



The Royal Green Jackets Regimental Association

Ezine

15th Dec 2009

Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 3

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Swift and Bold

This will be the 3rd edition of the RGJRA Ezine Newsletter and is to be published on 15th of December. This publication is only circulated to RGJRA members who have a registered email address on the Database. Make sure you keep your email address up to date and empty your mailbox frequently. Current distribution is to 2856 of 5542 database users.

Forward

Welcome to this 3rd edition of the RGJRA Ezine, (electronic magazine).

We do have a mixed bag for this pre Christmas edition with a wide and varied list of contents. Hopefully you will find something to hold your interest.

The many charitable appeals continue to draw support and donations from within the Royal Green Jackets Association with at least one case of a branch organizing their own events over several months with the object of presenting a very large

cheque to The Rifles Regimental Charity. Well done the London branch!

In addition we have people walking across the Pyrenees, sponsoring art exhibitions, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa or selling battalion wristbands to raise much needed money in support of the services as a whole and The Rifles in particular.

This will be the last edition of the Ezine until June 15th 2010 but in early March if you are a full paying member of the

Association you will receive your personal copy of Swift and Bold, the RGJR Association annual magazine.

So that you receive your copy without problems please do check that your postal address is up to date on the database by the 1st February 2010 and if you do not know how to update your address please send the new details to me and I will do it for you. May I wish you all best compliments of the Season and the New Year?
Ed

The Milton Keynes Reunion 30th January 2010

The first Milton Keynes branch reunion will be held at John Howard Barracks, Yoemans Drive, Blakelands, Milton Keynes.

The timings for the reunion are as follows;

16.00 Bars open

20.00 Public address

18.00-22.00 Curry buffet available at £3 ph

23.00 Bar closes

23.59 John Howard Barracks closes

If you are not already a paying member of the Association there will be a £10 admission charge which you can convert to a one year membership subscription by completing an application form available at the door. There is also an option to pay future subscriptions by standing order or purchase a lifetime membership for a one off payment of £100

The advantages of full membership are listed in the next column.

- Free entry to the Winchester and Oxford reunions
- Full access to the Association Database and a free Association email address on application
- A free Association annual magazine
- Free entry to the Museum for the Winchester reunion weekend and half price entry for the remainder of the year
- The book Swift and Bold – A Portrait of the RGJ 1966 – 2007 is sold at half price (£16.50) to members

Paddy Proctor

Major (Retd) RGJ

Chairman:

Milton Keynes Branch RGJRA

"There will be a Chili and buffet type meal laid on. A planned Bugles display during the evening has yet to be confirmed".



4th (v) Battalion
The Royal Green Jackets

News Flash

"Hanslips (Property Buyers Agents) were proud to host a private charity art exhibition at the Rifles London Club which took place on October 7th. All proceeds are destined for the H4H charity. A future exhibition is planned with Bryn Parry in attendance".



The sponsored sword

4th (v) Battalion The Royal Green Jackets Reunion

Donna West is organising a 4(v) RGJ reunion on Saturday 30th January 2010 at G Coy West Ham TA Club.

As this will be our first reunion and we are not sure what the response will be it is going to be for ex-members only, so partners will not be invited this time. If it becomes a success then we may hold it on a permanent basis and partners will be able to attend future reunions. It will be a guest list and this is a ticket only event, so if you know of any ex-members who may be

interested please let them know,

Ticket income will cover the cost of organising the event, staff and buffet.

Please send name, address & cheques made payable to Miss D. West address below in order that tickets can be sent out to you

You will be required to bring your ticket on the night. They will not be on sale at the door.

Venue: G Company
The Cedars
Portway
West Ham

£15 3QN

Time: 18.30hrs
Date: 30th January 2010
Dress: Smart casual.
Tickets £7.50

If anyone has any questions please contact Donna or Tony on 0208 4720140

Sponsor a Bugler's Sword for The Rifles

The "Roman Pattern" drummer's/bugler's sword with a cruciform hilt was first authorised in 1856, although certain regiments had already adopted this pattern several years previously. The well known "Paulet Group" of the 68th (Durham) Light Infantry, painted in 1840, clearly shows this pattern being worn by the bugler.

The 1856, or "Swords, Bugler/Drummer Mk 1" had a 19in blade. The cruciform hilt was cast brass for drummers and cast iron for buglers. The ecusson (the point at which the guard crosses the grip) was decorated with the royal cypher. These swords were unacceptably heavy.

This continued in service until 1904 when drummer's bugler's swords were officially withdrawn, and drummers/buglers were ordered to wear the current bayonet. The wearing of a WWI bayonet, "Sword", by Rifle regiments has been carried forward to this day. With the creation of The Rifles and 7 separate Bugle Platoons and a platoon with the Rifles Band the stock of former RGJ Bugler's Swords was insufficient to equip all 8 Bugle platoons of the Regiment.

The Rifles have now obtained sufficient WWI type swords to equip all Buglers. Many former members of the forming regiments of The Rifles, their Associations and individuals have requested to sponsor a Bugler's Sword. A sponsored "Bugler's

Sword", as pictured, can have the sponsors Rank, Initials, Name dates of service engraved on the blade i.e. Cpl John Whatshisname, LI 1973-1985 and the Rifles Cap Badge engraved on the scabbard.

Those wishing to sponsor a Sword in memory of an individual may wish to precede the name with: In Memory of: Rfn Henry Newname, 3 RGJ 1980-1992 The total cost of a sponsored sword including engraving is £100.

Those wishing to sponsor a "Bugler's Sword" should complete the u/m form [HERE](#) and attach a cheque for £100 made out to: The Admin Fund The Rifles.

From RGJ to Royal Engineer TA - Dave Thornton, RE, formerly 3RGJ

The last time I wrote it was to tell you all how I and Ian Holgate ended up in a Royal Engineer TA unit in Germany. I also mentioned that the Regular Regiment with whom we are part were due to deploy to Afghanistan on OP Herrick 11. Well it is now coming to the end of November and we have been in Afghanistan since the 9th of September.

On our arrival into theatre we were first based at Camp Bastion, which is the main camp for ISAF forces in southern Afghanistan in the province of Helmand. Camp Bastion is situated in the middle of the desert making it very hard for the Taliban to attack. The first thing we had to get used to was the heat because as we arrived here it was still the summer period with temperatures of 45 degrees, I have no idea how the infantry with all the kit they carry today are able to fight in these conditions.

Day 2 of being in Camp Bastion we had a suicide bomber at the main gate which didn't cause any casualties to ISAF forces. After finishing the pre deployment training we were flown to our first tasks in the Green Zone along the Helmand River. After the main push of

RGJRA Ezine Newsletter

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Editors Notes

Please remember that this publication is only intended for on screen viewing and that attempts to print out these pages are not likely to produce good results.

the year in Operation Panthers Claw, it was our job as Royal Engineers to build patrol bases along the front line securing the area taken during the operation. The area we worked in was the Babaji District through which the Babaji road runs; this road is probably the most dangerous road in the world at the moment.

Ian and I are now part of 1 Troop and our task along with twelve other members of the Troop was to build Patrol Base Whiteside (nearly all PB's are named after soldiers killed in Afghanistan).

We had only been on the ground 8 days when we had our first casualty, our Troop commander stood on a pressure pad IED whilst on patrol causing him to lose both his legs above the knee, one of his digits and he had severe groin injuries. This obviously put moral right down even after all the good work we had done up till then. Troop is now back in Sellyoak receiving the best medical care available and we hope he recovers soon, the rehab at Hedley court will be a very long process for him with such horrific injuries. Only a few days after that incident one of the Mercian lads also stood on an IED causing him to lose his left leg. The incident only took place about two hundred meters outside the patrol base so the casualty was able to Medevac using the PB's own HLS. The Engineers were required to secure the HLS while at the same time the CSM collected the casualty and returned to await the chopper. You could see it on the faces of the guys who had never been on tour before that this suddenly became reality and that Afghanistan is a very dangerous place to be. I was required to accompany

an infantry patrol a few days ago and an eight hour patrol lasted fourteen due to the fact that just to cover a couple of kilometers of ground out here can take hours because the IED threat is so high. Certain points on the ground that are considered VPs Vulnerable Points are checked for visible signs of an IED using a type of metal detector called Valon to try to identify the metal components of an IED. The Taliban have however wised up to this and we are coming across more devices with low metal contact making it harder for us to find them. Just to prove how bad the IED threat is whilst out on the patrol we found 11 IEDs, two being command wire the rest pressure pads. We also had an Engineer IED Disposal Team with us and they destroyed the devices where they were found. When I return from RnR I will still have three and a half months of the tour to do. Hopefully it will stay as exciting as it has begun, however it doesn't want to get too exciting so we both return home safe in March. Once we do return we will then enjoy some leave before completing our last 2 months as regular soldiers and demobbing at the end of May. This will be the last tour we do. We won't be volunteering again as we have noticed the bones are starting to creak. It just takes that little bit longer to recover. I think it's time to hang up the green skin and grow old gracefully.

Until the next time.

Dave Thornton



1 Troop – Check out the RGJ berets

“I was required to accompany an infantry patrol a few days ago and an eight hour patrol lasted fourteen due to the fact that just to cover a couple of kilometers of ground out here can take hours because the IED threat is so high”.



Grenade Machine-Gun



Strike Op's

The 'Chosen Man'

"So it was this sad and inspiring tale of art and brotherhood from a fellow Green Jacket that caused me to put pen to paper. If you would like to send your condolences to Perry and his family or would like to support him with his awesome sculptures you can contact him by email at":
perryjansenchapman@msn.com



Perry Chapman at work

I've got to tell you about my recent trip to 'Sunny Somerset' where I managed to find time to take in the sights, sample the 'zider' and look up 'me old wurzel mate' from the 2nd battalion Perry Chapman.

I've known about Perry's interest in art and sculpture for a long time now, and as he no longer looks like an ex soldier - he has decided that dreadlocks, beard and a tree hugging philosophy is more to his liking - I was expecting to be confronted with some mad 'new-age' work of art! But to my surprise Perry produced a dynamic 'Chosen Man' figurine, accurate in every detail. The figure is a combat veteran, *not* a 'square bashing' barrack room soldier. I was immediately taken with the piece, but when Perry told me the reasons behind this project I decided that I would have to have one and let others know.

He said "I started the 'Chosen Man' several years ago to commemorate the formation of The 'Rifles', but with the death of my brother I put it on the shelf."

This was a shock as I hadn't seen this sad passing noted by the Regiment or the Association. Perry explained that his brother Shaun (Cpl S.E. [Canada] Chapman 2nd RGJ) lost his long battle against Leukemia in 2005. So now that The 'Rifles' are formed and with the fifth anniversary of his brother's death approaching he thought that it was time to complete the sculpture and dedicate it to Shaun. He's going to make a mould of the original and sell a limited number in bronze or steel to anyone interested - and by giving a percentage of the income generated towards 'Help for Heroes' and 'Leukaemia Research' it will furnish his brother, a 'Chosen Man' with a

deserving epitaph.

So it was this sad and inspiring tale of art and brotherhood from a fellow Green Jacket that caused me to put pen to paper.

If you would like to send your condolences to Perry and his family or would like to support him with his awesome sculptures you can contact him by email at:

perryjansenchapman@msn.com



Michael (Sam) Price

Formerly

2nd RGJ (Signals Platoon)

The Band and Bugles Reunion 2009

"Thank you for attending this year's reunion, my 6th at the helm. The raffle this year will be drawn during lunch. If you have any suggestions, complaints or questions please write, email or phone me after the weekend as I have a tendency to forget them by Sunday morning (not sure why?)"



The Band & Bugles annual 'Blow'

The reunion kicked off with the Secretary turning up late at 1130hrs – to find more than ever already in and raring to go for the 1200hrs start. He started to sign the 90 + members & Guests in and try to sell them 2010 diaries at the same time. Members of the Waterloo B&B of the Rifles arrived at approximately 12.20hrs with their kit and set up ready for this year's blow, This finished at 14.30hrs ready for the next interruption to the bar takings. The Secretary's words at 1500hrs went:-

"Good afternoon Ladies, Gentlemen, Honorary Members, New Members, Guests and those uninvited. Thank you for attending this year's reunion, my 6th at the helm. The raffle this year will be drawn during lunch. If you have any suggestions, complaints or questions please write, email or phone me after the weekend as I have a tendency to forget such things by Sunday morning (not sure why?) Since our last meeting it has been bought to the committee's attention that too many of you have drifted away from the

reunion. I will try and get it right in the future ask you all to show your thanks and appreciation to the following; Tom and his helpers for their hard work and the bar staff for their hard work now and in the next 12 hours. Members of the Waterloo Band & Bugles of the Rifles for bringing their kit along to allow some of us to have a blow and Tony Dowd and his mate for arranging the Raffle. Nearly there but not quite. I would like you all to thank the secretary for trying to get it right".

D Timms
B&B Reunion Secretary

North East Branch

May I welcome you all to the third entry to the Association "Ezine". In September we held a branch meeting at the TA Hall in South Shields, where it was decided that the expense of hiring the room and bar staff was too great a demand on our limited resources.

We are hoping to address the issue of a permanent venue very shortly and all members will be notified immediately it is confirmed for our quarterly meeting in April 2010.

Our next major meeting is on Saturday the 7th of November 2009 at the Pullman Lodge Restaurant. It will be our first annual remembrance Buffet and

disco. I am delighted to report that we have sold 96 tickets.

However, the real event obviously takes place on Sunday at Sunderland Civic Centre, where we will form up as an Association ready to take our place in the march past of the veterans. We will be accompanied by a contingent from the Rifles and the Band and Bugles, so hopefully we can all manage to rally for a regimental pace march past. We are laying two wreaths, one for our RGJ association and one for The Rifles association.

I hope you all have a good turnout in your respective Armistice Day parades and enjoy meeting up with old friends to remember our

fallen comrades who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Very soon we are hoping to have our own Association branch web page. The Association webmaster is working on this as we go to print and hopefully we will have some photographs from the weekend events for you all to see.

May I close this issue by wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a happy, healthy, prosperous 2010.

Celer et Audax

Malcolm (Don) Donnison



North East Branch Members on Parade Remembrance Sunday

"Our next major meeting is on Saturday the 7th of November 2009 at the Pullman Lodge Restaurant. It will be our first annual remembrance Buffet and disco. I am delighted to report that we have sold 96 tickets"



North East Branch Chairman John 'Jake' Cheetham

3 Rifles Wristband Appeal

My little brother, Nick Kitson, has just taken 1000 soldiers out to Afghanistan as 3 Rifles Battle Group and I promised him before he left that I would help him out with this.

Casualties are part of the job. By my calculations the average per 6 month tour is about 10 killed and 50 wounded in each battlegroup. (Yes that's a 6% chance of being killed or wounded). Already 3 Rifles has had its first casualties including a double amputee. The bottom line is that rightly or wrongly (they pretty universally believe that they are doing some good out there btw) they are risking their lives and bodies on our behalf and we need to do everything we can to support them and to show our appreciation for their sacrifices.

With the advent of organisations like "Help for Heroes", support for families in the medium and long term is good. However the battalion/ battlegroup still strives to provide much needed immediate support and assistance for the families, girlfriends and boyfriends of the dead and wounded in those devastating first hours and days after a tragedy. The battalion finances this work from funds that it raises through its wristband appeal.

Support our soldiers by contributing to the RIFLES BG3 wristband appeal (details below). Proudly wear the wristband as a sign of that support. It comes in Rifle Green with the Rifles motto "Swift and Bold" picked out in red. Forward this onto as many people as you can.

ALL the money you send will go directly to the battalion's wristband appeal where it will be used directly as it is needed. **So please send your name and address** together with a cheque (for at least £2) made out to

"CENTRAL BANK 3 RIFLES

(Wristband Appeal)"

and send to me at:

**3 Rifles Wristband Appeal
120 Court Lane
London
SE21 7EA**

You will receive your wristband/s by return postage free.

If you have not received your order within 10 days of application for the UK or 21 days for overseas please contact the order address again or email:

3rifleswristbandappeal@watsonsonline.net



"Casualties are part of the job. By my calculations the average per 6 month tour is about 10 killed and 50 wounded in each battlegroup. (Yes that's a 6% chance of being killed or wounded)."

The Museum at Winchester

The end of the year is fast approaching as the Museum prepares to close, as it always does, for Christmas and the New Year (12.30 p.m. Friday 18 December to 10 a.m. Monday 4 January 2010).

The end of the Museum's accounting year follows soon after on 31 December. Already the signs indicate a year of mixed fortunes with success in some fields and disappointment in others. Overall visitor numbers are heading for a small fall while income from gift-aided admissions and museum research are showing appreciable gains.

During the past three months (September to November) the Museum has re-assumed management of the shop from Rifles Direct. A complete facelift is planned early in the New Year with new fittings and lighting and with the merchandise removed from inside locked display cases so that visitors may examine the goods at their leisure before purchase. The inside of the front entrance to the building has also been subject to considerable change with the finishing touches due to be added shortly. The Trustees hope that these measures will appeal to visitors, add a welcoming touch and increase shop sales. Presently goods may be bought over the counter; over the telephone using a Credit/debit card; or by forwarding a cheque through the post. A website on-line purchasing facility is to be introduced in 2010.

Over the National Heritage Open Weekend on 12/13 September the Museum

offered free admission to visitors, plus the attraction of a display by The Rifles Living History Society. A total of 175 visitors were recorded, almost exactly the same number as visited over the Heritage Open Weekend in 2008.



The Rifles Living History Society at the Museum on 12 September. The Curator, Christine Pullen, is in the centre.

There have been three evening talks over the last three months completing the series for 2009. A further programme of talks begins in the New Year:

Fri 15 Jan Lunchtime Talk, Winchester:

Subject: "Napoleon's Marshals in the Peninsula"
Speaker: Natalia Griffon de Pleineville, French historian and author

Wed 10 Jan Evening Talk, London:

Subject: "2 Rifles in Helmand"
Speaker: Lt-Col Rob Thomson, CO 2 Rifles

Wed 27 Jan Evening Talk, Winchester:

Subject: "Commissions and Promotions in King George III's Army"
Speaker: Gordon Corrigan, military historian and author

Wed 10 Feb Evening Talk, Winchester:

Subject: "History in the Making: Half a Century in Broadcasting"
Speaker: Peter Snow, BBC broadcaster

Tue 30 Mar Evening Talk, Winchester:

Subject: "Italy 1943-45: Masterstroke or Mission Creep?"
Speaker: Nick Hewitt, Imperial War Museum

For more information, including booking, please visit the Museum website www.rgjmuseum.co.uk or telephone the Curator on 01962 828549.

The Museum website is constantly evolving with the addition of new material on the What's On page and an Object and Photograph of the Month.



Object of the Month, Dec 09. One of over 50 cartoons in the Museum collection drawn by Major Ian Fenwick, KRRC, killed in action 1944

More is planned for inclusion during the coming year, especially the development of on-line shopping and the build of an on-line timeline covering the Regiment's 266-year history from 1741-2007. Presently the website receives an average of 2,000 visitors per month.

Apart from improvements to the shop and website, the main effort in 2010 is planned to be focused on changes to the section covering the history of The Royal Green Jackets between 1966 and 2007, especially from 2000-07. In particular, Trustees are very interested in acquiring maps, documents, photographs,

clothing and objects that former Green Jackets may have acquired during their service post-1945 and no longer require. Now is the time to rummage through your cupboards, see what you have and don't want, and give the Curator a call on 01962 828549 – please!

To conclude, this Ezine contribution provides only a small foretaste of what is in store in 2010. Meanwhile the small team at the Museum – Christine Pullen, Ken Gray, Julie Nugent and the new Front of House/Shop Manager, Laura Swanborough – do a wonderful job with limited resources constantly looking to improve the Museum's displays and conserve the collection. The Trustees are very grateful to them.

From all at the Museum, a very Happy Christmas, and we look forward to seeing you at the Museum in 2010.

Note: To become a Friend of the Museum for a minimum subscription of £24 p.a. please e-mail the Curator at museum@royalgreenjackets.co.uk or call 01962 828549. Money raised from Friends' subscriptions is the main source of income for development of the Museum, so please do not hesitate to become a Friend and enjoy Friends' benefits including:

- free admission
- 10% of shop purchases of £5 and above
- receipt of two newsletters a year
- reduced tickets prices for entrance to Museum talks

A Battlefield Tour – The 95th Rifles at Tarbes, 20th March 1814

“There is no doubt that the Riflemen in 1814, newly armed with the Baker Rifle were very tough, for on this particular day they marched 25 miles, much of it over rough terrain, defeated a well sited French Division and eventually came to rest after their 17 hour day with no supper.”.



The Authors of the article

News Flash

Following a number of high profile charity functions specifically designed to raise money for The Rifles Benevolent Trust the London Branch of the Royal Green Jackets Regimental Association recently handed over a cheque for £7325 to The Rifles Regimental Trust Fund. Included in this figure was the sponsoring of seven, one for each battalion, Buglers swords.



Roy Bailey (ex Oxf & Bucks) laying a wreath on behalf of the RGJA Oxford Branch/Oxf & Bucks Old Comrades.

On the 8th of September 2009, a group of ten people, mostly from the local area, assembled at Haget to the north of Tarbes in South West France. This was the starting point of a battlefield tour organized by Tony “Digger” Jarrey.

Tony joined the Rifle Brigade in 1959 as a Junior Bugler and later was the Regimental Bandmaster of The Glorious Glosters from 1974 – 1983. He lives in the area and has a special interest in the fortunes of the 95th Rifles during the Peninsular War (1808 – 1814).

The tour was conducted by Colonel Michael Ayrton who, with Brigadier John Taylor recently published the book “ The Sharpest Fight – The 95th Rifles at Tarbes” . (An excellent read). Col. Ayrton conducted the tour with detailed, authentic accounts and graphic impressions of the battlefield, as it must have been.

The Oxford Branch

Oxford Reunion

It was pleasing to see so many Oxf & Bucks ties at the first reunion to be held at the new barracks. Hopefully the word will get round that a good time was had by all in our splendid new facilities with the band entertaining us as usual. Honours for the oldest man on parade almost certainly go to Sid Hester 43rd and later 6th Bn who joined up in October 1933 and who was visiting us from Canada with his daughters Wendy and Becky.

43rd & 52nd Lunch

At the suggestion of a group of ex Oxf & Bucks chaps we

A memorable, moving and even haunting picture of a battle long forgotten.

The tour followed the course taken by the light division and the 95th Rifles under the Marquis de Wellington on the 20th March 1814. The tour included visits to the site of the 95th's battle at Orleix, the tower at Orleac which was thought to be a windmill but in fact turned out to be a communications tower and was very useful as an OP during the battle.

The itinerary was based on the movements of the armies as in “ The Sharpest Fight “. Being on the actual battleground on a clear sunny day, the story became very much alive. There is no doubt that the Riflemen in 1814, newly armed with the Baker Rifle were very tough, for on this particular day they marched 25 miles, much of it over rough terrain, defeated a well sited French Division and eventually came to rest after their 17 hour day with no

supper. Though happily, our tour did end with a superb lunch at Boulin.

Tony Jarrey sounded ‘Skirmish’ on the site of the 95th's Battle and at various other places during the tour, much to the baffled amusement of some local French picnickers’.

The tour was both very illuminating and most enjoyable. Michael Ayton said that he would be happy to conduct further tours for the Association members. We all felt however, that it was a pity that no Memorial Stone marks the spot where so many 95th Rifles and French Soldiers were killed. Perhaps this could be arranged on the bi-centenary in 2014.

Colonel Michael Ayrton

and

Tony “Digger” Jarrey

The 95th Enactment Society

have provisionally organized a lunch, along the lines of the Officers Club lunches, to take place at 12.30hrs on Wednesday 21st April 2010. Partners can come and I anticipate a cost of about £20 per person incl` table wines. I will include more details and a booking form when I write out to branch members in January.

Cyprus memorial

I am sure many of you will have read about the unveiling of a memorial at Kyrenia to the 371 British servicemen killed in Cyprus in the 1950's. The Oxf & Bucks Lt Infantry were of course directly involved. A wreath was laid on our

behalf by member Roy Bailey and a photograph of this poignant moment appeared in the Daily Telegraph report of 9th October.

Death of Old Comrades

We have been notified of the following deaths within the Oxford Branch family and Old Comrades in the past year:

P Andrews, K Bateman, W C Bennett, D Craig, NCJ “Topper” Brown, K J Eglinton, O G Pratt, J M Toner, D J Wood, K Woodward.

Mike Marr
Treasurer for Committee

2 Rifles in Croydon – A Parade to Remember



“For many of the injured the parade form-up was an emotional reunion with their brother riflemen whom they had not seen since sustaining their injuries.”



News Flash

“The recent email appeal from Edward Watson to RGJR Association members in support of 3 Rifles during their current tour in Afghanistan has raised over £15,210 from the sale of wristbands as at 14 December 2009



At the funeral of Rifleman Danny Simpson the Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Margaret Mead JP, who headed a strong contingent of official representatives from the town and borough of Croydon, asked “what can we do for The Rifles”?

Within no time this genuinely heartfelt and sympathetic question was translated into a memorable “Return from Operations Parade/ Home Coming Parade” for 2 RIFLES on the 29th October 2009 in Croydon.

Two quick preliminary meetings in early September and early October at the Mitcham Road TA Centre headed by Col Ian McRobbie, the Representative Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Croydon, and attended by representatives of the Mayor’s office, local Police and TA, the Rifles Band, the Rifles Recruiting Team, 2 RIFLES Rear Ops and the London Office of The Rifles translated, without much fuss and practically no paperwork, into a very memorable parade through the centre of Croydon by 180 Riflemen of 2 RIFLES, mainly from A & C Coy.

For many of the injured the parade form-up was an emotional reunion with their brother riflemen whom they had not seen since sustaining their injuries. The subsequent arrival of

these “Selly Oak and Headley Court escapees” outside the Town Hall, in advance of the marching troops, was heralded by spontaneous cheers, a wave of emotion, flowers and sustained applause and not a few kisses as the subsequent lipstick marks bore witness!

The route to the Town Hall was in most places lined up to five deep by a genuinely welcoming, enthusiastically cheering and flag waving public. Outside the Town Hall the public was ten deep many of whom had “bagged” their places some two hours before the parade. The local police estimated an overall crowd of some 8,000 – 10,000.

At the Town Hall Madam Mayor and the other dignitaries received a General Salute and she was then invited to inspect the front rank of the parade accompanied by the parade commander Maj Carl Hickman and the CO Lt Col Rob Thomson.

After an impressive solo Last Post and Reveille, by Bugle Major Budd, and a quick eyes right the parade marched off to the Fairfield Halls for a civic reception. Some 500 guests had been invited to the civic reception; namely all the participating troops, the next of kin, parents, siblings and partners of Croydoners and Londoners in the battalion, the injured who had managed to escape from Selly Oak or Headley Court and their families and of course Rfn Simpson’s extended family. Association members of our forming regiments, local TA, Cadets and veterans plus an extensive Town & Gown list also participated.

At the civic reception Madam Mayor, Councillor Margaret Mead JP, gave the following short speech:

“Thank you very much for coming here this afternoon on this memorable day.

A home coming parade is a very special event and rightly so. I am delighted that so many Rifles, a good number of whom have been recruited from Croydon were here to march through the Town. Some of you have travelled long distances with great determination, courage, pain and discomfort but we congratulate you on achieving your own individual remarkable milestones.

A special thank you goes to your families and loved ones who are supporting you and have been able to come with you today.

Some of you have very serious injuries and we know today is very emotional but you need to know how much it means to us that you are here today to take part. Well done. You are so brave and we all wish you well on your road to recovery and a new life.

None of us can imagine the stress and emotion many families have suffered but I know both the Army and the TA are giving great support and TA personnel do a grand job serving alongside their regular comrades in arms.

Employers also play a vital part in giving TA men and women, who have voluntarily given up their civilian jobs to serve for nearly a year, the security of tenure of their jobs, even in these difficult and challenging economic times.

Today is an opportunity for everyone in Croydon to show their gratitude and respect for what you have done and are doing on behalf of all of us.

Earlier today I announced that The Rifles are to be offered the Freedom of the London Borough of Croydon. There are processes to go through for the Army and the Council but I hope that in the not too distant future The Rifles may be seen again marching through Croydon town.

Thank you again for your part in today’s Home Coming parade. All in all a happy day of mixed emotions, remembering those that are no longer with us, pleased to have our injured amongst us and witness their infectious determination and that of their families, revelling in the genuine public support and that of the citizens of Croydon and glad to be back home.

Thank you Croydon”.

2 Rifles Afghanistan – The end of a Tour by Alasdair Ross

2009 has been the year the Rifles have become the most well known regiment in the British Army, 5 Rifles were the key unit in the handover of Basra to the Iraqi people and the other 4 Rifle Battalions have all fought with amazing bravery in Afghanistan. 1 Rifles started the year in Sangin with 2 Rifles arriving in April for seven months of very hard fighting where they were later joined by 4 Rifles and then handing over the mantle to 3 Rifles. On top of that numerous members of our TA Battalions- 6 and 7 Rifles have fought alongside their regular comrades.

But you all know that, what does that mean to us as Green Jackets, well most of 2 and 4 are former member of the two Green Jacket

Battalions and there were also ex Green Jackets serving in the other 3 Battalions. Also throughout this part of Asia you can find other Green Jobs, some now with our friends from Hereford, those in Private security and now the 2 most senior British Generals in Afghanistan are Green Jackets- Carter and Parker.

I was fortunate enough to make a short guest appearance with 2 Rifles and I can tell you that we should be immensely proud of The Rifles; they carry on the great traditions of the Royal Green Jackets, brave, heroic, great soldiers plus still with the p*** taking that as Green Jackets we all excelled at.

The Rifles are also proud of the way the former

supported them whether it was parcels and letters sent to us or the attendance of Association members at Wootton Bassett or at the numerous funerals held throughout the country.

We are all rifleman – for me one of the most telling examples of this link between the Rifles and our great Regiment was at the funeral of a young Rifleman in Mansfield, our first fatality in 2 Rifles, where in the same graveyard as Rfn Sheldon was laid to rest former Green Jackets and serving members of the Rifles also took time to visit the grave of a Green Jacket who had been killed in Northern Ireland.

You should be proud of the Rifles as much as they are proud of being in a Regiment that descends from ours.

Thank you for your support.



The Old and the New working together

“I was fortunate enough to make a short guest appearance with 2 Rifles and I can tell you that we should be immensely proud of The Rifles; they carry on the great traditions of the Royal Green Jackets, brave, heroic, great soldiers plus still with the piss taking that as Green Jackets we all excelled at.”

2 Rifles Welcomed Home by the People of Liverpool

On returning from Afghanistan 2 RIFLES had a huge welcome from the people of Merseyside, this area being one of their main recruiting locations.

After a wreath laying Ceremony at St. George's Hall War Memorial they marched through the town through tremendous cheering crowds to a

Reception at Liverpool Town Hall, there they were welcomed by the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, Dame Lorna Muirhead, and the Lord Mayor Councillor Mike Storey. Both the Merseyside ACF RIFLES badged cadet detachments supported the occasion, firstly at the Cenotaph and carrying wreaths for

the VIP's. They also formed a Guard of Honour at the Town Hall.

BBC TV were so impressed by the Army Cadets that they requested to interview them at their detachment which was granted and they then were included in the Political Show on 8th., November, and gave an excellent account of themselves plus a great image of the Army Cadet Force



Captain Nick Mazzie stops to congratulate the cadets.



interview with Cpl. John Simpson. Cadet Lauren Hughes and Cpl. John Simpson.

New `Forces Reunited` Series for Sky TV

Leopard Films are currently filming a TV series for SKY television and are looking for people who are hoping to be reunited with old friends that they haven't seen for a number of years.

Presented by Fiona Phillips for Sky Real Lives, FORCES REUNITED (working title) will bring into sharp focus the dedication, danger and loneliness of those serving in the British Armed Forces, through tales of bravery, love,

loyalty and friendship. From fathers returning from the present conflict to be introduced to their baby for the first time, to reuniting World War II buddies after many decades, Forces Reunited will

showcase amazing stories from past and present personnel. If you are attending a reunion over the next month or you are thinking of arranging one we would be really keen to speak to you.

e: benwellington@leopardfilms.com
Telephone number: 0207 704 3330

The Climbing of Kilimanjaro in Aid of our Wounded



The Climbers



Kilimanjaro

After months of waiting, fundraising, buying kit, packing and re-packing we were finally at Machame Gate, 1800 metres above sea level ready for the off! The pace somewhat different from what some of us are used to was slow and steady as we ascended through the Jungle up to our 1st camp. 6 hours later and a few 1st hand outside toilet experiences for the ladies we had arrived to find the tents had been set up by the porters and it was time for the admin to be sorted, a brief on the next day and food! Who'd of thought it Hot Chocolate (Milo) and fresh warm popcorn ready for us in the food tents! I am still unsure how the cooks managed to serve us the food that they did, unbelievable!

Sleeping at altitude is certainly an experience people were not expecting, not sure that 1st night if I could tell whether I was asleep or not most of the time, very weird experience!

On the summit day we had set off an hour or so after many of the other groups had departed so not to get stuck in traffic as we climbed. The whole group was amazing with moral high for the 1st few hours of this cold night. I know the only mistake I made in those 1st few hours was to keep looking up at the train of lights ahead of us, would they ever get any closer?? Or in fact would they ever get to the top?? As it got colder the harder the night got, camelbaks started to freeze, faces started to go numb and hair (those of you that still have some!) started to resemble icicles...remind me why we did this again?? Inevitably the group split again, everyone finding their

own pace enabling them to keep going. Point to note, if anybody reading this decides to attempt this little walk it might be an idea to pop a couple of Imodium for this part of the climb otherwise like me you will be greeted on one of the many rest periods by a lesser spotted rugby player wearing a bright red waterproof jacket sitting in the snow at about 4500metres above sea level taking a huge unload..... Pleasant, thanks Pete!

As the sun started to break through the cloud our group was approaching Stella point about 5700 metres above sea level, at this point things were the toughest I have ever experienced. Trying to walk 3 steps in a straight line was beyond me! I can only describe it to be being drunk, without having drunk anything! A short break, and from out of nowhere a cup of hot sweet tea was forced into my hand, it wasn't PG tips but it did the trick. A final push to Stella point and then easy to the Summitwell that is what I was thinking anyway!

You can almost taste the success when you reach Stella Point, it can't be that far now surely? The track was somewhat flatter than the last 7 hours but still unbelievably difficult to walk on, back to being drunk again. A lot of support from the group we were walking in finally got us to the Summit at Uhuru Peak, (to put this into context, as we flew from Nairobi to Kilimanjaro 5 days before, we flew at cruising height past the Mountain and we were below where we stood now!) 5895 metres above sea level at 0845hrs local time with the flag of The Rifles flying, a can of Fosters

opened and the names of the fallen and injured troops in our hearts.

Things started to go a little wrong up here for people now, another one of the guys had to be rushed down (after he was propped up to have his photo taken at the Summit sign) by the porters and the Doc, if my memory serves me right it took only 45 minutes to get him down to base camp with the aid of 5 porters, it took us about 4 hours by the way! Photoshop done! Now the only thing we had to do is get down, an experience in its own right, and as most people will confirm all sense of humour and achievement soon disappears. Imagine skiing down volcanic ash and dirt, in driving snow and wind after walking up hill for 9 hours...oh yeah and you haven't got ski's on! Fun eh? Lost count the amount of times I was on my backside.

A couple more of the group have by now started to get ill and are being rushed back to base camp, which is a welcome sight 4 hours later. A quick meal and head down for an hour whilst the rest of the group makes its way down the mountain.

3pm kit packed and back on our feet and down to High Camp, 3797metres above sea level, about another 4 hours and still downhill, not good on the knees or toes but knowing there will be a Beer waiting for us when we get there! A great sense of achievement was in the air that night but unfortunately 2 of the girls were sent back down before reaching the summit, they both did unbelievably well but it was unsafe for them to continue, I'm sure both of them will attempt it again!!! A couple of well deserved beers and dinner before being in bed by 8pm and asleep by 5 past!

"On the summit day we had set off an hour or so after many of the other groups had departed so not to get stuck in traffic as we climbed. The whole group was amazing with moral high for the 1st few hours of this cold night. I know the only mistake I made in those 1st few hours was to keep looking up at the train of lights ahead of us, would they ever get any closer??"

News Flash

"The climb on Africa's Mount Kilimanjaro managed to raise over £140,000 for H4H and those that took part are truly an amazing bunch of people, well done everyone!"



Rifles on the Summit

Richard Matters Walks for the Rifles Regimental Charities

Richard Matters (a Green Jacket from 1974 – 2005) has now walked the Way of St James, also known as the Camino de Santiago de Compostella, across the north of Spain from the Pyrenees mountains to within a few miles of the Atlantic coast. He started on Sunday 4th October and finished about 5 weeks later. Richard is raising funds for the Rifles Regimental Charities upon which serving and former members together

with their families are dependant. This includes those of the former and antecedent regiments that are the forerunners of the Rifles.

Assistance takes the form of disability adaptation, such as stairlifts, mobility equipment, wheelchairs, and a host of other means of alleviating hardship for members of The Rifles family.

The current level of operations in Afghanistan has resulted in a large numbers of casualties in battalions of The Rifles, and given the likelihood of a continued military presence in that country, calls on the regimental charities can only increase.

Dig deep and many thanks,

Richard Matters.

Please donate to

<http://www.justgiving.com/Richard-Matters>



Richard Matters ex RGJ

The Riflemen's Club (Cyprus) Update

Latest news is that Major General JH Gordon CBE (Late RGJ), currently the Commander British Forces here in Cyprus, has agreed to be our first President and Alfie Fisher has kindly volunteered his services as the Entertainments Secretary.

We hosted members from the Ox & Bucks LI Association (Roy Bailey & Geoff Day), who were visiting the island as part of the Cyprus Memorial Trust, as they were here to attend the unveiling ceremony of a Memorial at the British Cemetery in Kyrenia on the 8th November

honouring former colleagues from the 1955-1959 troubles. Three members of the Riflemen's Club (Alfie Fisher, John Arnold & Ken Ridgway) also attended the ceremony at Kyrenia before later joining Tony Watson (Riflemen's Club Secretary) & Maurice Newman at the Arsinoe Hotel in Limassol. We were later joined by another former Oxf & Bucks LI colleague, Geoff Anderson who resides just outside Limassol and expressed a wish to Join the Riflemen's Club.

A visit to the UN Buffer Zone in early December is planned for members and their partners.

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of David Smith, our founder

member. He passed away on the 20th October 2009 and is now amongst fellow Riflemen at Dhekelia Military Cemetery. David served with the 60th KRRC, Green Jackets and Royal Green Jackets before transferring to the Royal Military Police. A great colleague and fellow Rifleman, who will be missed by everyone, and our thoughts and best wishes, go out to his family.

The new point of contact for all matters relating to the Riflemen's Club (Cyprus) is Tony Watson who can be contacted by email:

tonywatson1@hotmail.com
or

Telephone: 00357 99088387



Members of The Rifleman's Club in Cyprus

"It is with great sadness that we announce the death of David Smith, our founder member. He passed away on the 20th October 2009 and is now amongst fellow Riflemen at Dhekelia Military Cemetery."

An 1847 Military General Service Medal

An 1847 Military General Service Medal, with the 11 clasps of

Corunna,
Busaco,
Fuentes d'Onor,
Ciudad Rodrigo,
Badajoz,
Salamanca,

Vittoria,
Pyrenees,
St Sebastian,
Orthes
and Toulouse was awarded to W. Carden, a bugler in the 95th Foot.

There were only five soldiers recorded with this rank on

the roll and consequently the medal is rare. The pre-sale estimate in the December 10th auction was £4,000 and this was quickly exceeded, the final selling price being £7,820.



“LOVE’S FAREWELL” SINGLE CD

The Band and Bugles of The Rifles in conjunction with John Tams have recorded 2 tracks from their repertoire and are bringing out a CD in December 09. This single will contain the tracks “Love’s Farewell” and “Over The Hills” and retails at £4.99. All profits will be shared between Help for Heroes and The Rifles Charities .

CLICK - To listen to the title track and download now for £1

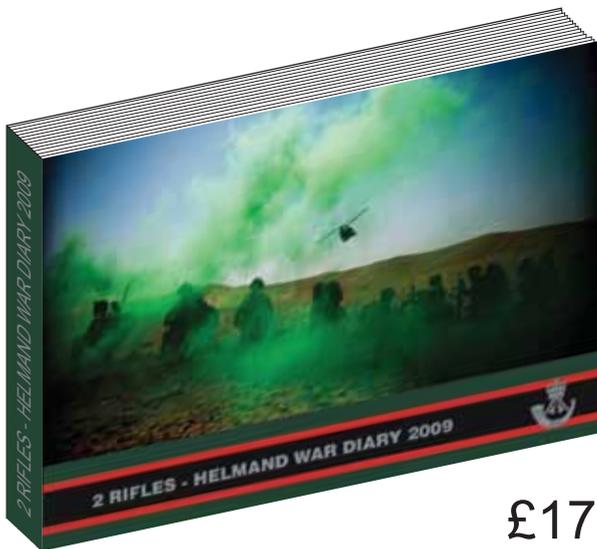


£4.99



Final product may vary from the one shown

2 RIFLES - HELMAND WAR DIARY 2009



£17.99



Final product may vary from the one shown

Using a combination of pictures with detailed captions and written vignettes the book describes the Battlegroup’s way of life and operations. Lavishly illustrated with pictures on every page and a glossy cover this paperback book tells the story of their tour in Helmand from April to November 2009. At 210 x 297mm and 200 pages it is the perfect size for your coffee table.

The book will be published in January 2010 and launched at CO 2 RIFLES talk at Davies Street on 20th January. All profits from the book sale will go to The Rifles Charities.

To pre-order please click [HERE](#).

Obituary Notices

Please click name for details

Sjt S McGrath	16	Sept
Ray Michael	18	Sept
Drury Robert (Garth)	23	Sept
Steadman Harry	25	Sept
Hearn Shane (Col)	26	Sept
Townsend Terry	26	Sept
Lowman Pat	26	Sept
Wetering Gerald AW	10	Oct
Keyes Steve	11	Oct
Pateman Colin	13	Oct
Goody Derek	18	Oct
Smith Steve (Gidda)	18	Oct
Smith Dave	20	Oct
Payne Kenneth S	26	Oct
Furness Dave (Flossie)	?	Oct
Sjt P Scott	5	Nov
Birdsall Norman	6	Nov
Rfn P Allen	7	Nov
Rfn S J Bassett	8	Nov
Rfn A E Fentiman	15	Nov
Kenney-herbert	17	Nov
Richard L Mather	22	Nov
Peter Uden	28	Nov
Bob Carpenter	5	Dec

Forecast of Events Jan – March 2010

- Jan** Fri 1st Royal Green Jackets Regimental Birthday.
- Jan** Sat 30th 4th (v) Bn Royal Green Jackets Reunion from 18.30hrs at G Company, The Cedars, Portway, West Ham, E15 3QN. Tickets only from Donna or Tony at £7.50 a head. For more information please telephone.
- Feb** Thurs 18th KRRC/F Company, 7th Rifles Band Concert. Davies Street starts 1900hrs. Tickets from KRRC Hon Secretary, Richard C Frost MBE. Please make cheques payable to Central Fund, The London Regiment.
- Mar** Sat 6th The Royal Green Jackets End Ex Party, 3rd Anniversary at The Railway Tavern, Stratford, London, E15 1DB hosted by Jan and Tommy Dooner and starting at 19.30. An on line booking form for attendance and accommodation is available by clicking below this text.

RGJ End Ex 3rd Anniversary Party, 2010

The 3rd anniversary party for the RGJ End Ex is provisionally booked with Jan and Tommy at The Railway Tavern as indicated above.

Anyone wishing to attend should click [HERE](#) to be taken to an on line form

which when completed will be auto sent to Tommy and Jan as a booking slip. As ever there is limited accommodation at The Railway Tavern which will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Advice on alternative

accommodation that may be available close to the venue can be obtained through Jan and Tommy.

Depending on the numbers who book for the evening a buffet will be laid on. The cost per head will be £5

A Different view of the Queens Body Guard - Gentlemen at Arms

Following on from the excellent article by Peter Chamberlin in the last issue here is the Queen's Bodyguard as you may not have seen them before – at the St James Palace urinals. The picture is by artist Jeremy Houghton, who was last year invited to paint the Gentlemen at Arms (as they are called) for their 500th

anniversary. Houghton, 35, did various pictures of the chaps in their finery and was allowed to 'follow them everywhere'. He took them at their word. The moment shown here was just before the Queen inspected her official bodyguard and presented the Gentlemen with a new

standard.

The picture will be part of a forthcoming exhibition at Eton. The guilty men shown presenting more than their arms are, left to right: Major W Petro, Lt Col Rory Ingleby-Mackenzie MBE, Col Sir Brian Bartelot Bt OBE, Col Peter Flach MBE, Major Oliver Howard and Major Charles Macfarlane.



An ode to English plurals

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,
Yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.
If the plural of man is always called men,
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?

If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,
And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?
Then one may be that, and three would be those,
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.
We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren.