

THE ESSEX AND
ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENTS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 31

February 1983

3rd Battalion (Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex) The Royal Anglian Regiment

The Battalion returned from Christmas leave on the 4 January and immediately started a programme of individual training which involved cadres for Potential NCOs, Assault Pioneers, Drivers and Signallers and training in NBC, First Aid, Battle Handling Exercises and Map Reading for upgrading boards.

Preparations are well ahead for Exercise "Trumpet Dance" which will be held near Seattle, USA, in March and April. The United States Information Room is well stocked with details of what to expect when the Battalion arrives in Fort Lewis.

Shortly before Christmas Leave, the Battalion's GPMG teams fired Match 83 and beat all the other entrants from Eastern District to qualify for the UKLF finals to be held next month. The team total score was some 400 points better than any of our opponents. The Eastern District Cup was presented by the GOC, Maj Gen MacMillen.

On the 20 January the Battalion Cross Country Team gained second place in the District Championships. The team, which was without two key runners, were beaten by 1 Devon and Dorsets, with excellent performances from Ptes McKay and Maynard who were placed second and seventh respectively out of 178 runners. This qualified the team to run in the area finals which were held at Pirbright on 31 January where again they were placed second behind 1 Devon and Dorsets and qualify for the Army finals which will be run on 16 February at Aldershot.

There was success too in the District Badminton finals on 25 January. SSgt Chapman REME and Sgt Philpott RAPC won the Unit Doubles, SSgt Chapman and Mrs Carr (wife of Sgt Carr) won the Mixed Doubles, SSgt Chapman and Sgt Humphreys won the Veteran Doubles and Sgt Philpott was the winner of the Plate Competition. Mrs Thurston (wife of WO2 Thurston) was the runner up in the Ladies Singles. Out of a total of 8 finals the Battalion was represented in 5.

As part of the new members introduction into the Battalion a visit to the Regimental Museum and the Regimental Chapel is made. This enables them to learn about their predecessors and the traditions they are inheriting.

TA Essex Companies

5th Battalion

Following the usual round of Christmas festivities, Dinners, Dances and Children's Parties, at all locations, the Battalion emerged into the New Year anxious to dispel the effects of at least two weekends at home.

Maj Trevor Veitch (Trg Maj) had anticipated this feeling by arranging a Bn Test Weekend. Both testers and tested worked extremely hard on Class 1 and Class 3 tests, followed by Swimming Tests BFTs etc etc. The Invertron was also put to good use by the Officers and Senior NCOs.

5th Battalion (Continued)

Keeping up the pressure on the more athletic members of the Battalion, Capt Andrew Alexander organised the annual Orienteering Competition at Grimes Graves on 16 January. The event was well attended by several teams from each Company, Civilian Teams and teams from other units. The competition was run over a course of three 4.3k legs. 4 Coy were the winners in a time of 91 mins 38 secs followed by 3 Coy (112 mins 17 secs) and HQ Coy (133 mins 58 secs). The winning 4 Coy team consisted of Sgt H Batchelor, LCpl Johnson and LCpl Byford.

HQ Coy were pleased to welcome Col Barber, their Deputy Honorary Colonel, at Peterborough on Tuesday 18 January to present a record number of medals to the following:

Cpl Kerrigan	TEM
Bdsm Dyer	TEM
Sgt Smith T	First clasp to TEM
Cpl Chown	First clasp to TEM
Cpl Crowson (Band)	First clasp to TEM
Bdsm Clarkson	Second clasp to TEM

It is interesting that these awards create a total of 102 years service or an average of 17 years per man. This does something to offset the high turnover figures of the TA as a whole.

Coy Shooting Teams have started to train for the 1983 Season and the Bn Team have already completed the first weekend of their very intensive programme leading up to Bisley in July.

6th Battalion

The Battalion started the New Year vigorously with two training weekends at Stanford. Both concentrated on individual training, and there was a good attendance on both occasions.

On 1 January the Battalion became part of a reformed Home Defence Command: 54 Inf Bde based at Grantham Lincolnshire. On 11 January a Flag Raising ceremony was held to commemorate the occasion, and fourteen soldiers from the Battalion took part, under the auspices of WO1 Eke who was parade RSM.

There were three important visitors in January. On 5 January Maj Gen Gerrard-Wright, DTA & C visited Bury St. Edmunds and also the Home Service Force platoon at Cambridge. On 13 January Brig Davey, Comd 54 Inf Bde, visited the Battalion for the first time; and on 30 January Maj Gen J R A MacMillan, GOC Eastern District, visited the Home Service Force Company on Thetford Ranges.

The footballers from B(Bedford) Coy have carried on from the success that they engineered last year by defeating E Coy, 3WFR 2-1 at Grantham in the final of the Eastern District TA football competition. They have therefore qualified for the TA National Competition and in the quarter finals of that competition they will meet A Coy, 2 Wessex at Portsmouth on Sunday 6 February.

The Battalion inter-coy Cross Country championship was held on 30 January at Bassingbourn and D (Cambridge) Coy were the victors. Sgt Scott and Lt Wadham were first and second respectively.

Regimental HQ

Subscriptions

The Newsletter and Subscribers Roll is now £1 per annum. Many members who pay by Bankers Order increased their subscription, but for those who did not, a form is attached to the Newsletter. This subscription is queried by some members because they have paid a Life membership and/or Branch subscription. It is in addition to any other subscriptions and now does cover the cost of two Newsletters per year, Subscribers Roll every two years and postage.

Gardens

The sponsoring of the Rose beds was a great success and of the 1983 re-planting only one bed of 30 x City of Leeds has not been taken up. Planting will take place next month.

Annual Reunion 1983

The date is Sunday 26 June 1983. Application form is attached. Please remember to fill in the number of both Tea and Chapel tickets if required.

This year the Address will be given by the Provost of Chelmsford Cathedral and the Band of the 3rd Battalion will play during the Service and afterwards.

Regimental Chapel

On 11 November 1982 the 3rd Battalion held their Rememberance Service at 11.00 a.m. Unfortunately this was the last occasion for about 5 years. Sunday Services will be held as follows:-

<u>Date</u>	<u>Padre</u>
6 March	Revd R ORTON
3 April	Revd E T STEVART
1 May	Revd T H ROBINSON
5 June	Revd A E OCCOMORE
3 July	Revd E T STEVART
7 August	Revd E T STEVART
4 September	Revd E JONES
2 October	Revd F TESTER
6 November	Revd J A RANDALL
4 December	Revd K BELBEN

Repairs are to be made to the roof and superstructure so members will not be surprised to see the Chapel covered by scaffolding for some time in the next few months.

Army Benevolent Fund

A Garden Fete is planned to take place on Sunday 17 July 1983 in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund. Further details will be published on posters.

Benevolence and Aid

The Fund disbursed £4,218 in 1982 and assisted 54 cases in doing so. Of this amount £1,740 was received from the Army Benevolent Fund and £215 from other sources. In addition we sent out £585 to ex-members or their widows at Christmas. A sample of the kind of "thank yous" we receive are:-

"Just a few lines to let you know that I received your cheque for the payment of my electricity bill. I went down and payed it straight away. I also understand you have sent a cheque straight to the GLC for my rent.

May I say Thank you very much indeed for helping me pay these bills. I really don't know what I would have done without your help.

It is most heart-warming that there are people like you who are kind and caring enough to help others.

I personally wish you all the very best of luck.

Thank you once again on behalf of my son-in-law and myself."

"I'm taking this opportunity by thanking you very much for your very nice kindness, for helping me with the money. I do very much appreciate it, thanking you once again."

"Both SSAFA and the family are most appreciative of your Regiment's very generous help to Mr. ... in his financial difficulties and I think your Committee will be touched to hear that in his letter to me he said "I shall never forget this as long as I live". Poor man, I am afraid that may not be very long, as he is being re-admitted to hospital for a brain scan for a possible brain tumour. What you have done to provide his family with security against eviction will give him peace of mind at the end of his life. His Regiment and his War Service still mean a great deal to him and your recognition that this has been appreciated is very important to his morale."

Branches

Chelmsford Branch (Secretary: Major M.D. Franks MBE)

On the social side, the past year has been most successful despite the support dropping for the earlier dances. Attendances at the last three dances has risen and all who attend always enjoy themselves. Please make a note of the remaining dates for 1983:

26 March 1983	15 October 1983
16 April 1983	19 November 1983
17 September 1983	17 December 1983

The 1984 dates for your diaries are: 28 January, 25 February, 24 March, 21 April, 29 September, 17 November, 15 December.

The Branch has continued in its main role to give financial assistance to members in need of help and to visit the housebound and those in hospital. If you are able to give time to help with visits please let us know and it would be very much appreciated.

It is felt that there are many welfare cases of which the Branch is unaware. If you hear of any deserving cases please contact the Chairman of the Welfare Committee, Charlie Meekin on Brentwood 214951.

Trigno Reunion for ex-members of the 1/5 Bn (1939-1946) will be held on Saturday 12 November 1983.

The Annual Dinner Dance will be held at the County Hall, Chelmsford, on Saturday 29 October 1983, and I hope that you will do your best to attend. The cost of the tickets will be £8.00. It is hoped that the Guest of Honour will be our Deputy Colonel: Major General Ward-Booth OBE. If you are interested please contact Eric Saville.

A Military Musical Pageant will be held at Wembley Stadium on Saturday 25 June 1983. A coach has been booked to convey members and guests to Wembley, there will be no charge for those wishing to use the coach. The cost of each seat will be £6.50. The coach will depart from the Chelmsford Bus Station at 4.30 p.m. If you would like to attend please contact Eric Saville.

4th Battalion Comrades Association (Secretary: Mr F C Hawkins)

Annual Service of Remembrance

Remembrance Service at St. Marys Church Ilford. Major General D A Beckett CB DSO OBE gave a tribute to Sir Arthur Noble.

Rev. J Barnes gave the sermon.

Mr. Edward Noble (Sir Arthur's son) read the lesson on behalf of the Essex Regiment.

Lt Penfold read the lesson on behalf of The Signals.

The flowers in the church were subscribed for by the donations given by the church - The Essex and The Signals.

The parade was one of the largest we have had for some considerable time, being led from the church to the Drill Hall by the Essex Corp of Drums.

Interim Reunion

Will be held at RHQ Warley on Friday 16 March 1983. Details from Secretary.

Southend-on-Sea (Secretary: Captain R G Turnidge)

Branch Dinner Saturday 12 March 1983

A Branch Dinner will be held in the Function Room of The Halfway House Hotel, 213 Eastern Esplanade, Thorpe Bay on Saturday 12 March. Reception 7.30 p.m. for 8.00 Dinner.

Buffet Dance Friday 8 April 1983

Following two very successful Buffet Dances at the Ekco Social Club, it has been decided to hold a further one on Friday 8 April from 7.30 p.m. until 11.30 p.m. Dancing will be to the Double "L" Dance Time Disco. Tickets price £2.50 per head will be available from Charles Harrod, Bill Appleton,

Southend-on-Sea (continued)

Buffet Dance Friday 8 April 1983 (continued)

Paul Lincoln or myself.

Members of the Royal Air Force Association have been invited to join us on this occasion so early application for tickets is advisable.

Thurrock Branch (Secretary: Mr T J Everitt)

Our 16th Annual Dinner and Dance held on the 26 November 1982 at Chadwell-St-Mary Social Club was a great success and was supported by our Comrades in Arms from the 4th Battalion, The Essex Regiment Comrades Association. Also in attendance was a party from Woolwich consisting of members from The Royal Regiment of Artillery and The Royal Corps of Transport; included in the party was C F H Owen, who was badly burnt at Bluff Cove in the Falklands aboard the Sir Galahad whilst serving with the Welsh Guards.

Our guests included Major General Michael Holme CBE MC and his good lady, Major Claude Salmon and his lady, Mr. Sam Soepboer and his lady from Zeist in Holland, one of the towns the 2nd Battalion The Essex Regiment liberated in 1945 and which the Thurrock Branch visited last May for the Liberation Celebrations and were given a very warm welcome.

Captain C A L Barnes MC welcomed our guests from Holland and the Woolwich Depot.

Major General Michael Holme CBE MC paid tribute to our present day fighting forces praising them for their professionalism, saying that they were better trained and equipped than ever before.

It is proposed to visit Holland again on the 4 May for 5 days, returning on Sunday 9 May. It is hoped that former members of the 2nd Battalion The Essex Regiment would wish to attend. An invitation is extended to other Branches who would like to go. Contact Mr. H M Conn, Chairman of the Thurrock Branch at 145 Godman Road, Chadwell-St-Mary, Grays, Essex.

Royal Hospital, Chelsea

Colonel Hugh Craig, Major Jack Beazley and the Regimental Secretary visited In-Pensioners Staff, Tilley and Johnston.

Harry Staff (96 this year) and Albert Tilley (89 this year) were in good form. Mr. Tilley is an International Bowls man and still plays for the hospital.

Ex R S M Johnston was in the infirmary and we wished him a speedy recovery. Each were given a Christmas gift and card from the Association.

Can You Help?

Greece 1944 - 1945

Dear Major Riches,

I have been given your name as a contact, by Vick Anderson, in the hope that you may be able to help me in my research for the aircrew friends of mine who were shot down in Greece 1941.

Can You Help? (continued)

Greece 1944 - 1945 (continued)

During 1941, I was flying with 211 Squadron (Blenheims) based at Paramythia in Northern Greece. On Easter Sunday 13 April, six Blenheims were shot down by ME 109's, between Florina and Lake Prespa. In 1979 the brother of one of the airgunners on the raid, went to the location involved, and succeeded in tracing some of the history of that day, when virtually the whole Squadron was wiped out, and evacuation followed.

By chance, in August 1982, I saw a notice in the RAFA magazine "Airmail" detailing that bodies of 211 aircrew had been found, including my pilot and airgunner, their graves now at the War Cemetery at Faleron, Athens. Since then I have been in touch with several next of kin and through contacts in the MOD, Luftwaffe and Greece, I have pieced together most of the events of that day in April 1941.

As it is a very long story, I will try to be brief. The bodies of some of the crews were buried by the local villagers at Karia, and at the top of a peak at Alonas. There is another report that the site of another crash was either at Trigonon, or Pisodherion. After the war, these bodies were exhumed by A Coy of the Essex Regiment from the churchyard at Karia, and another location given as Akritas, (but this is doubtful) and a date is given as 19 May 1945. Unfortunately, the RAF records are very sketchy on this, and only brief details are given.

Although I know all the crews and the identification numbers of all the Blenheims involved, it has been impossible to determine which aircraft crashed where. All six Blenheims were shot down between 1605 and 1609. One went into the lake about 8 miles down from Mikrolimni, one in the lakeside at Mikrolimni, and a report says that this was recovered by the Greeks in 1957, but I have yet to hear from Greece on this. Two pilots bailed out but were killed later, their aircraft crashing in flames at Karia. The remaining two aircraft evaded to the East but were shot down at Alonas and either Pisodherion or Trigonon.

I wonder if there are any surviving members of that A Company who may remember any details found when the bodies were exhumed which might lead to a clue of finding whose aircraft crashed in which spot. Then the picture would be complete. Further details from this RHQ.

India - Burma 1943 - 1945

Lt Paul Haskins is hoping to write a book of experiences on operations against the Japanese in Magaland, entering at Omgshim thence to Imphal with the 1st Battalion. He would welcome personal reminiscences and photographs etc. His address and telephone number is:

Paul C Haskins
15 Avenue Road
King's Lynn, Norfolk
PE30 5NN.
Telephone: (0553) 64267

General Notes

Residential Homes

Dear Secretary,

The Joint Committee of the Order of St. John and British Red Cross Society maintains a residential Home, Mais House, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, for which ex-servicemen, officers and other ranks are eligible to apply. In addition, ex-servicewomen and widows of ex-servicemen, are eligible. We do give first priority to the War disabled and their widows but there are presently vacancies for all eligible categories.

It is our aim at Mais House to provide a permanent home and that extra care which the disabled and the elderly and frail need when they can no longer look after themselves. Whilst we encourage our residents to maintain their independence and allow them as much privacy as possible, we also assist them as may be necessary in the ordinary course of their lives, such as by helping with dressing, bathing and mobility.

I am now writing to ask you to bring the existence of Mais House to the notice of the members of your Association so that in suitable cases reference may be made to my Director at 6 Grosvenor Crescent London SW1X 7EH. It strikes me that a 'snippet' of the type frequently included in Regimental magazines would be a most helpful method of bringing Mais House to the attention of interested persons.

Further details from RHQ.

Visit to Holland Report

By Major Claude Salmon 1945 - 1982: Pompadours Return to Zeist

A day or two after the end of hostilities in May 1945 a seventeen year old Dutch lad was out cycling near his home town of Zeist, not far from Utrecht. From opposite directions came a company of the 2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment and a detachment of a Panzer S.S. Regiment. Both halted and the British Company Commander impassively received the surrender of the Germans. The boy never forgot the episode, or the name of the Essex officer, but it was not until 5 May this year that he was to see him again.

This was only one of the many acquaintances renewed during a visit to Zeist organised by the Thurrock Branch of the Essex and Royal Anglian Regimental Association to take part in the celebration of the 37th Anniversary of the Liberation of Holland. The town had never forgotten the 2nd Essex who came there in the first days of peace and stayed for about six weeks, and its welcome was obviously heartfelt. No sooner had the party arrived at their hotel than they were hurried away to the magnificent 17th Century Slot (Castle) for a Civic Reception and Speech of Welcome by the Burgermeister (Mayor), and the reciprocal presentation of a Regimental Plaque. All clutching a book about the town and, very appropriately, a cheese board, the party then moved to the Town Hall. Here places of honour were reserved for them to witness the hoisting of the Allies' flags and the lighting of the Flame of Freedom. There followed a musical programme with about eight bands and orchestras, ending with Tchaikovsky's "1812" Overture, with perfectly timed cannon and musket fire accompaniment.

Visit to Holland Report (continued)

The next day the party went to Arnhem which the Battalion helped to capture after the long winter of 1944-1945. Visits were made to the Airborne Museum and the peacefully dignified British War Cemetery. Then on to Nijmegen, with its magnificent bridge that was not "too far". Motorways and urban development had changed the appearance of the area between the two towns, known to the troops as The Island during the bleak last winter of the war, but signposts showed many familiar place names.

That evening there was another reception, an informal one, in the Fiji Hotel and this was an opportunity for townsmen and old soldiers to renew friendships made when back in 1945 they had shown their skill at "getting their feet under the table". Photographs galore were produced - young looking British soldiers and the Dutch families whose hospitality was so welcome. But none could remember the name of the young soldier holding a 2 year old girl who, now almost a middle-aged woman, had made a special journey from Amsterdam for the occasion. As the evening ended, the theme was "Do come back again".

We in Britain are fortunate never in the last thousand years to have experienced enemy occupation, and perhaps find it hard to understand the Dutchman's enthusiasm for these annual celebrations to commemorate the return of their freedom. Equally, we do not understand the sincere affection for Britain that still exists in Holland. There must be many Old Comrades' Associations that would receive an equally enthusiastic welcome in the places to which their members helped to bring freedom and hope in 1945. What better way of promoting international goodwill? After all, hasn't the British serviceman always been our best ambassador abroad?

Le Cateau Squad

Mr. Paul Davis of 40 Baru Street, Pooraka 5095, Adelaide, South Australia, would like to hear from anyone who served with Le Cateau Squad in April 1938 onwards. Mr. Davis, Army No. 6013052, served with the 2nd Battalion Essex Regiment 1938 - 1942 and then 2/5 Battalion from 1942 - 1946. He served in the Middle East, Italy and Germany.

Stock List

	£
Ashtrays (glass, purple, gold eagle)	0.50
Blazer Badge (Cap badge/Eagle motif)	4.75
*Car Badge (Cap badge/Eagle motif)	10.50 approx.
Coasters, set of six (Cap badge/Eagle motif)	2.36
Comb Case with comb	0.75
Credit Card Case	1.30
Cufflinks (Cap badge/Eagle motif)	Reduced to 2.50
Hip Flask	5.50
Key Case (six hooks)	0.80
Key Fob	0.25
Plaque (Cap badge/Eagle motif)	6.80
Record - 3rd Bn Royal Anglian Regiment Recording (+40p if posted)	4.00
Scarf Ring	
Ties - Essex Regiment	3.25
Wallets (black leather, Cap badge/Eagle motif)	4.20

* State bar or grille fitting. Delivery 10-12 weeks.

SUBSCRIBERS ROLL - Amendment No. 1

Additions

Mr.	E G	ALLEN	28 Vine Way, BRENTWOOD CML4 1UU
Mrs.	C F	BEAMS	5 Fairfield Road, BRENTWOOD CML4 4LR
Mr.	L A	DUNCOMBE	202 Eastwood Road North, LEIGH ON SEA SS9 4LX
Mrs.	A F	EVE	145, Woodman Road, BRENTWOOD, Essex.
Mr.	A H A	FREEMAN	4 Reedings, Woodcroft Road, IFIELD, West Sussex.
Mr.	J	HARRINGTON	4 Chaucer Road, CHELMSFORD CM2 6ML
Mr.	R A N	PURDY	Norton Cottage, Orchard Lane, Boars Hill, OXFORD OX1 5JH
Mr.	A P	STOCK	31 Prospect Place, Collier Row, ROMFORD, Essex.

Changes

Mr.	P J	BINDLOSS	10 Spindleberry Grove, Nailsea, BRISTOL BS19 1QE
Sir John	R	BLAGDEN	Delete KBE insert OBE
Mr	J F	CLEMENTS	35 The Lawn, Watchhouse Road, Galleywood, CHELMSFORD, Essex.
Lt.Col	J F	CRAMPORN	The Old House, Stoneham Street, COGGESHALL, Essex CO6 1TT
Captain	A G	FOWLER	Add after the name FOWLER 'TD'
Mr	N J	HOLDEN	c/o Standard Chartered Bank, Kaertner Ring 10, A 1010, Vienna, AUSTRIA.
Captain	W L	SIMMONS	Ingrave Hall, Middle Road, INGRAVE, Nr.Brantwood, Essex.
Captain	S C	SPICER	Amend Chinford in the address to read: CHINGFORD.
Captain	R W	START	Walnut Cottage, The Green, Lurgashall, PETWORTH W. Sussex.
Major	C A	THORNE	20 Brighton Road, SHOREHAM BY SEA, Sussex.
Mr.	G H	THORNE	Insert below Major C A THORNE: 258 Warley Hill, BRENTWOOD, Essex.
Mr.	J	TUBB	Amend Hainault in the address to read: HAINAULT
Mr.	F	WALTERS	33 Fuller Court, Hockerill Road, BISHOPS STORTFORD, Herts.
Major	C E A	WHYTE TD	13 Seabank, Beach Road, PENARTH, S.Glam CF6 2AR

Deletions

Mr.	T J	CHAPMAN	
Lt.Col	G H	DRURY	
Mr.	S E	HELLIER BEM	
Colonel	J C	LOCKWOOD CBE TD DL	
Mr.	F G	PARSONS	
Mr.	L	PETHERICK	
Mrs.	C E	STACEY	
Colonel	R L	TELFER	