), Malcolm Fry (23836046), Trevor Griffiths (22831643), Jessie James (23172489), Bill Kellaway (23523513), John Lloyd (23290247), Brian Richards (23400898), Bob Ridley (2740531), Merion Roberts (22217378), Hywel Thomas (22831427), Mike Hotling (24150254), Gordon Lewis (23400897), Joe Griffiths (22217598), Roy Drummond (23523541)

Best wishes and good health to you all in 2010

Swansea & West Glamorgan Branch

(Formed 1927)

President: Major G White MBE.

Chairman: Bryn Pennock (23877288)

Sec/

Treasurer: Steve Fisher (24242691)

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Welcome to this Branch article which I hope finds you in good health. As promised in the Branch summer newsletter (09) an article on the SAMA B2 (Wales Branch) Memorial Service which took place in St Mary's Church, Swansea on the 8th June is included with pictures elsewhere in this magazine. There is also an article on the Provenance (information) Board which was presented to Revd Andrew Vessey at the same time as the Falklands Memorial Service. This is reference the two Colours hanging either side of the Falklands windows.

Once again on the 30th of August we attended the Gurkha Durba in Brecon for a fantastic day with our much respected Gurkha soldiers and their families. As you can see from all the smiling faces we had a fabulous day.

The Branch had a very successful and memorable Battlefield Tour to Belgium to celebrate the 65th liberation of Hechtel. A full article with pictures is elsewhere in this magazine.

Unfortunately we were unable to attend the Association Darts & Shoot this year due to not being able to find enough members to put teams together. This must have come as a great relief to other Branches since the Swansea A (shooting) team has been very successful over the past few years. At least it gave another Branch the chance to engrave their name on the cups! Next year 'look out'. We have over 300 members on our area mailing list so maybe next year why not join us for either the darts or shoot teams - or both - so that we can retain our titles.

To our boys who returned safely back home to their families from Afghanistan, we thank you for the very brave and excellent job you did in extremely difficult and unimaginable conditions. To the families and loved ones of the fallen heroes that gave the ultimate sacrifice, you are always in our thoughts, and we hope that you will be able to get through this very traumatic and sad time, and eventually be able to look back on the fond and loving memories that you have of them. May They Rest in Peace. It brings back the very sad memories that we veterans have of the Falklands war all those many years ago. May they also Rest in Peace.

Our Branch Annual Dinner which was planned for the 31st of October sadly had to be cancelled due to the very few numbers who showed an interest in attending. Hopefully this will be rectified next year.

In November we paid our respects in memory of fallen heroes by laying wreaths at the Swansea & Morriston Cenotaphs, St Mary's Church which included a Falkland's wreath and at the Memorial Park in Port Talbot.

This year for our Branch Christmas social event we joined up with the local RETA's. This was well attended since we have members who are affiliated with them.

This is only a short article as I have submitted three other articles for this magazine (Falkland's Memorial, Provenance and Hechtel) which I hope that you will find interesting.

Our Branch congratulates our Chairman, Bryn Pennock on winning the 2009 Golf trophy. Well done.

We really do need the support of you to make this Branch more successful i.e. Darts and Shoot and the Branch Annual Dinner etc. We also need young blood (members in their 50's and younger) to join us at our meetings to inject new ideas etc. Our President who attends every month is Major (Retd) Glyn White MBE. Our Chairman is Bryn Pennock. The young blood attending each month are Karl Trenchard, Steve Radford, John Lott and of course myself Steve Fisher. Are you from our era? Are you in your 60's or 70's? Then we have

BRANCH REPORTS



members attending of that age as well. Do you remember Major (Retd) Charlie Carty MBE TD? He also joins us every month. We also have Bill Cleary who is in his 80's and a WW2 veteran. A mix of all ages and military experiences right across the board. Please contact me for details of our meetings etc.

Take care and I wish you good health and happiness.



WELSH GUARDS ASSOCIATION DARTS & SHOOTING COMPETITIONS 2009

Welsh Guards Association Darts & Shooting Competitions 2009

By Brian Keane

The 2009 competitions took place at Nesscliffe Barracks, Shrewsbury on Saturday September 26th by kind permission of Major Paul Everson. This is the second time in a couple of years we have been able to use this camp, which has great facilities on the DCCT

Approximately 80 members and guests participated in the competitions, which were extremely and fiercely competed for – but all with good banter!

Overnight accommodation was once more made available to us for both the Friday and Saturday night, enabling members having to travel long distances to relax and recuperate ready for the 'big event', as well as recovering after a long day at the 'OCHIE' and firing range.

Results

Darts Competition

Welsh Guards Association Cup
North/South Wales

Winner of the Abertawe Shield
Cardiff Branch

Highest Individual Score
Jim Manning Merthyr Tydfil Branch

Gerry Greenstock Cup
Col. Brian Morgan Mont/Shrop Branch

Shooting Competition

Winners of Leatham Trophy
Mont/Shrop Branch (A)

Runners-Up
Cardiff Branch (A)

Aberdare Cup
Alan Curtis Cardiff Branch

William Burman Cup
Not played for in 2009



Winner of the Abertawe Shield
Cardiff Branch



Aberdare Cup
Alan Curtis Cardiff Branch



Highest Individual Score
Jim Manning Merthyr Tydfil Branch

WELSH GUARDS ASSOCIATION DARTS & SHOOTING COMPETITIONS 2009



Winners of Leatham Trophy
Mont/Shrop Branch (A)



Runners-Up of Leatham Trophy
Cardiff Branch (A)



Gerry Greenstock Cup
Col. Brian Morgan Mont/Shrop Branch

WELSH GUARDS ASSOCIATION AGM

Minutes of the 81st Annual General Meeting Of the Welsh Guards Association

*Held at Wellington Barracks London
at 1230 hrs Friday 12th June 2009*

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: Mr M Williams, Secretary Aberdare Branch; Mr K Haines, Secretary East Glamorgan Branch; Mr A Cunningham, Secretary Llanelli Branch; Mr J Heenan, Secretary London Branch; Mr J Manning, Secretary Merthyr Tydfil Branch; J Williams, representing Montgomery/Shropshire Branch; Mr D Webb, Secretary North Wales Branch; Mr M Jones, Secretary Ogmore Branch; Major C Carty, representing Swansea & West Glamorgan Branch

There were also 10 other members present.

In Attendance: WO2 W J Williams, Headquarters Welsh Guards; L/Sgt M Morgan, Headquarters Welsh Guards; L/Sgt S Brandon, Headquarters Welsh Guards.

Apologies for Absence: Brigadier J F Rickett CBE, Vice President; R Lewis, Vice President; S Rhodes Esq, President Aberdare Branch; Colonel C J Dawmay, President Cardiff Branch; Lieutenant Colonel R E H David OBE, President Cardiganshire Branch; Lt Col. D C Macdonald-Milner, President East Glamorgan Branch; Lt Col. C F B Stephens,

President London Branch; Captain Harry Legge-Bourke, President Merthyr Branch; Colonel S C C Gausson, President Midlands Branch; Captain W de B. Pridhard, President Monmouthshire Branch; Captain Sir Beville Stanier Bt, President Montgomery & Shropshire Branch; P (Dai) Tilley Esq, President North America Branch; J M Harrop Esq, MBE, President North Wales Branch; Lieutenant Colonel R L Traherne, President Ogmore Branch; Major I B Ramsden MBE, President Pembrokeshire Branch; Major G White MBE, President Swansea & West Glamorgan Branch;

Mr W Morris, Secretary Cardiff Branch; Mr N Owen, Secretary Cardiganshire Branch; Mr K Bartlett, Secretary Midlands Branch; Mr N Chamberlain, Secretary Monmouthshire Branch; Capt. R J D Parry, Secretary Montgomery & Shropshire Branch; Mr W Elliott, Secretary North of England Branch; Mr T Warr, Secretary Pembrokeshire Branch; Mr S Fisher, Secretary Swansea & West Glamorgan Branch.

Item 1 - President's Address

The President began the meeting by welcoming everyone who made the effort to attend, his staff at RHQ and also all Branch Secretaries for their continuing hard work in order to make the Association the success it is today. He went on to mention the deaths of two

prominent members of the Association who recently died, namely Sir David Mansell Lewis, President of the Llanelli Branch and John Jones (34) who was a very active member both in the Association and the Regiment.

Battalion

He informed the meeting of recent events in Afghanistan, and especially mentioned his sincere thanks to members for the support shown at Wootton Bassett, which meant a lot to the Regiment and the families. To date, there are five battle casualties, with none life threatening, but that morning heard that Guardsman Leach, Drummer, and a Corporal had been seriously injured.

The Battalion are two months into the campaign, with 3 Coy expected back in the UK in September and with complete recovery by 7th October. The biggest challenge is expected during the elections which are to be held in August.

The Battalion will return to Aldershot, and will be presented with their medals by the Prince of Wales at a memorial service in early December, and in March 2010 will spend some time in Wales, holding concerts, marches and visiting schools etc.

In 2010, it is hoped to launch a 'Colonel's Fund', with the Prince of Wales as patron. This money will supplement the Regimental funds to give aid to Guardsmen and their families who served in Afghanistan. With the aid of the Association a million pounds is hoping to be raised.

It is probable that the Welsh Guards will once again Troop next year from Aldershot and in September 2010 will move from

Aldershot to Hounslow, allowing the Grenadiers to move into Aldershot. Wellington Barracks will then be used for Bands, Incremental Companies and other minor Units.

Association

a. The President stated he was massively grateful to all the Secretaries for the work they do for their Branches and the Association, with so many activities being held throughout the year.

b. The Welsh Guards Collection at Oswestry is doing well, but need more donations. (a mandate is available for those who wish to contribute).

c. A few new Branch Presidents are needed, and he was pleased to announce that Roger Plowden has agreed to take over from Sir Beville Stanier Bt at Montgomery & Shropshire.

d. The Memorial Service for Sir David Mansell Lewis takes place at 1430 hrs on Tuesday 14th July at the Guards Chapel.

e. PRI sales are excellent, with increase stock available, including the calendar and diary for 2010.

Item 2 - Minutes of previous meeting

Confirmation of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 11th June 2008 was proposed by Mr Jeff Heenan, (Secretary London Branch) and seconded by Richard Doughty, (Chairman London Branch). This was carried and the minutes signed. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Item 3 - Remembrance Sunday

It is not expected that there will

WELSH GUARDS ASSOCIATION AGM

be many members from the Battalion at the Guards Chapel for the Remembrance service on 8th November due to leave. The Battalion Padre will take the service, and details will be printed in the Summer Newsletter. Many Association members usually support their local towns and villages.

Item 4 – Association Dinner 2011

D Webb (North Wales) informed the meeting that the North Wales and North of England Branch are celebrating their 75 years and 65 years anniversary respectively and therefore wished that Wrexham be considered for the next Biennial Dinner. The hall would be free, and the council had a choice of 3-5 outside caters as well as a bar. There is also plenty of accommodation in the town.

The Secretary General had reservations regarding attendance in North Wales since in the last Dinner there was only a total of 20 members attending from mid and north of Wales, therefore an assurance of numbers is needed before actual planning, whether in Wrexham or elsewhere. A Cunningham (Llanelli) complained about the poor quality of food and the use of plastic glasses at Ludlow and stated his members would not attend another Dinner. He also said that he had put these complaints in writing. At this point, the Secretary General informed the meeting that this was the first time he had been informed of the poor food, since his meal, and those around him were fine, and to date, has not received any complaints, official or otherwise from any Branch. | Manning (Merthyr Tydfil)

pointed out that there was two years to go; therefore it should be possible to give some ideas of numbers by the next AGM. Other facts were brought up such as financial practicalities and advertising, and after much discussion it was agreed that the Dinners should continue to rotate as agreed in the past, and Wrexham will host 2011.

The ARA requested that some idea of the cost should be made available to him before Christmas.

Item 5 – Association Events

a. Battlefield Tours

1. Unfortunately Captain Graham Taylor, Tour organiser was not available, but plans for the September Battle Field Tour was well under way, with Hechtel laying on a special day, with lunch followed by a 'play' in the afternoon. Besides the official tour (which is now full), Swansea and Ogmore are also meeting up at Hechtel, so there should be a fantastic turnout of over 110 Association members present.

2. Some veterans have been invited to Cagney for a few days this month.

3. The Secretary General was invited to St Charles de Percy and Montchamp to lay wreaths at the commemorations on June 6th.

b. Golf

The 2009 dates for the Golf tournaments are:

25th June – Haverfordwest Golf Course.

27th August – Alice Springs Golf Course, UK.

24th September – Chirk Golf Course, Wrexham

Martin Griffiths is the person to contact if anyone is interested in attending, either as a player or non player. His contact details can be found in the last newsletter.

c. Darts & Shooting Competition

This is to be held at Nesscliffe Barracks on Saturday September 26th. It is hoped to keep the costs to a minimum, and there will be overnight accommodation available on Friday and Saturday night. The Secretary General would appreciate total numbers by Monday September 7th since he will be away on the Battlefield tour from 11th – 16th September.

It is hoped that members will stay until after the presentations, since previously many left before time.

d. Race Day

There is no information available as yet, but should be published in the next Newsletter.

Item 6 – Future cost of Magazines

The Regimental magazine has taken on a new format and appears to be extremely popular, with more coloured photographs and articles. The last day for submission is the last day of September to the editor, Major Keith Oultram. The cost is now increased to £3 if ordered through the Branch Secretaries, but £4 if sent by post. Major Oultram also reiterated that any item ordered should be done using the New Order form that is sent out with the Newsletter. The form should then be sent to RHQ London along with a cheque made payable to the correct account as stated on the

order form. A point was brought up about last year's calendar, whereby the Printers were given personal details of Association members. This has now been sorted out, and the Printer has destroyed the disc he was given.

Item 7 – Christmas Card

The card is still being printed, but will be available for the Summer newsletter. The cost will remain the same price as last year.

Item 8 – St David's Day 2010

In 2010, St David's Day falls on a Monday, and will definitely be celebrated with the Battalion at Aldershot. It will take on the traditional form with Presentation of Leeks etc. Details will be published in the Winter Newsletter.

Item 9 – Imber Court

A Service of Remembrance, to remember all those who died as a result of enemy bombing on 30th June 1944, takes place at Imber Court, Esher, on Saturday June 27th. Colonel Stephens and The Reverend Willy Prior will be officiating and turnout is expected to be good, with London and East Glamorgan Branches planning to attend in numbers. This event will be advertised in the Winter Newsletter.

Item 10 – Review of the Association

The President thanked all the Branch Secretaries who took time to return his questionnaire regarding the Association, although five Branches did not reply. Some good points were brought up, such as Officers affiliated to Branches should be invited to Branch events. The President will therefore provide a new list of Officers, which will

WELSH GUARDS ASSOCIATION AGM/FORECAST OF EVENTS 2010

be circulated to the Secretaries together with the analysis of results carried out by the Secretary General

Item 11 – Association Accounts

The Treasurer presented the Regimental Accounts for perusal, and informed the meeting they would be available throughout the afternoon.

He informed the meeting that the total deficit between income and expenditure for the current year is £1,594, and all money has been spent for the benefit of the Association.

Item 12 – Date of next Annual General Meeting

The date of the next Annual General Meeting is Friday June 11th at Wellington Barracks.

In conclusion, the President announced that L/Sgt Mark Morgan (B4) will be leaving RHQ later this year after serving 11 years in RHQ. He is a person

who cannot say 'no' and is always willing to help. Mark and his new wife are moving to West Wales, and plans to become a member of the Pembrokeshire Branch. He will be missed by everyone at RHQ and also among Association members. L/Sgt Shane Brandon is taking over from Mark, and is doing a very good job.

This is also RQMS Warren Williams' last meeting, and he has done a fantastic amount of work for the Association and RHQ, particularly with the calendar and magazine. He has also been indispensable as webmaster at RHQ.

The President thanked both on behalf of the Association, and was then asked by D Webb (N. Wales) to present cuff links to Mark and Warren on behalf of N. Wales, Merthyr and East Glamorgan Branches.

The meeting was closed and the President once again gave his thanks for those who attended.



FORECAST OF EVENTS 2010

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

- 5 London Branch AGM, Wellington Barracks, London
- 11 Monmouthshire Branch AGM, Town Hall, Abergavenny

MARCH

- 1 ASSOCIATION ST DAVID'S DAY, Aldershot

APRIL

- 17 Ogmore Branch Annual Dinner /Dance, Masonic Hall, Bridgend
- 18 North Wales Annual Reunion Lunch, The Plough, The Roe, St Asaph
- 23 Welsh Guards Band Concert Brangwyn Hall, Swansea
- 24 Welsh Guards Band Concert St Davids Cathedral, Pembrokeshire
- 25 Welsh Guards Band Concert St Davids Hall, Cardiff
- 25 Midlands Annual Reunion Lunch, The White House Hotel, Worcester
- 25 ASSOCIATION RACE DAY LUDLOW RACECOURSE

MAY

- 1 London Branch Ladies Lunchtime Party
- 16 Monmouthshire Branch 'mixed' Sunday Lunch, Maes Manor, Blackwood
- 29 Trooping The Colour – Major General's Review

JUNE

- 5 Trooping The Colour – Colonel's Review
- 11 ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
- 12 THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY PARADE

SEPTEMBER

- 9-14 ASSOCIATION BATTLEFIELD TOUR (Belgium and France)
- ASSOCIATION DARTS AND SHOOTING COMPETITION (TBA)

OCTOBER

- 22 Cardiff Branch 90th Annual Dinner, St Peter's Hall, Cardiff
- 30 Monmouthshire Branch Reunion Dinner, The Angel Hotel, Abergavenny

NOVEMBER

- 14 Remembrance Day

DECEMBER

- 3 London Branch Lunchtime Christmas Party
- Cardiff Branch Annual Ladies Night, St Peter's Hall, Cardiff (TBA)

IN REMEMBRANCE

Lieutenant Colonel Rupert Thorneloe MBE

by Colonel A J E Malcolm OBE Welsh Guards



Rupert Thorneloe was killed in action in Helmand province on 1st July 2009 while travelling in a Viking armoured vehicle to visit No 2 Company on the front line during Operation PANTHER'S CLAW (PANCHAI PALANG). Aged 39, Rupert was one of five Welsh Guardsmen who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country during Operation HERRICK 10 in Afghanistan.

Rupert was always destined for a military career; it was in his blood. His father, Major John Thorneloe had served in the Gunners. Originally destined to join the Cavalry, it was the success of the Welsh Guards Polo team in the Inter-Regimental Competition in the late 1980s, combined with his love of the game, that persuaded him to change his choice of regiment. He never looked back after passing out at Sandhurst in 1992.

He joined the Battalion in Ballykelly under the command of Tim Purdon and was very quickly noted as a future star. He was appointed Adjutant in 1997 following the Battalion's return to Wellington Barracks from a very successful tour in South Armagh. Readers of this magazine know only too well what a hugely important the Adjutant's role is in a Public Duties Battalion. It requires a sharp brain to deal with the endless requests from the Ministry of Defence for ceremonial events, for manpower and also from senior officers of all three Services requiring car parking for their

daughters' boyfriends. It also demands immense hard work and great tact. At all of these Rupert excelled.

He kept me as his Commanding Officer, the Company Commanders, the Quartermasters, even the Regimental Sergeant Major and his Drill Sergeants happy. The Ministry of Defence, Headquarters London District and Headquarters Household Division knew that the Adjutant was on top of his job. Many people had said that a tour in central London would be a difficult time for the Battalion, but this was not the case; retention was excellent and recruiting flourished. Much of the Battalion's success was due to the excellence of the Adjutant.

After graduating in the top 10% of his year at Staff College, Rupert returned to the Battalion to command his beloved No 2 Company, taking it to Northern Ireland in the difficult times of the final drawdown of operations. This was followed by a 2-year tour in the most demanding and important Grade 2 staff appointment in

Headquarters 1st Armoured Division in Germany, which also included a 7-month deployment to South East Iraq and it was here that Rupert's outstanding work led to the award of the MBE.

At some stage the brightest and the best have to serve in the Ministry of Defence and Rupert did not escape. He became MA to the ACDS (Policy) and then, after promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, he was moved to the office of the Secretary of State to be his MA. He was greatly admired by the two Secretaries of State with whom he served and it was Des Browne who gave the address at his funeral service in the Guards Chapel on 16th July.

In October 2008 Rupert took over command of the Battalion. Training for the deployment to Afghanistan was beginning and this was a good time for the Commanding Officer to start his tour of command. He was energetic, hard working and quietly authoritative. Perhaps his greatest gift was his ability to find time for everyone and anyone. He adored his Guardsmen and they responded as Welshmen do. He laughed a great deal and his reassuring and ready smile, captured so well on the famous photograph of him sitting against a wall in his combat gear, was a source of strength and a great boost to morale in difficult times.

His belief in the mission was infectious and it was that confidence, combined with his respect for all the soldiers in his Battle Group, which made him such a hugely admired Commanding Officer. He was described by the Chief of the General Staff as being at 'the leading edge of his generation' and his Brigade Commander described him as being destined for greatness in the Army.

Serving in the Welsh Guards Battle Group in Helmand were soldiers of the Estonian Army. Rupert took as much care of them as he did with his own Welsh Guardsmen and they too loved him for that. After his death he was awarded the Estonian Defence Forces Distinguished Services Decoration in recognition of his work for the Estonians serving in Afghanistan under his command.

Rupert was a person of great compassion. His love for his Regiment and his Guardsmen was only surpassed by his love for his wife, Sally, and their two young daughters, Hannah and Sophie. It is they who will live without a husband and a father and it is to them that our sympathy and prayers are offered. As for the Regiment, we are all left with the many, many memories of a truly great Welsh Guardsman.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Major Sean Birchall

by Lieutenant Colonel CFB Stephens formerly Welsh Guards



I was sitting at my desk in Regimental Headquarters in June 1999 looking forward to fishing on the Test the following day when the telephone rang. It was the Adjutant from Sandhurst who said there is a cadet here who is keen to come to the Welsh Guards, can you come and see him tomorrow? I am very busy tomorrow I said, just tell him we are very full and I will see him in due course. I think you should see him he replied, he is an outstanding young man and you should not lose him.

I met Sean Birchall the following day and was immediately very impressed. A vacancy in the Regiment miraculously appeared and Sean was commissioned in December 1999. He soon made his mark as an exceptionally competent platoon commander. He was an inspiration to the other young officers and was greatly respected by Guardsmen.

Commanding Officers are invariably asked to send the best officers to serve outside the Battalion and in 2004 Sean was appointed to command the Jungle Warfare School in Belize. He was lucky to escape

serious injury when a cooker exploded in his face and he spent several weeks recuperating in an US Army hospital in Washington. Sean returned to the Battalion and in 2006 he was appointed to the Staff of the US CENTCOM in Tampa, Florida. His job took him to combat theatres worldwide and his US general described him as displaying 'outstanding leadership and physical courage during dangerous combat missions with the ground patrols.'

Sean returned to the Staff College and from there he went to an important Grade 2 appointment. In The

Permanent Joint Headquarters at Northwood. Once again he made a great impression, his reporting officer writing 'a superb performance from an impressive young officer.'

Officers returning from appointments away from the Regiment are supposed to report to Regimental Headquarters. Very few bother but Sean invariably did so. When I was Regimental Adjutant he would always look in and it was invariably good to see him and hear his latest stories and escapades.

In 2008 1st Battalion Welsh Guards deployed to Afghanistan. This large Battle Group commanded by Rupert Thorneloe involved two newly formed companies of Welsh Guardsmen with Sean selected to command IX Company. He made an immediate and significant impact in the short

time he was in Helmand Province. He was killed on a routine patrol when an IED was detonated near his vehicle. His Company Sergeant Major described him as 'an exceptional soldier, an inspired leader and most importantly a good man.'

In July 2004 Sean married Jo and the arrival of their son Charlie in 2007 was a source of immense pride. It is to them that we offer our prayers and our thanks for having had the privilege of knowing a wonderful Welsh Guardsman. He was enormously proud of his Regiment and he loved his Guardsmen who in turn would follow him anywhere. To Jo and Charlie we offer our deepest sympathy. Sean was an inspirational husband, father and Welsh Guardsman and his death will be deeply felt throughout the Regiment and beyond.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Lieutenant Mark Evison

By Colonel AJE Malcolm Welsh Guards



Mark Evison died in Selly Oak hospital on 12th May 2009. On 9th May he had been leading a patrol in Helmand Province, Afghanistan when it came under fire. He was hit in the shoulder by a single round, and was helicoptered back to Camp Bastion Field Hospital. Despite the best efforts of the doctors he was showing no signs of recovery, and was flown back to Selly Oak hospital, Birmingham. He was aged 26.

Mark was educated at Dulwich College, Charterhouse, and Oxford Brookes University where he read Land Economy. He then went to Sandhurst and was commissioned into the Welsh Guards in December 2007. In his short time in the Regiment Mark made an enormous impact, but he made an impact in almost everything he did. He achieved much in his short life.

As a young boy Mark was the first of his South London Cub Scouts to gain the Cub Scout Challenge. In the CCF at Dulwich Mark won Best Cadet in 1996 and Best Gunner in 1997. From Dulwich Mark won a music scholarship to Charterhouse. He had perfect pitch and could easily have become a professional musician; he played the cello and piano to a high standard. However, he loved physical challenge, and just before his A Levels he ran the

London Marathon in 3 hours and 14 minutes. In his gap year he passed the RCB entry to Sandhurst but just missed being awarded a Gap Year Commission, hampered by his relative youth: instead he worked as a jackaroo on a sheep farm in the Australian outback. During and after University he continued with his love of adventure and personal challenge: he spent six months trying to obtain sponsorship (unsuccessfully) to organise an expedition to become the youngest unsupported person to walk to the South Pole, a dream of his for many years, and trained for two weeks on the glaciers of Norway, living in sub-zero temperatures. At Sandhurst he organised an adventurous training expedition to the Jebel Akhdar mountains in Oman.

After the mandatory platoon commanders course at Brecon,

where he was awarded an A grade with a recommendation to return as an instructor, Mark's first year in the Battalion was, as it always is, frenetic. A battlefield tour of Normandy with the Regiment's old and bold was followed by the Queen's Birthday Parade and then exercises in Canada and Germany. Training for the deployment to Afghanistan started in earnest in the autumn of 2008 and his platoon flourished. His guardsmen realised that they had an outstanding leader and that they would be in good hands for the forthcoming tour.

On the morning of 9th May Mark's patrol was engaged in a fierce fire fight with the Taliban. He managed to extract half of his patrol from a difficult situation and whilst trying to gain a better view of the ground he was shot in the shoulder. Despite this serious wound he remained conscious and continued to issue orders to his men. The entire patrol returned to their base and there is no doubt that Mark's professionalism and presence of mind saved further loss that morning.

Mark's platoon had nicknamed

him 007. His Commanding Officer described him as one of the finest young officers of his generation and a truly remarkable young man. His Brigade Commander in Helmand said that 'In 25 years in the army I have never heard soldiers speak with such affection about one of their officers.'

Mark was an inspirational young officer. He was intelligent, charming, charismatic and he had a wide circle of friends from all walks of life. The loss of Mark on active service has left a gaping hole in the Regiment, but of course it is his family who will carry the burden of his death and to them go the thoughts and prayers of all Welsh Guardsmen.

After his death his family established a Foundation to provide funds to promote the physical, personal and mental development of young people. This is a wonderful tribute in remembrance of a really outstanding young man: donations can be made to the Mark Evison Foundation www.markevisonfoundation.org

IN REMEMBRANCE

Lance Sergeant Tobie Fasfous

by Major D W N Bevan



Lance Sergeant Tobie Fasfous joined the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards on the completion of his training at the Guards Training Company, Catterick, in 2001 at the age of 21. From an early start as a Guardsman Tobie Fasfous showed a significant degree of promise passing the rigorous selection process required to become a sniper.

Such promise and potential was displayed further on operational tours to Bosnia and Iraq. Of particular note was Lance Sergeant Tobie Fasfous's highly nuanced and astute understanding of local customs and language which won him favour with the local community in Iraq.

Such an advanced ability to be able to understand and work well with others was one of many fine attributes to Lance Sergeant Fasfous's character. This inspiring quality was constantly admired by Lance Sergeant Fasfous's peers and superiors alike. Lance Sergeant Fasfous, or 'Fas' as he was known

by his friends, was renowned for his ability to be able to integrate quickly into a team, thanks to a unique sense of humour and highly distinctive charisma. Indeed the commander of the Forward Operation Base (FOB) in Afghanistan out of which Fas was last operating, Major Sam Plant, Light Dragoons stated:

"In the short period of time that the FOB Keenan troops had worked together Fas had become a very special member of the team. He was widely regarded as a star of the FOB in every respect."

In addition to such strength in getting on well with others, lay a highly developed professional

streak which had shown itself consistently throughout his career. Tobie readily applied a profound intellect and resilience in adapting to a variety of combat situations and operational theatres. In addition he was known for his leadership, drive and determination all of which drew the highest of regard from his fellow soldiers.

As Sergeant Harper, Lance Sergeant Cunningham, Guardsman Walters and many others from 3 Section 1st Battalion Welsh Guards noted:

"Fas was more than just a fellow soldier. He was a close friend and an inspiration to us all. Throughout the time he spent in Afghanistan he conducted himself in a professional manner and had a lot of pride in the work he accomplished. Fas, thank you for everything you have taught us. Our Promise to you is that

your professionalism and pride will carry on in us until the day we meet again".

With such phenomenal potential and promise in mind, it is with profound regret that Tobie lost his life whilst on foot patrol on 28th April 2009. He was working as a Mortar Fire Controller out of FOB Keenan near Gereshk whilst attached to The Light Dragoons Battle Group. His role within the larger ISAF picture was indeed essential. Through calling in indirect fire in support of friendly forces, Tobie contributed towards setting the conditions for the Afghan National Security forces to play a greater role in defending their own nation.

Lance Sergeant Tobie Fasfous is survived by his mother, Anne, who works in the Middle East and his partner Kelly Gore who lives in Bridgend.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Lance Corporal Dane Elson

by Major D W N Bevan



Lance Corporal Dane Elson's began life in Harare, Zimbabwe on 26th September 1986. His career in the Army commenced in 2004 at the age of 18. Upon completion of his training at Catterick as part of the Guards Training Company he joined the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards when based in RAF St Athan. Lance Corporal Dane Elson's formative Army years as a Guardsman saw him take part in Operational Tours to Iraq in 2004 to 2005 and Bosnia in 2006 to 2007.

Lance Corporal Elson very quickly became known within the 1st Battalion for his exemplary qualities. He was noted for embodying much that is desirable and positive about the modern British Army. Selfless commitment and physical courage were such qualities which Lance Corporal Elson was certainly not short of. Indeed many recall fondly the impact that an unfortunate accident had on him during the Battalion's pre-deployment training for Op HERRICK 10. Lance Corporal Elson was injured during a quad biking course, resulting in his hand being placed in a cast and therefore also delaying his departure date for Afghanistan. His reaction was, not to shy away from getting stuck in with his fellow soldiers and all the associated physical rigours that this entailed, but instead, to insist he break his wrist free from

the plaster and pretend that all was fine. Much to his disappointment, medical staff were adamant that he take the necessary time to recover.

In addition Lance Corporal Dane Elson's character was noteworthy for its abundance of good humour and sociability. As a gregarious and physically fit soldier Lance Corporal Elson relished the opportunity to play rugby, a passion he most certainly shared with a strongly rugby orientated regiment. His peers loved to be around him and his superiors noted the positive effect that such an outlook had upon his platoon. Indeed as the Battalion Second-In-Command, Major Andrew Speed MBE recalls:

"His friends describe him as being as sociable as a young Guardsman can be; he was universally regarded as being

reliably good for morale. For Lance Corporal Elson's friends no night was complete without his presence."

It is with deep regret that such a well-liked and strong Welsh Guardsman tragically lost his life in Afghanistan on 5th July 2009. Lance Corporal Elson was part of a fire support group attached to B Company, 2nd Battalion The Mercian Regiment and was killed whilst on patrol as part of Operation PANCHAI PALANG (PANTHER'S CLAW), in Babelji, Helmand Province. Lance Corporal Elson was killed when an Improvised Explosive Device exploded as his fire support group moved off from a position, having provided fire support for comrades from the Mercian Regiment to clear an enemy compound.

It was suitably fitting that the tragic circumstances leading to Lance Corporal Elson's death were embroiled by so much of what he had come to represent. As a Fire Support Team Commander he displayed outstanding physical courage and selfless commitment as he paid the ultimate sacrifice in order to protect those whom he

served alongside. Again Major Andrew Speed MBE recounts the truly humbling nature of Lance Corporal Elson's character.

"It was so typical of Lance Corporal Elson to have been providing cover and looking out for his mates when he died, he lived his life with a very selfless ethos which inspired others".

It was certainly the case that this inspirational dimension to his personality, such an essential component of leadership had marked him out for a bright future. Recently promoted before deploying to Afghanistan it was clear to many around and above him that he was destined for great things. Major Austen Salusbury his Company Commander clearly made note of such potential:

"Lance Corporal Elson was recently promoted because he embodied all the qualities of the most promising of junior leaders: outstanding fitness, calmness under pressure and an intense reliability. When he did deploy, he proved as expected to be a very strong team commander in the demanding operational environment of Afghanistan".

IN REMEMBRANCE

Gdsm Christopher King

Coldstream Guards



Guardsman King died whilst serving on operations in the Nad e Ali District in Helmand Province. He was serving as a rifleman with Number 2 Company, 1st Battalion Welsh Guards. He was part of a Section of Coldstream Guardsmen who had been attached to the Welsh Guards since the end of last year, and who have been working with 2 Company throughout.

Guardsman King was working as part of a team responsible for the protection of vehicle patrols, which involves checking vulnerable points are clear of danger.

On the morning of his death he was on such a patrol on Operation PANCHAI PALANG and was on foot clearing a vulnerable point when an Improvised Explosive Device detonated. He died immediately from the injuries caused by the blast.

Guardsman Christopher King was born on 1 June 1989 in Birkenhead, near Liverpool. He joined the Army and, on passing out of the Infantry Training

Centre, Catterick, in August 2008, he joined Number 3 Company, 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards.

He quickly completed a sharpshooter's course, and took part in tactical exercises with the Battalion. At the end of the year he took part in state ceremonial duties in London. In early 2009 he volunteered to serve with 1st Battalion Welsh Guards for a six-month operational tour to Afghanistan.

Although his time with the Welsh Guards was short, he had settled in well and quickly became a popular member of his platoon. He had hoped to complete a sniper course on his return to the

UK, one of the most demanding challenges he could volunteer for. He had great potential, and will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Guardsman King lived in West Buckland, Devon.

Major Henry Bettinson, his Company Commander, said:

"Guardsman King showed tremendous spirit by volunteering to serve with the Welsh Guards in Afghanistan. Some might view an Englishman joining a sister battalion, fiercely proud of its Welsh heritage, as a daunting prospect. But Guardsman King was fearless. He quickly settled into the Company says less about how we welcomed him, but more about how he went out of his way to meet us, his new colleagues.

"He arrived in the battalion last

year and quickly established himself during our pre deployment training as someone who was more than capable of holding his own.

"He was a robust, energetic, uncomplaining and reliable young man who had a sense of fun. His dry sense of humour often surfaced in conversation. Our thoughts are with his family at this very sad time. He will not be forgotten as we continue to remember him."

His family paid the following tribute:

"Chris was a tremendous son; he was proud to be a Guardsman and died serving his country doing a job he loved. We are very proud of the fact that Chris was prepared to do his duty, helping to secure a lasting peace and provide stability to the people of Afghanistan.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Private John Brackpool

The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment



Priate John Brackpool was born on 11th July 1981, in Crawley West Sussex. He joined the Regular Army and served with his local regiment, the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. John Brackpool's time in the Regular Army saw operational tours in both Kosovo and Iraq. Having left the Regular Army he volunteered to deploy as a Reservist with 1st Battalion Welsh Guards on Op HERRICK 10 in Afghanistan.

John Brackpool tragically lost his life on 9th July 2009 whilst taking part in Operation PANCHAI PALANG (PATHER'S CLAW). John was on sentry duty near Char-e-Anjir, outside Lashkar Gah in Helmand Province when he was struck by enemy fire. Despite immediate medical attention from his comrades within the Princess of Wales Company his injuries were too severe for him to be saved.

Those within the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards who served alongside and above him were truly taken aback by how quickly, not only a Reservist, but an Englishman could fit into a Regiment with such a strong

national identity. Indeed it would appear testimony to his truly friendly and personable character that he so quickly became an admired and well respected member of his platoon. Major Giles Harris, his Company Commander remarked

"Private Brackpool joined the Prince of Wales Company as a Regular Reservist and instantly became popular amongst the Welsh Guardsmen he had volunteered to serve with in Afghanistan. He was an extremely likeable and engaging man. His laid back attitude and tremendous sense of humour – most often at his own expense – made him a hugely valued

member of his platoon, who quickly came to know him as 'Bracks'."

What was frequently noted as commendable of John's character was his abundant and unrelenting sense of humour. Accounts are numerous of the impact that he had in lifting the morale of his fellow soldiers. In one particular episode John fell through a roof and into a compound having attempted to adopt a fire position in order to provide his section with intimate protection. As Sergeant Bjegovic his Section Commander recounts:

"...he fell through the roof shouting out in his loudest accent 'get me out, get me out!' We had to break a wall down to get him out, he then fell through the hole, John and even the Company Sergeant Major were in fits of laughter."

In addition to his unique self

deprecating sense of humour, many also looked on admirably at his experience. At the junior level he was clearly an invaluable asset to his platoon commander. Operational tours in Kosovo and Iraq ensured that much experience and knowledge could be shared amongst those less experienced young Guardsmen. Regardless of this experience it was clear that John retained a certain degree of humility when dealing with others. Major Giles Harris took note of such:

"Having already completed two tours of Kosovo and Iraq he brought a huge amount of experience with him, yet he was humble down to earth and took each day as it came"

Private John Brackpool is survived by his parents, partner and a young son.

IN MEMORIAM - ÊR CÔF

We regret to announce that notification has been received of the deaths of the following

24236021 LSgt E E Bennet

Died: 4th September 2009 Aged: 55
Served: 24th September 1974 – 23rd September 1983

2741332 CSM D R Boak

Died: 2009 Aged: 82
Served: 26th September 1945 – 29th June 1970

397195 Maj W J Burchell

Died: 5th June 2009 Aged: 80
Served: 3rd May 1947 – 31st July 1967

22612296 Gdsm C Crosswell

Died: July 2009 Aged: 76
Served: 15th November 1951 – 14th May 1957

27401049 Gdsm D Dennis

Died: 18th November 2009 Aged: 82
Served: 1st September 1944 – 18th February 1948

22460435 R F Edwards

Died: 8th February 2009 Aged: 75
Served: 15th June 1953 – 6th February 1955

22217390 Gdsm Evans

Died: 11th May 2009 Aged: 75
Served: 4th May 1951 – 6th May 1954

2733828 Sgt C Everitt

Died: 5th October 2009 Aged: 94
Served: 1st December 1939 – 13th May 1943

2741640 Loc/Sgt G Foster

Died: 28th April 2009 Aged: 80
Served: 15th August 1946 – 30th July 1948

23129219 J M Francis

Died: 5th September 2009 Aged: 75
Served: 14th April 1955 – 5th May 1957

22022578 Gdsm E Goodwin

Died: 22nd June 2009 Aged: 79
Served: 1st April 1944 – 1st January 1949

397877 (Capt) The Rt Hon The Lord Dean of Harptree

Died: 1st April 2009 Aged: 84
Served: 28th January 1944 – 1st January 1949

2736473 CQMS E Hart DCM

Died: May 2009 Aged: 89
Served: 23rd May 1940 – 14th September 1946

2735531 R E Jenkins

Died: 24th September 2009 Aged: 89
Served: Jan 1940 – 1945

2735934 Sgt R E Jones

Died: 2006 Aged: 86
Served: 18th March 1940 – 8th May 1946

22217134 Maj J E Jones

Died: 22nd May 2009 Aged: 80
Served: 9th February 1949 – 23rd October 1983

23929687 Gdsm R Joseph

Died: 4th August 2009 Aged: 60
Served: 4th January 1967 – 24th July 1972

24263847 Sgt P Keepin

Died: 26th July 2008 Aged: 49
Served: 1975 – 1987

278644 Capt J A Kevil

Died: 15th October 2009 Aged: 86
Served: 5th June 1943 – 23rd June 1951

Maj Gen P Leuchars

Died: 17th July 2009 Aged: 87
Served: 26th February 1941 – 1976

2737916 L/Sgt R Lewendon

Died: 12th May 2009 Aged: 88
Served: 1940 – 1945

2740198 Gdsm W G Lloyd

Died: 26th August 2009 Aged: 82
Served: 12th December 1944 – 11th March 1948

411999 Capt G S Lort-Phillips

Died: 30th August 2009 Aged: 79
Served: 22nd July 1950 – 19th March 1958

371698 (Capt) Sir D Mansel-Lewis

Died: 17th April 2009 Aged: 81
Served: 18th October – 18th April 1948

2733675 Gdsm W Mapp

Died: 14th October 2009 Aged: 94
Served: 21st August 1933 – 6th August 1945

23523070 Gdsm B Morgan

Died: 20th January 2009 Aged: 69
Served: 29th August 1958 – 29th August 1965

IN MEMORIAM - ÊR CÔF

We regret to announce that notification has been received of the deaths of the following

22217076 Gdsm W Owen

Died: 5th October 2009 Aged: 76
Served: 22nd September 1948 – 16th February 1954

22831349 R W Parry

Died: 8th November 2008 Aged: 70
Served: 15th August 1955 – 15th August 1959

22831834 Gdsm B J Peet

Died: 8th December 2008 Aged: 69
Served: 1st October 1957 – 1st September 1960

2741309 Gdsm E E Roberts

Died: 2009 Aged: 81
Served: 11th October 1945 – 28th May 1948

22217809 Gdsm T M Roberts

Died: 7th March 2009 Aged: 73
Served: 15th June 1953 – 13th March 1957

22433114 Gdsm R Rosser

Died: July 2009 Aged: 77
Served: 12th February 1951 – 12th February 1954

2739527 LCpl H B Rowlands

Died: 17th November 2007 Aged: 82
Served: 4th May 1944 – 2nd January 1948

22831092 LSgt D Sloman

Died: 3rd April 2009 Aged: 70
Served: 1st August 1954 – 31st March 1964

2735318 Sgt C D Smith

Died 26th October 2007 Aged: 89
Served: 1939 – 1945

229122 Lt J D Stratton-Ferrier

Died: 2009 Aged: 87
Served: 19th February 1941 – 18th October 1945

2735318 Sgt C D Sutton

Died: 21st October 2008 Aged: 89
Served: 29th September 1939 – 8th October 1945

458607 Viscount of St Davids

Died: 26th April 2009 Aged: 70
Served: 15th November 1958 – 2nd June 1960

23877341 Sgt B Turley

Died: 18th August 2009 Aged: 63
Served: 1962 – 1974

22831028 LCpl K Walker

Died: 21st October 2008 Aged: 72
Served: 3rd May 1954 – 3rd May 1957

176791 Colonel V G Wallace

Died: 20th December 2009 Aged: 88
Served: 8th March 1941 – 30th January 1973

2738396 Gdsm J Whitehead

Died: January 2009 Aged: 85
Served: 25th June 1942 – 29th March 1947

22831624 Sgt D Whiting

Died: 2nd January 2009 Aged: 69
Served: 1st September 1956 – 1st September 1959

468171 Major R C Williams MBE

Died: 11th July 2009 Aged: 90
Served: 9th November 1961 – 28th February 1972

2740291 Gdsm W O Williams

Died: 22nd August 2009 Aged: 83
Served: 9th November 1944 – 19th March 1948

2831746 LCpl N Wilson

Died: 26th December 2008 Aged: 66
Served: 25th April 1957 – 28th August 1975

23523269 Gdsm H Worsley

Died: 5th April 2009 Aged: 66
Served: 27th April 1959 – 14th May 1964



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