



07/08

ROYAL ANGLIAN NEWS

JUL 08

REGIMENTAL DAY

1. The Regimental Day will be held at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, on Sunday 14 September. The programme for the Day will be as follows:

- 09 30 am Gates Open (entry via Gate 1)
- 10.30 am Regimental Association Annual General Meeting
- 11.00 am Muster for Drumhead Service
- 11.30 am Drumhead Service. Music by The Minden Band.
- 12.15 pm March Past
- 12.30 pm Bars, Kiosks and Stalls Open
- 13.00 pm Band Concert by The Royal Anglian Regiment Band
- 3.00 pm Beating Retreat
- 5.00 pm Bars and Stalls Close

PROMOTIONS

2. The Regiment congratulates the following officers who have been promoted to Major wef 31 Jul 08:

- Maj MA Dingle
- Maj JD Inch
- Maj DH James-Roll

APPOINTMENTS

3. RHQ has been informed of the following appointments:

- Brig DJ Clements MBE from Comdt Sch Inf to Director Army Personnel Strategy HQ LF wef Oct 08
- Col AJC Wild MBE from AD Ops & Plans CST(L) DE & S to Royal College of Defence Studies wef Jan 09
- Lt Col (for Col 09) SW Carver DSO from SO1 Survivability DCMT to Commander British Army Training Unit Suffield wef Sep 09
- Lt Col ACE Marinos from HS Course ACSC 11 to SO1 ODP Delivery HQ LF wef Feb 09

- Maj BM Allen from 2nd Bn to SO2 J5 Plans PJOB ROW PJHQ Northwood wef Dec 08
- Maj (for Lt Col 09) SB Brunt from SO2 G5 Estab/Structures HQ Inf to Chief J2/J3 NTM-I wef Dec 08
- Maj GB Foden from SO3 Ops 3(UK) Div to ICSC(L) wef 8 Sep 08
- Maj DH James-Roll from SO3 O&D 3(UK) Div to ICSC(L) wef 8 Sep 08
- Maj JD Hughes from SO2 BOWTAG (G) to SO2 Instr Army Inf School Fort Benning wef Aug 09
- Maj JD Inch from 2nd Bn to SO2 EC (S&S) Msn Sp Br Op Sp Gp Warminster wef Oct 09
- Capt RJ Bredin from 2nd Bn to SO3 G7 1(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt wef Feb 09
- Capt JM Ding from 2nd Bn to Primary FAC 626 TACP Tidworth wef 09
- Capt AI Maclay from 1st Bn to SO3 G7 HQ 19 Lt Bde Lisburn wef Dec 08
- Capt SF Roberts from SO3 Tac Offr C OPTAG (Ops) to SO3 G2 HQ 19 Lt Bde Lisburn wef Feb 09
- Capt DJ Robinson from 1st Bn to SO3 ASTOR Coord ASTOR IPT Abbey Wood wef Sep 08

CONVERSION OF COMMISSIONS

4. The following officers are congratulated on being awarded Intermediate Regular Commissions (IRC):

- Maj J Hancock
- Maj MC Melia
- Maj PC Moxey
- Maj CW Swallow
- Maj PG Martin (IRC (LE))

BATTALION ACTIVITIES

5. **1st Battalion**

Lt Col JM Woodham MC took command of the Battalion on 7 Jul 08. Lt Col SW Carver DSO was pulled out of camp in the traditional manner. All companies deployed onto Salisbury Plain to conduct CT2 training and BGHQ training started with a new Headquarters. The annual Officers' against WOs' and Sgts' Mess cricket match was held and a hotly contested competition was won by the WOs' and Sgts' Mess. Man of the match was WO2 Gray, our Australian Sergeant Major, who is with us for EX LONGLOOK.

Each company spent a week on exercise, two companies using the Plain at any one time. It was a very successful training period, highlighting some key gaps in our training, such as skill fade with BOWMAN mounted in vehicles. However, the companies were happy with the basic skills of the soldiers and gained more experience with the vehicles, their capabilities and limitations. This was hampered slightly by the weather; it was very wet at times, which meant that a track ban was in place for periods of the exercise. The enemy

was provided by a platoon from a different company and so understandably there was a high level of competition, which only raised the standard of the exercise.

The Battalion Shooting Team entered CENTSAM in Bisley and was very successful. Although the team was not placed, 5 members were in the Army top 100 shots; these were Capt Robinson, Pte Down, LCpl Saunders Jones, LCpl Hunt and CSgt Hartland. It is a real achievement and a very good result after all of the hard training they put in.

Between 7 and 13 July a group made up of families of soldiers killed last year and members of the Battalion walked from Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey to Duxford village in Cambridgeshire. Over 50 people walked at least some of the route, with approximately 20 full time walkers. They walked down Duxford High Street to the sound of the Minden Band and great cheers. The money raised is still being counted, but is in excess of £25,000. Thank you to everybody from across the Regiment and East Anglia for the support shown throughout the walk.

Minden Day was celebrated on 27 July, the day before the Battalion broke up for summer leave. With the school holidays in full swing it was a great family day. There was the traditional gunfire and PT, with some very amusing PT kit on display. After the Minden Breakfast, Maj Gen Sutherell took the Parade and presented roses to members of the Battalion. This was followed by a fete and finally a disco in the evening. The Battalion was then stood down for leave for a well earned rest. All ranks are now focussing on TESEX in October.

A (Norfolk) Company

July would prove to be an important month for A Company and indeed all companies in the Battalion. The month started with hard work to prepare the BULLDOGS for exercise. The maintenance of the vehicles has been the Main Effort since they were taken over. A shortage of man power and necessary spares has meant that they have been a constant thorn in the Company Chain of Command's side.

On 7 July 2008 the Company complete deployed to Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) for a CT2 (Company Level) training package. With a relatively new command team getting to grips quickly with the use of BULLDOG, and keen to get on with the job in Iraq, the exercise was a chance to push the vehicles a bit more and see what they could do. This exercise was far more realistic in terms of the number of BULLDOGS within the Company Group and Company Level missions to complete. The first chance for the platoon commanders to work together was ruined however, when on his last exercise before departing to ITC (Catterick), Lt Denning decided to drop the command hatch of his vehicle on his hand. Despite his best efforts to fool the OC into letting him continue, his white as a sheet colour and shaky demeanour left Maj Biddick with only one option, to send him to Salisbury Hospital. With that the first Company Level attack, on Bridge Site 3, was executed, with 1 (Almanza) Platoon now being commanded by Sgt Thorne.

The planned rapid assault didn't quite happen as briefed, with 2 (Kohima) Platoon, acting as fire support, debussing almost a kilometre short, which I'm sure pleased the blokes as they had to tab in. This navigational embarrassment did not affect the plan too much, 3 (Corunna) Platoon were launched on the Company Main Effort once fire support was raining down on C Company's enemy troops. It was good to see the vehicles being used

to get troops close to the enemy and then debussing straight into the assault. As a first attempt the attack went well, but there were learning points that the Company Command Team were keen to correct. The Company went back to dismounted close combat for a final attack on Imber village. The wealth of experience from Afghanistan came to the fore as the village was systematically, but swiftly cleared.

Since returning from SPTA, all efforts have turned to Minden Day celebrations, with the setting up of stands keeping Sgt Martin on his toes for a week or two. It has also given the Company the chance to practice that much loved pastime, drill.

With Minden Day comes the start of summer leave, a well earned break for the Company. Once back, attentions will turn to Pre-Deployment Training under the command of a new OC, Major Smith. It is exciting times in the Fighting Ninth, with building on the high standards of the Company's past continuing into 2009.

B (Suffolk) Company

The past month for B Company has been dominated by two main events, the Inter-Company Boxing and CT2 training, both of which had a high profile within the Battalion's forecast of events.

The boxing final took place in Aldershot. It was an excellent venue, full of character and slightly better ventilated than our own small gym. Equipped with a bar, seating and two Viking warriors bearing arms and chainmail (set to lead the pugilists into the ring), the night began with a palpable sense of tension. There were displays of skill and courage from all fighters but we were mainly there for the one fight - Super Heavyweight - with LCpl 'Donk' Murphy (B Coy) against Pte James (C Coy). It was a hard fought battle, underscored by chants and cheers from the Battalion, the shuffle of feet over canvas and the dull thud of gloved hands striking flesh. Despite a closely fought contest, James' strength told in the end and he emerged the overall victor. The B Coy boxers quenched their thirst, firstly in the Aldershot bar, then the Sgts' Mess and finally the Cpls' Mess, hosted by a respectful and entertained crowd.

The remainder of the month was focussed on CT2 training. The BULLDOGS were serviced then serviced again down in Aldershot. In addition to getting the vehicles up to standard, the command element looked into Company Level tactics: our direction was to use these vehicles as Saxon 'plus' (Saxons with greater armour and mobility) as opposed to Warrior 'minus' (no armament) which is how other units have been using them: this was a constant trend throughout the exercise - exactly how we should fight the vehicles, how close we should close with the enemy and how to make best use of their manoeuvrability. The pace of the exercise was well regulated, enabling us to conduct sufficient battle-prep and maintenance. We conducted three main serials: an opposed obstacle crossing, a deliberate attack into Imber Village and some FIWAF. For these three operations, we were ably assisted by 9 PI C Company, who provided our enemy. The weather throughout was inclement (to say the least) and it's doubtful there's a man in the Company who hasn't cursed British Summertime.

C (Essex) Company

July was a month full of highlights for C (Essex) Company. The Inter Company boxing night which was held in Aldershot was a great success with the Company winning five of its seven bouts. All C Company boxers must be commended for their hard work and effort. Thanks also go to Sgt Ferrand and LCpl Paige for their expertise in training the team.

A number of RAAT tasks were given to the Company this month; 9 PI were tasked to act as OPFOR for A and B companies during CT2 on Salisbury Plain and 11 PI were tasked to support Cambridge UOTC in Lydd. Both tasks went well with 9 PI pre-seeing the enemy recce and engaging them, much to the annoyance of OC A Company. 11 PI acted as Civpop for the Cambridge students, providing riotous crowds, with Cpl Willan showcasing his acting talents.

CT2 was the big test for C Company this month. The Company deployed to Salisbury Plain in their first run out with a full allocation of BULLDOGS. 2Lt Thomas took a wrong turn out of camp and led the Company the wrong way (apparently it wasn't his fault as he "dropped his map"). The highlight of CT2 was the attack on Imber Village, with many of the soldiers commenting on how it was just like being back in Afghanistan.

It is with sadness this month that we say goodbye to our OC Major Phil Messenger who moves onto pastures new. He led the Company in arguably its most demanding tour in recent history. He will be missed by all that worked under him and we wish him all the best for the future.

D (Cambridgeshire) Company

July for D (Cambridgeshire) Company has been heavily focused on the 432 upgraded vehicle, the BULLDOG. As a Company we have some tracked experience in the Recce Platoon but even so our first week long exercise required a significant amount of that ever quoted principle of war, flexibility.

The exercise went without serious hitch and greatly improved our confidence in the BULLDOG across country, at night, and our ability to care for the vehicle on the Plain. During the exercise the ISTAR Group from D Company was put through its paces, practised and tested. The ISTAR Group is now able to competently occupy a harbour in a wood block and conduct a rolling replen and a triangular leaguer at night, carry out vehicle contact drills, set the conditions for a Battle Group obstacle crossing over the Berril Valley, set the conditions for a Rifle Company Attack as part of a Battle Group Advance to Contact, mark routes, conduct the delay battle and handover the battle to the rifle companies as required. Hopefully this training will give D Company a good grounding for TESEX.

Since returning from the Plain the pace has gone up a gear and we have found ourselves trying to do Minden Day drill, vehicle maintenance and CVR(T) cadres, all at the same time. August leave will have been well earned by D Company and they will need it. The pace of life will only increase as we conduct Company Level CATT, BG CAST and CATT and TESEX in October. All members of the Company will need to hit the ground running to ensure we are in the best possible state for TESEX.

Headquarter Company

CT2 was the main training event of the month and HQ Company provided the additional G4 support as required. This was mainly in the form of fitter sections attached to the companies, with the LAD in Westdown Camp. As ever with armoured vehicles they were working constantly to maintain the vehicle fleet. With a new Commanding Officer and planning team, the CIS Platoon has been busy setting up Main HQ in Aldershot and on Salisbury Plain to support the BGHQ training. With new personalities in almost all roles it has been very good to start from scratch and slowly build up so that the HQ is in good order for CAST and CATT and, most importantly, to support the companies on TESEX.

It has been a very busy period for Headquarter Company, with all departments within the Company involved in the take over and bringing onto account of the new vehicles and the associated equipment, together with the training and maintenance of the new fleet. In the margins they have supported the Battalion's Public Order commitment, while still managing to support the Inter Company Competition, Adventure Training and the other extra curricular activities that have been organised. They have deserved this leave and look forward to the training opportunities in September and October.

6. **2nd Battalion**

The Poachers have enjoyed another month of mentoring the Iraqi Army and most of the Battalion are now either in their new FOBs permanently or preparing the final touches. With the Poachers spread throughout Iraq it is fair to say that we are engaged in most of 7 Armd Bdes tasks.

The companies are still enjoying the challenge and continue to work hard in unfamiliar and ever changing circumstances.

A (Lincolnshire) Company is detached as the UK Protection Force, or PROFOR, based in the International Zone of Baghdad. The Company's mission is to protect British elements in Baghdad, primarily the Senior British Military Representative Iraq (Lieutenant General Cooper). We are task organised with two rifle platoons; these alternate between guarding the General's residence and escorting him and other senior officers on road moves out and about in the Red Zone of Baghdad; currently these patrols are still using the Snatch Armoured Land Rover. There is also a 1-Star Escort Team whose role is to escort various officers of brigadier and higher status who do not have an allocated RMP close protection team. The team uses civilian armoured vehicles, both in the International Zone and also in the Red Zone, in conjunction with a Snatch escort from the patrols platoon.

The Company is accommodated in the Baghdad Support Unit and, although the in-camp conditions are no doubt comfortable compared to the MiTTs, this is balanced by the demanding escort patrols conducted on a daily basis down Route IRISH and into the city itself. The role-specific training carried out before deployment has certainly been useful in this high threat environment; fortunately the only incident so far has been an approaching car that was assessed as a potential suicide vehicle until warning shots were fired and it stopped short.

The guard platoon has a less exciting role, but does give the soldiers an opportunity to develop a stable routine. This task is not without interest as the rear sanga faces the landmark Sheraton Hotel across the River Tigris; on many days explosions and gunfire are heard and smoke can be seen rising from car bombs in the vicinity, giving the sentry plenty to observe and report.

The 1-Star Team has perfected its own vehicle and foot armed escort drills and is continuing to receive plaudits from the high ranking officers that it escorts.

Two months into the tour A Company is in good spirits and the general consensus is that our allocated role is a good one. Although we are not supporting the Brigade Main Effort, the Company does allow the General the freedom of movement to attend various strategic level meetings and is therefore playing an important role in the campaign. Baghdad is a fascinating place and a real eye-opener for all ranks.

B (Leicestershire) Company continues to provide support to the Military Training Teams (MiTTs) throughout MND(SE). Fully embedded with the Iraqi Army, this continues to provide successes and frustrations at all levels.

Operating in platoon level FOBs there is a higher level of freedom for individual commanders. For anyone who has deployed to Iraq previously the contrast is great and people are finally getting used to working and living so closely with the Iraqi Army.

C (Northamptonshire and Rutland) Company has had an extremely busy and varied month. 7 and 8 Platoons and Coy HQ are based in the Divisional Training Centre (DTC) in Shaibah and 2 and 9 Platoons are based in Basra working alongside HQ 50 and 51 Brigades respectively.

Capt Nick McGinley (I have literally just handed over the Captain rank slide, so congratulations to him) and Cpl Stocks greeted the majority of the training teams (from 7 and 8 Platoon) on 15 May, having been here since 21 April. C Company soldiers immediately took over QRF and Guard tasks, in addition to shadowing the Mon Company Training Team. Within a few days, we had taken over one of the 2 training teams and by the 22 May, with me assuming command of the DTC within 24hrs of arrival, we had taken on all tasks. Having been told I was 'Kommandant' (sic) of the DTC, I was hoping to saunter around my empire but, although we have 8 km square of training facilities, I am normally restricted to an area the size of a football pitch (compact and bijou). I have managed, however, to name my small compound 'Camp STEELBACK' to differentiate it from the rest of the DTC. I am sure the old and bold from the former Northamptonshire Regiment will be pleased that their nickname is in use again.

We have had more visits than you 'can shake a stick at'. Within the first few days we had DCOMOPS (Comd 7 Bde, Brig Storrie), one US General, 4 x 2-star generals and above, Comd AMPHIBFOR and his entourage, plus a few colonels and half-colonels. Although manpower and time intensive, it reflects the importance of this location to the future training and effectiveness of the Iraqi Security Forces. Additionally, there have been numerous meetings with key Iraqi Army and US Army officers to plot the future of the DTC here at Shaibah.

The CSM and CQMS have been pulling their hair out trying to support 150+ officers and soldiers from C Company Group, plus up to 40 attachments and short term visitors to the DTC. I do not envy them that role.

There have only been a few minor incidents at the DTC. One IA soldier caught his eye with his rifle and, extremely efficiently, was evacuated to the nearest eye hospital. We also had a few disgruntled employees of the local construction sites who caused some upset to a British security firm. Our QRF dealt with the issue efficiently and maintained our freedom of manoeuvre in the DTC.

We have had great success training the infantry companies from the IA 52 Bde and look forward to the continuation training of 53 Bde. Although there have been plenty of frustrations along the way, the enthusiasm of the Iraqi infantry soldier has more than made up for it. The IA companies have gone from a very poor standard to being able to conduct strike operations in only 6 days. I firmly believe that the training here at the DTC is a factor in the improved performance of the IA – to their great credit and that of my training teams. Although the training of the IA Brigade support companies has not been as productive, WO2 (CSM) Dyson's Sniper Course has proved a great success.

9 and 2 Platoon have been having a good time in Basra. The generally quiet time in the City is a reflection of the increasing effectiveness of the IA and the efforts of the MiTTs. Maj Herbie Hancock and Capt Marcus Frehse, supported by CSgt Danny Morgan and 2 Platoon, have been MiTTing HQ 50 Bde. Maj Bev Allen and WO2 Ian Wicks, supported by 2Lt Will Willdridge and 9 Platoon, have been MiTTing 51 Bde. Both MiTTs have done an excellent job, ably supported by CSgt Hunter and LCpl Wood in the COB. They have been busy impressing the IA Brigade Commanders and their staff and have been widely praised for their efforts

7. 3rd Battalion

It is with great regret that the Battalion has to announce the death of Dan Grice, aged 12, son of WO2 Grice, on the 31 July 08.

The key event for the Battalion in July was Ex STEELBACK ENFORCER III which was conducted at Longmoor and was the last in the series of COIN focused exercises. The exercise saw each of the four rifle companies rotate around stands consisting of Public Order Drills, Mobile Patrolling, Urban Patrolling and Search. Each stand was split between a teaching phase and a Battle Exercise, with the most popular stand being the Public Order which for many contained their first exposure to petrol bomb inoculation. On the Saturday night, each company conducted a Reactive Operation, with tasks ranging from covering a weapon hide to protecting a police station. This was a new skill to most and there was much to learn. All of these skills will be required during Annual Camp at Sennybridge in September, which will be the final COIN activity of this year. This event also saw WO2 Taylor being presented with his Meritorious Service Medal, for outstanding devotion to duty during his 22 years of Regular Service.

Other training this month included a Chef training weekend, at which the RCWO, WO2 Locke, taught 8 of our RLC chefs various catering techniques. There was also BARB training for the Company Recruiting Staff, which will allow them to conduct the BARB Test at TACs in the future. The hard work continued for the RRTT, with a new batch of recruits

arriving from the Regional Training Centre to be given their Special to Arms Phase 1b training prior to attending CIC.

It has not been all work however and the Battalion held a successful Golf Competition at the Suffolk Course in early July. Of the 40 taking part, Duggie Coe won the individual trophy, with the Battalion beating 6 AAC in the Inter Unit Blenheim Trophy. There was also an opportunity for the Permanent Staff to spend 3 days Adventurous Training in the Lake District. There was a mix of walking, taking in Scafell Pike and Helvelyn, and Mountain Biking. Finally towards the end of the month, Battalion HQ Staff spent a gloriously hot day team building on a boat on the Norfolk Boards.

There have been a number of Battalion Training Teams deployed to ACF Camps in July and this will continue in August. The aim is to provide high profile, quality training to our local ACFs, in order to strengthen Regimental links. There were two TA 100 events in July, the first being the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, which was one of the major events of the year. The Battalion was allocated 40 tickets, but managed to get 60 couples to the event, which was a great day for all. The second event was a parade in Hertford, which was strongly attended by E Company. It was also the time of the annual Army Presentation Team (APT) visits to the area, with officers from C, E and HQ Company hosting.

As the August leave period approaches the Battalion will be reducing its activities. Each company will conduct an Adventurous Training Weekend and the month will end with the Battalion Urban Ops Battlefield Study to Arnhem.