



Riflemen's News

The Royal Green Jackets

1st January 2000

Issue No: 05

MESSAGE FROM REPRESENTATIVE COLONEL COMMANDANT RGJ

As we end this Millennium, I am happy to report that the Regiment is in excellent shape. Both regular battalions are widely acknowledged as leaders in their particular fields. Our 4 TA companies are establishing themselves as significant entities within their new battalions. Our cadets increase in numbers and activities, and the RGJ Association has achieved status alongside the Associations of our former Regiments. 1999 was the first year in which they marched past the Cenotaph in their own right. All this augurs well for the new Millennium but it requires each and every one of us to support the Regiment as actively as possible to ensure that we continue to prosper. If each of us could recruit one new Rifleman each year, we would be moving closer to the targets that we MUST achieve. Go to it!

NEWS FROM THE BATTALIONS

1 RGJ

Life here in Palace Barracks is now beginning to settle down after the trauma of the Marching Season. Before covering that period it is important to bring everyone fully up to date with rumour control, scandal and gossip.

First of all we say a sad farewell to WO1 RSM Edwards MBE who has just been commissioned and takes over as Families Officer. WO1 RSM Cochrane took over on 16 Jul 99 and is now firmly in the chair. The Battalion held a sounding of retreat back in January and managed to bring some of the Old and Bold over for the occasion. Danny Hunt even managed a smile which sent a

few shivers down the spines of the people who knew him from many years ago. The evening started with cocktail parties in both the Officers and WO's and Sergeants Messes and was a great success with the Light Division Band stealing the limelight as usual.

We have had a number of high profile visits including General Vyvyan and Field Marshal Bramall, who were as keen as ever to hear what the Riflemen had to say. We then started to prepare for the Marching Season with a company from within the Battalion running the whole of the Brigade Public Order training. A few black eyes and sore legs later and we were ready for whatever the situation decided to throw at us. In the end it turned out to be the quietest

Marching Season ever known which was good news for all concerned.

Out of Province and Adventure training are now the main focus for the coming months, with expeditions to Zimbabwe, Spain Gibraltar and Cornwall!

Summer came on a Tuesday this year and we all made the best of the sun but the rain was back again on Wednesday as usual.

The inter Company Summer and Winter Shield Competitions are beginning to gain momentum with football, tug of war, rugby and squash all being played. Competition seems to be the way ahead with all the Rifle Platoons taking part in the Bramall Trophy. The competition took 14 hours for each platoon amounting to four days to get everyone through. Events

included command tasks, fitness, driving skills, first aid, Regimental history and range work as well as a bit of singing! The Mortar Platoon were overall winners with the Machine Gun Platoon coming second.

Some of our Riflemen have managed to get away to France on a Battlefield Tour and others had a chance to get out on the streets of London on a KAPE tour seeking recruits for the future. The Battalion is due to discover our next posting soon and we are waiting expectantly with bated breath with Blackpool and Tidworth equal favourites at present.

On the sporting front we have done well with yet more Riflemen trying out for the Army Rugby team as well as two officers rowing for the Army and further Riflemen chosen to play Hockey for the Army. As well as all this the Battalion Football Team is doing great things as well. The inter company boxing was a huge success with B Company ending up overall winners. The Battalion now box 1 WFR at Ballykinler next month in the Grade 3 Novice Inter Unit Army Boxing Championships.

Welcomes/Internal Moves:

WO2 Roberts returns as RQMS(T)
WO2 Brown returns as CSM HQ Coy
WO2 Dunne returns as CSM C Coy
CSgt Caws returns as RSWO
Sgt Lemin returns as Sigs SNCO
Sgt Barkes returns to the Trg Wing
Sgt Owen returns from ITC Catterick

Farewells/Postings

WO2 Brain leaves on completion of 22 years.
WO2 Melia is posted to Oman
WO2 McCartney is posted to the London Regt.
CSgt Thompson is posted to Germany
Sgt Wright is posted to ITC Warminster

Promotions

Sgt Stubbs to CSgt MG Platoon
Sgt Cowan to CQMS 9 R Irish
Sgt Homby to Csgt AIO
Sgt Pemberton to CSgt CQMS
B Coy

2 RGJ

The Battalion has now been deployed on OP AGRICOLA 2 in

Kosovo since the end of September. Our area of operation (AO) encompasses the urban sprawl of Pristina - the provincial capital - as well as a few small hamlets on the outskirts of the city.

We are part of Multi-National Brigade (Centre)(MNB(C)), whose HQ is founded upon HQ 19 Mech Bde, usually based in Catterick. Also in MNB(C) are the QDG(including a company of RHF); sappers from 38 Regt RE; and gunners from 26 Regt RA. The multi-national elements include Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, Finns and our sister Regiment, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. Also with the Brigade AO are the Russians (guarding the airport just west of Pristina) and we have a battalion of Italian Carabinieri operating around the City. We really do belong to a Polyglot organisation.

B, R and S Coys are all operating in a dismounted role, equipped with Snatch and Wolf Landrovers, and each have a company AO within the City. A Coy is based just outside the City with it's Warriors and operates as Surge/Ops Coy as well as acting as the Bde reserve. Patrolling is the staple operational activity, by foot and by mobile, and there are a considerable number of teams living amongst the few remaining Serbs, affording them close protection. Increasingly we are mounting proactive operations to reassure those whose safety is threatened and to deter and interdict the mischief-makers who are intent on contravening the various political and military agreements. In this task we operate alongside the UN International Police (UNIP) and each Coy is co-located with a UNIP station, as is Bn HQ. The UNIP ranks have just been swelled by the arrival of 60 RUC who bring with them a good deal of experience in joint military/police operations.

The tour so far has had its fair share of minor excitements with plenty of weapon finds and arrests following shooting and grenade attacks. KFOR are still regarded as the saviours of Kosovo by most of the population so there is little direct threat to us at the moment. Driving in the Balkans, however, is still a life threatening activity and the Battalion was lucky not to lose anyone in a large fire at R Coy's

location in late October. As it was several soldiers were injured in the fire and as a result of a subsequent traffic accident. With winter approaching it is a timely warning to all. That said, there is every indication at the moment that the tour will continue to be challenging and exciting and the Battalion is held in high regard by our masters.

A number of personalities are due to change over during the tour, Maj Kitson returns to take over S Coy from Maj Corden-Lloyd; Capt Richardson replaces Maj Copinger-Symes as Adjutant, WO2 Holland returns as CSM A Coy taking over from WO2 Jeffreys; and CSgt Martin steps up to CQMS R Coy vice CSgt Logan. We also have over 150 TA and Reservists with us in Kosovo and a special mention must go to the two LCpl McCabes' who are back with us again having also served in Bosnia last year.

The Battalion returns to Paderborn in late March for some well earned leave which will be followed by a period of individual training cadres for potential JNCOs and Support Platoons. We will also be parading in Winchester and Milton Keynes in July, followed by a wide ranging KAPE tour.

LONDONS (RGJ)

F and G Coys have now fully integrated into the London Regiment, the process is slow but the RSM is beginning to learn more about Light Division Drill.

The year as always has been busy for the Riflemen, notably we have 13 soldiers away with 2 RGJ in Kosovo. This ranges from the rank of CSM to Rfn. Word has it that things are pretty busy in Pristina and that they are having a challenge.

The Adjutant hopes to get another skiing trip off the ground, this year he is trying to take 25 of the boys to France to emulate the success of Ex COCKNEY GREEN SLIDE in Steibis last year.

The Battalion are currently planning for next years summer camp in Romania. Whether it ever happens or not is another thing and if it doesn't then F and G Coys are likely to join in 1 RGJ's Battle Exercise in England.

The Oxford Street Millennium parade

is planned for 23 July when F and G Coy will have a major part to play in the parade and are looking forward to marching with the Band of the Light Division.

The new Millennium is of course a gear challenge for all the RGJ soldiers in the London Regiment, we are in the process of selecting a Regimental tie for the Londons and an appropriate and politically correct flash.

1999 was a particularly sad year for 4(V)RGJ but the spirit of the Rifleman lives on in F and G Coys.

RRV (RGJ)

The first few months following the formation of the Royal Rifle Volunteers (RRV) from an amalgamation of 5 RGJ, elements of 6/7 PWRR and 2 RGBW are now behind us.

For those readers who are still unsure how SDR affected 5 RGJ the results are as follows:

We have RGJ Rifle Coys in the following locations:

A(RGJ)Coy has 2 Platoons and the Waterloo Band(V) in Oxford with the MILAN Pl in High Wycombe. E(RGJ)Coy in Milton Keynes has 2 Rifle Platoons and a Mortar Platoon. The remainder of the RRV is located as follows:

A mixed capbadge Bn HQ and B(RGBW)Coy in Reading with a Platoon in Swindon and C(PWRR)Coy in Portsmouth with a Platoon on the Isle of Wight.

We have to be fully operational by April 2000, the following training is planned to enable us to achieve this target.

January sees the start of a cadre period, run over 4 weekends at Rollestone Camp, Salisbury Plain, for all the specialist platoons as well as driver, signals and medical training and a recruit cadre which will inject even more new Riflemen into the Companies. The period will culminate with a live firing weekend that will involve all platoon and Bn support weapons systems firing.

During the above training a Battalion Study Day is planned, this is to be held in Larkhill. It is intended that the entire Battalion command structure down to Pl Sgts will attend. The aim of the Study Day will be to consider aspects of

fighting power in order to assist junior commanders within the RRV to appreciate the capabilities of infantry weapons systems.

The TA National Recruiting Day is on 25 March and will see all 7 Coy and Pl locations open to host a similarly successful event to the held last year.

The Bn has a SAAM planned for the 1st and 2nd of April. This is where we will select the team to enter the 4 Div SAAM and hopefully progress to the TASSM. It will also provide a final chance for those who still need to pass the APWT for Bounty purposes together with some much needed shooting practice.

Over the coming months numerous Coy training weekends are planned to allow Coy Comds to plan and conduct their own training. Each Coy will be tested on FTX's at Coy level run by Bn HQ. Each Coy being tested will have its own 'slice' of support arms whilst the enemy will come from elements of another Coy.

We will be running 1ix Executive Stretch again in May, this year based at Longmoor. This 1ix allows local firms to place their employees in the hands of the RRV for 2 days of command tasks and other military activities.

June will see the first RRV Cocktail Party and Sounding of Retreat, exact details are still to be confirmed, but the location of the event will be Reading.

The Freedom of Milton Keynes will be exercised on 2 July. The parade is being coordinated by 2 RGJ and more details will be made available when known.

Our Camp this year will take place in September where we will provide the OPFOR for the newly formed 16 Air Assault Brigade.

The coming months for both A and E (RGJ) Coys of the newly formed RRV will be extremely busy, however, there is no doubt that they will both carry out all training with the same professional attitude that is the true mark of a Royal Green Jacket.

TRAINING NEWS

ITC CATTERICK

Throughout 1999 the Infantry Training Centre at Catterick has continued to produce soldiers

ready to take their place in operational battalions.

This year the relevance of this training has been underlined, with trainees regularly passing out and going on to deploy to their Battalions in an operational theatre within a few days. This has especially been the case with soldiers joining 1 RGJ in Belfast and 2 RGJ in Kosovo.

There has been a marked improvement in the transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2 training using both a concerted effort to improve the passage of information to the trainees, and also by trying to stem some of the Discharge as of Right (DAOR) applications which sometimes occur early in a trainee's time at Catterick. There are now formal Week 3 and Week 11 briefings for recruits. These aim to dispel some of the myths about Catterick and provide a 'look forward' from Winchester. To aid this a combined Light Division weekend was held at Winchester in the summer, which allowed all Permanent Staff from both locations to understand what happens at their 2 respective locations. There were a number of presentations including subjects such as Phase 1 training, Phase 2 training, recruiting and the requirements of the Battalions themselves. The day was then rounded off by a visit to the town centre, which was much enjoyed by all.

Many Light Division platoons are arriving at Catterick and being trained by non-Light Division training teams. To combat this, the mentor system has continued, and been expanded upon. Each Company has a Green Jacket NCO allocated to keep an eye on it, and to be a point of contact for the trainees, thus providing some Regimental input. Regimental Gatherings have continued for the trainees and are held quarterly with input and appearances from the RRI. These provide an opportunity for the Light Division trainees to get together in an informal situation and see what light exists at the end of the tunnel, as well as allowing the Permanent Staff to get together.

This year has put even more demands on the Field Army and it has never been more important to produce the maximum output possible without a drop in the quality of the trainees. Currently there are 27 Green Jacket Permanent Staff at the ITC with Lt Col David Brown commanding the

1st Battalion. Major Adam Foucar left earlier in the year and was replaced by a Light Infantry Company Commander. The bulk of work continues to be done by the JNCOs who work long hours with the trainees. Arrivals this year include a brief appearance by WO2 Melia, and on a more permanent scaling, Sgts Cox and Darby, and Cpls Noon and Wright from 1 RGJ. Arrivals from 2 RGJ include Sgts Cameron and Kenworthy plus Cpls Case and Sharman. Those departing from the ITC include Cpls French and Richardson to 1 RGJ and Capt Wilson, Cpl McCrieth and Cpl Roberts to 2 RGJ.

Training at Catterick continues to adapt to the requirements of the Field Army. From January 2000 the organisation of the Light Role Infantry platoon changes and the ITC is reflecting this in the training. There is now less emphasis on Signals and the 51mm mortar with an increase in skill at arms and training on the GPMG. More time is being spent on fieldcraft and for the first time the trainees will be doing an Operations in Built Up Areas exercise. Training will continue for the foreseeable future. Thus there is greater emphasis to keep alive the traditions and values held most dear by all Green Jackets.

ATR WINCHESTER

C Company ATR Winchester continues to fly the Green Jacket flag at Winchester although the numbers for Green Jackets being trained at any one time rarely numbers more than 45.

Phase I training is constantly being reviewed and there have been numerous rumours as to our future here. We are sitting tight for the moment although by next April, the Army Foundation Scheme (AFS) Company where all the recruits do three weeks induction training before coming to us, will probably be scrapped. The recruits will do one weeks induction within the company followed by twelve weeks

training before moving on to Catterick for the Combat Infantryman's Course. This will increase the number of Light Division platoons in training from 3 to 4. Further rumours depend on the success or failure of the Infantry's wish to combine all Phase 1 and Phase 2 training in a centralised location. This would almost certainly mean our departure from Winchester and, with the exception of Regimental Headquarters and the Museum, the cutting of links with the City.

Wastage rates continue to occupy the mind as we continue to lose around 20% through voluntary release, medical or unsuitable discharges. Sixteen year old recruits of slight build are particularly vulnerable to failure. Moves are afoot to cut down on the number of "risk" entries which might help our wastage rate but could mean fewer recruits reaching Phase 2.

Whatever the future holds, C Company will be here for the next Green Jacket reunion in the summer.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

**Commander in Chiefs
Commendation**

Rfn MD Fail Gibbon 2 RGJ

REGIMENTAL MUSEUM

A number of improvements are being made to the RGJ Museum over the winter.

A Regimental Gallery and hospitality area, Band display case, and an updated Recent History Section, 1966 - 2000, are being added.

EXHIBITS WANTED - HELP

The Museum Trustees are short of photographs, maps and memorabilia for new displays covering Northern Ireland (1969 onwards), the Gulf War and the Balkans (Bosnia and Kosovo). They would also welcome

knowledge of any other material you may have covering the period 1966-2000. If you have items in your possession which you would be prepared to donate or loan to the Museum, please contact the Curator, Major Ken Gray - Tel Civ 01962 -828549 Mil 94271 5149. Whatever the items and/or their condition, we want to hear from you.

SOUND OF LIGHT THE BAND AND BUGLES OF THE LIGHT DIVISION

This superb new double compact disc is now available from the Regimental Museum.

The discounted price to past and present members is £11.99 plus £1.00 P&P. Orders enclosing payment should be sent to: The Curator, RGJ Museum, Peninsula Barracks, Winchester SO23 8TS (cheques made payable to the RGJ Museum Trading Company)

RGJ ASSOCIATION REUNION NEWS

Readers should note that there is no longer a RGJ Reunion at Davies Street on Cup Final Night.

The Annual Reunion takes place at Sir John Moore Barracks, Winchester on Saturday 8th July 2000.

Please pass this information on to anyone you know that used to attend.

MILLENNIUM DIARY

Readers can still order Regimental Millennium Celebration Diaries. They are £3 each. Orders enclosing payment should be sent to:

**Asst Sec RGJ Assn, RHQ
RGJ, Peninsula Barracks,
Winchester SO23 8TS**
(Cheques should be made payable to the RGJ Association)