



07/09

ROYAL ANGLIAN NEWS

JUL 09

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NOTICES

REDEDICATION OF CHAPEL IN ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH BURY ST EDMUNDS AS SUFFOLK AND ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENT CHAPEL AND HANDOVER OF CHAPEL TO THE ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENT: TUESDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2009

1. A service will take place on Tuesday 1st September at 1130 hours to re-dedicate The Suffolk Regiment Chapel in St Mary's Parish Church as the "The Suffolk Regiment and Royal Anglian Regiment Chapel". At the same time the chapel will be formally handed over by The Suffolk Regiment Association to The Royal Anglian Regiment for safe keeping. All members of The Regiment are welcome to attend. The service will be followed by a reception in The Athenaeum.

Further details can be obtained from the Area Secretary (Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire) Lt Col Tony Slater (Tel: 01284 752394; E Mail: ahqbse@rhgrooyalanglian.org.uk)

REGIMENTAL DAY

2. The Regimental Day will be held at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, on Sunday 20 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
- 12.15 pm March Past
- 12.30 pm Bars, Kiosks and Stalls Open
- 13.00 pm Band Concert
- 3.00 pm Beating Retreat
- 5.00 pm Bars and Stalls Close

All serving and ex-members of The Regiment and former Regiments are warmly invited to attend this enjoyable event. Further details can be obtained from the Assistant Regimental Secretary, Maj Dick Gould (Tel: 01284 752394; Email: ars@rhgrooyalanglian.org.uk)

BATTALION ACTIVITIES

3. 1st Battalion

The first days of the month saw the Battalion complete a successful TESEX on Salisbury Plain. The three-week long, light-role exercise was a rewarding and satisfying culmination of a series of both conceptual and physical build-up exercises.

The Battalion returned to Elizabeth Barracks to find A (Norfolk) Company busily preparing themselves for their forthcoming trip to BATUS as part of the 2 R WELSH BG. They will also be supported by the Mortar PI and FSG A. A great deal of preparation is required for deployment to BATUS, with all MATTs and Transition to Field Firing needing to be completed for the current training year. In addition, the requirement to deploy in the mechanized role has kept those involved in the preparation for Canada well and truly out of trouble!

The end of the month sees the Battalion hand over the Spearhead Land Element task to 2 SCOTS and a great deal of work has gone on in order to ensure that the vehicle fleet is handed over in good order. That said, there have been many opportunities to redress the work/play balance in July. The Inter Company Cricket Competition saw all five companies field teams in a 6-a-side competition held over two days. Every team played each other in short, 5-over matches which brought out aggressive batting styles from all concerned. After facing some stiff competition, Army cricketer Lt Simon Broomfield led A (Norfolk) Company to victory on a grey and drizzly Friday morning, meeting C (Essex) Company in the final. Importantly, several soldiers who had never played before gave very good accounts of themselves and some new talent was identified for the Battalion's 1st XI.

Staying with cricket, the Officers' Mess fought the Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess in the annual match for the Bunny Nye Challenge Trophy. The officers batted first, scoring an admirable 177 runs in a 20-over match. Despite batting valiantly, the SNCOs struggled to equal this score, in the end being bowled out for 64. The Bunny Nye Challenge Trophy was returned to its rightful home.

Ex VIKING SAIL, organised by 2Lt Chris Duncalfe, was a sailing expedition off the south coast of England. In two Victoria class 34ft yachts, *Voluta* and *Fimbria*, the Commanding Officer, Capt Tom Coleman, 2Lt Chris Duncalfe and Sgt Johnson passed on their knowledge to 19 younger soldiers from across the Battalion who, on the whole, were new to sailing. The expedition explored the Solent travelling from Gosport to Yarmouth and the Isle of Wight.

Penhally Camp near Tenby became home for 200 Vikings when they descended on the West Wales coast to conduct Level 2 Adventure Training over two separate week-long packages. Activities included hiking, climbing and mountain biking, but for many the highlight was *coasteering* - climbing along cliff faces before jumping into the sea!

In the final week of the month the Battalion's focus shifted to boxing. This was not the case for the boxers who had been training hard for several weeks without respite. Bouts took place throughout the week, culminating in the finals on 30 Jul. As last year there were some excellent fights, watched by the entire Battalion in an electric atmosphere. There were some familiar faces in the ring but also many new ones. Overall C (Essex) Company won the contest winning four fights on the night. Pte Willet, C (Essex)

Company, won *Tournament Best Boxer* and Pte Seymour, also C (Essex) Company won *Most Gallant Boxer*.

B (Suffolk) Company spent an excellent week in towns and villages throughout Suffolk raising the profile of the Battalion and raising money for the Army Benevolent Fund. An outstanding effort from the soldiers and generous donations from the public led to over £18,000 being raised.

4. **2nd Battalion**

The month of July has been varied for the Poachers with a focus initially on training and then switching to enjoying Battalion life in Germany. For the first 3 weeks of the month the Battalion exercised in the area around Celle and in Sennelager, with D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Company joining later in the exercise after returning from the Falkland Islands. In the final week before leave, the Battalion celebrated the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Talavera with a variety of events.

Exercise PRIME POACHER

The rifle companies deployed onto the first phase of the exercise at the end of June. The rifle company commanders enjoyed the opportunity to put their companies through their paces without Battalion Headquarters in the field. With the mantra '*getting the basics right*' ringing in the ears of all, much effective training was conducted. The companies focused on Platoon Level training aided by the effectiveness of the TES Kit. B (Leicestershire) Company created a day long battle run to test Platoon SOPs in counter ambush and quick and deliberate attacks. With another platoon from the Company providing the enemy, it proved to be a long and arduous day. Both A and C companies were also put through their paces. The week culminated in a Command Post Exercise for Battalion Headquarters with the serials being generated by the rifle company commanders.

The Battalion run Phase 2 started in the second week, with battle prep in camp and then a planned Battalion deployment into the forests some 20km to the North East of Celle. During the week the companies fought a mobile contemporary enemy, chasing the illusive WO2 Lawrence (OC Enemy) around the forests in a clearance mission. The companies managed well and as a result had a large number of contacts with the enemy, generally on the companies' terms. The value of the battle simulation TES equipment was illustrated during the week with skills and drills improved by the discipline of knowing when the enemy were accurate with their fire.

The week also provided the first opportunity since Poland in 2007 for conventional reports and returns to be practiced. The Battalion and Company CPs became more proficient during the week and learnt much in preparation for Kenya in October. The culmination of the exercise was a full Battalion Attack on a number of enemy camps. During the battle both B and C company commanders were killed off in their TES Kit, meaning that their young 2ICs got time in the limelight. The week was tiring, but all involved enjoyed the experience.

Phase 3 was the Live Firing package in Sennelager where all the lessons learnt throughout Phases 1 and 2 could be brought together for a comprehensive finale. Highlights included the platoons putting up an Infantry Bridge whilst also conducting a Live

Fire Platoon Attack onto positions on the far side of the river, Instinctive Shooting and many Section and Platoon attacks.

The 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Talavera

Between Saturday 25 July and Monday 27 July the Battalion celebrated the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Talavera. The celebrations began a week earlier when C (Northamptonshire) Company travelled to Northamptonshire for a week of recruiting and events with the Northamptonshire Regimental Association to highlight the event. This culminated with a very well supported and emotional parade in Northampton where the Northamptonshire Regimental Association conducted their final parade and marched off the square for the final time. All of the soldiers of the Company were aware of the history on parade with them and the importance of the day.

At the same time as the soldiers of C Company were on parade in Northampton, the remainder of the Battalion celebrated with a traditional English fete on the sports pitches. The day was very well supported by both the wider British Forces and German communities with over 2000 people through the gates even on a wet day. All enjoyed the welly-wanging, tug of war, stands, stalls and entertainment. Highlights were displays both by the Corps of Drums and the Band of the REME. The day finished with a Hawaiian themed all ranks' function with a UK band, Kelly's Heroes, flying in to entertain the assembled Hawaiian shirts.

The final part of the Talavera celebrations was the traditional Talavera Drumhead Service and Parade; the salute being taken by the Deputy Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier David Clements. In the evening the Officers and Warrant Officers enjoyed the Talavera Dinner in traditional style, again supported by the Band of the REME.

And Finally

The close of the Talavera week saw a number of summer 'Battalion life' activities, starting with the Sergeants' v Corporals' Mess football match, won by the Corporals in a nail-biting penalty shoot out. The Officers then took on the Sergeants' Mess at golf at the Hohne course, predictably losing, but in a close fought match that all enjoyed. The final event before leave was the Officers' v Sergeants' Mess cricket match. After a thrilling afternoon it went right down to the wire (almost) with the Officers finishing on 79 for 14 (don't ask) and the Sergeants on 130-odd all out. The game was played in the right spirit throughout and the Officers are now going away for a years' practice. At the match the two messes said their final goodbye to Major (now Lieutenant Colonel) James Hart, the outgoing 2IC. All ranks wish him well in his new role in Afghanistan.

5. 3rd Battalion

The month started with 11 PI (now deployed to Kabul), completing their training and starting their pre-deployment leave. Meanwhile, 12 Platoon, who are now confirmed as deploying to Musa Qala, conducted a quickly revised but intensive training period. This included the mandatory OPTAG Package, including a CFX in the Afghanistan village on STANTA. They have also conducted extensive field firing and conversion to the MASTIFF APC. At the end of the month they also went on pre-deployment leave.

The principle activity for the majority of the Battalion in July has been the deployment to Texas on the first leg of Ex GLOW WORM 09. This Exercise saw a Company (+) of 130 STEELBACKS, deploy to the Texas Army National Guard Training Centre, Camp Bowie, in Brownwood, Texas, for 2 weeks of Urban Ops and US weapon training. The ORBAT consisted of 4 rifle platoons, a Company Headquarters and a group of enablers working alongside the Americans. The rifle platoons were split with 1 Platoon (mainly from A Company and commanded by 2Lt Grant Milne, CUOTC) and 2 Platoon (mainly from B Company and commanded by Capt Phil Weatherhall) working in a UK Exercise Company, commanded by Maj Mark Bevin. Meanwhile 3 Platoon (mainly from C Company and commanded by 2Lt Tim Graham, LUOTC) and 4 Platoon (mainly from E Company and commanded by 2Lt Mark Hart) worked in a US Exercise Company.

The Urban training on Ex GLOW WORM was based out of an air conditioned tented camp near to the MOUT site (Military Operations in Urban Terrain) on the Fort Hood Training Area. Here the companies conducted 2 days of build up training on a Platoon/Company sized MOUT before conducting a Company Level Air Assault onto a large Company/Battalion sized objective. The training was excellent, not only because it allowed integration down to platoon level, focused on relevant operations and was conducted in extremes of heat and terrain, but also because it was outstanding fun.

The weapon training part of Ex GLOW WORM involved all those deployed carrying out Preliminary Marksmanship Instruction (similar to Weapon Handling Tests). This was followed by the firing of the APWT on the M4 rifle and M9 Pistol and familiarisation shoots on HUMVE mounted M2 HMG, M107 .50 Sniper Rifle, M240 LMG and M249 GPMG. Soldiers were awarded Expert, Sharpshooter, Marksman or Passed and for the first three levels were issued a medal. The award ceremony became slightly embarrassing as the majority of STEELBACK soldiers scored the top awards, with very few National Guardsman attaining the same level.

The planned R&R was a day in St Antonio, with a Battlefield Tour of the Alamo, shopping and a few beers. This went generally well, except for Cpl Lawrence who managed to break his leg and had to be casevaced home. Subsequently however, and due to a shortage of RAF airframes, the Exercise enjoyed a further 4 days in Fort Worth. Although this allowed for some extra sight seeing and training (with the majority of MATTs completed), it has not done much for employer relations back in the UK!

In general, the key aims of immersing those deploying on the Exercise into the American military systems and gaining a "Texas experience" were achieved. In September, 120 members of the Texas National Guard will attend Annual Camp on Salisbury Plain on Leg 2 of the exchange.

There have been a number of other activities conducted apart from the Operational Training and OTX this month. Of note 2LT Finbow (HQ Company) and 2LT Hodson (A Company) are to be congratulated on passing out of Sandhurst on 25 July, with Mr Finbow coming in the top 3 on the course. The Battalion Golf Day was held on 9 July, with WO2 Snow winning the individual prize and HQ Company taking the Team Trophy. Also Capt Paul Steel has handed over as Adjutant to Capt Ollie Ormiston, who is now hard at work in support of the 74 STEELBACKS who are now in harm's way in Afghanistan.