



# Riflemens' News

The Royal Green Jackets

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## MESSAGE FROM REPRESENTATIVE COLONEL COMMANDANT RGJ

*The events of the first six months of this new millennium have served well to promote further the good name of the Regiment. 1 RGJ describe themselves as having been 'in the trenches with the odd fighting patrol'. But their life is about to become more satisfying for the Riflemen with the battalion taking on complete responsibility for North and West Belfast, and for operations in the border areas. They are now preparing for operations across the Province. 2 RGJ have returned from yet another Balkan tour of duty, this time in Kosovo with their name very prominently in the public eye and acknowledgement for a job really well done. Both battalions are well recognised for their high standards of professionalism. Our four Green Jackets badged TA Coys are leading the way in their new Battalions with F and G Coys recently taking first and second place in the highly coveted Courage Trophy in a field of 28 TA Coys drawn from across London's TA. Our TA Riflemen from all four Coys are also providing excellent reinforcement support to the Regular Battalions. Such successes do much to enhance an already awesome reputation. Well done to you all.*

*The future - The Mayor's Millennium Parade on 1 July in Winchester where we exercise our Freedom with other military units, followed by the Freedom Parade in Milton Keynes on 2 July will keep the Regiment in the Public Eye. We must maximise our recruiting efforts in the light of all these positive events. And I am happy to report that both recruiting and retention together are on the verge of producing two full strength battalions for the first time in years. This is a notable achievement and the efforts of all involved are to be applauded. Keep at it. The next step is to move from up to strength to over strength.*

*The Regimental Association Reunion on 8 July promises to be the best yet. I am looking forward to seeing many of you there. Please make the effort to come.*

## NEWS OF THE FUTURE

### 1 RGJ

**We are now halfway through our two year tour in Palace Barracks.**

As a result of the decision to rear-base the Belfast Roulement Bn to the mainland we now control the whole of North and

West Belfast with one company forward in Girdwood Camp. We still maintain the security of Palace Barracks and run the wider Holywood Station. Our third deployable company has been re-designated the "Expeditionary Company" with a wider remit to undertake operations anywhere in

Province

The most immediate challenge will be to support the RUC during the marching season in July and August. After a quiet Easter, the political situation remains uncertain. We anticipate an increasing number of Expeditionary Company deployments beyond the 39 Inf

Bde area into South Armagh and over to East Tyrone in the coming months.

In September the Battalion are due to deploy on Ex **QUEBEC VENTURE**. This will be conducted at Otterburn and Kielder as well as various locations in Galloway and Dumfries. This will not only provide a brief respite from operations in Province, but will also allow us to address some of the more conventional war fighting skills which inevitably have taken a back seat to the specific skills and tactics required in Northern Ireland. We are hoping to get members of the RRV and the London Regt involved in this exercise.

On the sporting front we will again enter various competitions run in Province. We have enjoyed some excellent achievements so far this year at individual and team level. Having finished as runners up in the last Northern Ireland novices boxing championships this year we will be looking to win it this time. Rugby has seen some major success with 4 members of the battalion regularly playing for the Infantry and Army Teams. We won the Northern Ireland Rugby 7's title and are, at the time of writing, taking part in the Army competition at Aldershot. Over and above those established gladiators, the remainder of the battalion will be competing for the inter-company Summer and Winter Shields.

A number of personalities are due to change soon. Lt Col JIS **Plastow** assumes command of the battalion from Lt Col D St J **Homer** who in turn takes up a post in HQNI on promotion. CSgt **McCaffrey** returns from

the London Regt to take over from WO2 **Fozzard** as CSM A Company, and WO2 **Couzens** takes over from WO2 **Brown** as CSM HQ Company.

In summary, the battalion has seen an increase in its operational tempo as a result of radical changes across the Province. The fact that we are busy on every front merely serves to provide greater focus to our activities. We still have a year to go and undoubtedly many more challenges to meet.

## 2 RGJ

**The Battalion is now back in Paderborn having completed OP AGRICOLA 2 and it's well earned post operational tour leave.**

We are now looking forward to a stable year before returning to the Balkans in April 2001 for our third tour in as many years!

Training and Cadres will dominate the period up to Summer leave in August. The JNCO Cadre will be sponsored by A Company - under the command of Maj **Plummer** - and the usual raft of Support Company Cadres will bring the traditional influx of new faces into the Mortar, Recce and Anti Tank Platoons. When the battalion reforms after leave it will start the process of acquainting itself with war fighting, including a 20 Armd Bde concentration at the Drawsko-Pomorski training area. November will see the platoon and section commanders being subjected to a bit of pressure as they are put through their paces on a Cadre run by B Company under Maj **Sanders**.

R Company - under Maj

**Noble** - will be taking part in Freedom Parades in Winchester and Milton Keynes over the first weekend of July. This will be followed by an extensive KAPE tour. With recruiting highlighted for particular attention, each of the companies will be sending "Satisfied Soldiers" to all of the RGJ ACIOs for a week long project.

Inter Company sport will feature highly with hockey, cricket, athletics, basketball, rugby, football and boxing competitions being hotly contested, in the quest to find the Champion Company.

After Christmas the Battalion begin preparations for our tour of duty in Bosnia.

A number of Battalion personalities will change over the next six months. Maj **Doran** returns to take over A Coy from Maj **Plummer** and Maj **Thomson** takes over R Coy from Maj **Noble**. Capt **Grey** will replace Capt **Gilbert** as Families Officer, the latter moving to the Training Wing. Capt **Needham** is moving to the QMs department as QM(T). Capt **Wilson** will take over the Anti Tank platoon and Capt **Wingfield** the Mortar platoon. WO2 **Halford** will take over as CSM S Coy from WO2 **Blackman**. CSgt **Matthews** finishes as CQMS A Coy to take over from WO2 **Burke** as CSM B Coy with Sgt **Hurley** returning from ITC Catterick to be CQMS A Coy.

In conclusion, the next few months are certain to be busy and full of surprising new challenges. We will face up to all that comes our way with traditional Green Jacket professionalism and pride

## LONDONS (RGJ)

We have enjoyed a busy first quarter including a visit from the Mayor of Newham who was particularly impressed by the ability of our CQMS CSgt Burridge to produce a halal lunch!

Still reeling from our achievements in the Courage Trophy we are looking forward to preparations for Annual Camp in Romania and to providing support to F Coy in the Oxford Street Millennium procession.

Annual Camp is in September and will consist of an exercise in the Carpathian mountains, field firing and joint training with the Romania Army. R&R will be spent in the capital Bucharest.

After Annual Camp we are into the ceremonial season including the Lord Mayor's Show, Remembrance Sunday and various Livery Company guards. Hopefully we will be able to get an opportunity to use up the grenades and 94mm that the RAF won't let us take on the aircraft to Romania! We also aim to provide some dismounts for 2 RGJ in Poland.

June unfortunately sees us bidding farewell to WO2 **Holtham** on completion of 22 years service, he departs with our very best wishes for the future. CSgt **McCaffrey** also returns to 1 RGJ on promotion and is replaced by CSgt **Comer**. Other movements saw Maj **Uyl** moving to 2RGR in April and was replaced by Maj **Potter R Anglian**, CSgt **Conzens** returned to 1 RGJ on promotion and was replaced by CSgt **Murphy** as Mortar PSI. Lt Col

James **Cunliffe** arrives as CO London Regt in October.

## RRV (RGJ)

### A (RGJ) Coy

A very successful TA Day on 25th March produced a dozen potential recruits and we currently have nineteen in the training cycle. This intake is the basis of forming the second platoon at Oxford in January 2001.

It is also a good start towards achieving the target of 35 recruits set by the Commanding Officer.

Most of the training weekends in May and June will be taken up with drill practice in preparation for the Freedom of Milton Keynes on 2 May. We take part along with E Coy, 2RGJ and the Light Div Band. Although our involvement is mainly in support roles such as guards and ushers we are looking forward to what is a RGJ family day.

July will see us, along with the rest of the RRV moving across the border to Scotland to take part in Ex **EAGLE STRIKE** with the newly formed 16 Air Assault Brigade. We will be acting as enemy which will test the company at all levels and we are keen to give a good account of ourselves. We hope to be able to take some recruits and give them a "baptism by fire". There is no TA R&R day planned which goes to show how the TA is changing and becoming more accountable.

Unfortunately we will not get the chance to visit the Regiment during Green Jacket Week because of Camp but we will be there in spirit. In the later part

of July and early August we will be supporting the Cadet Camps with instructors and equipment. The focus from then on will be on the CPX with E Coy in October on SPTA. This will hopefully be supported by the Riflemen of both coys.

The Remembrance Parade in Oxford will be a higher profile event than in previous years with the Waterloo Band taking part together with a strong company presence followed closely by December and the usual round of social events.

On the recruiting and PR front the Coy RRTT are taking part in the following important events across the County: The Lord Mayor of Oxford's parade in May, Bicester Carnival and the Royal British Legion Tattoo in June. We hope to get even more recruits and spread the Regimental Message at these events.

To look forward briefly to 2001, we will be taking a composite Company to Cyprus. We hope that this will have a positive effect on both recruiting and attendance.

### E (RGJ) Coy

**The coming months will be extremely busy for the men of "E" Company. In July we have the freedom of Milton Keynes taking place on Sunday 2 July.**

In addition to E Coy the following RGJ elements will be participating, a guard from R Coy 2 RGJ, a guard from the ACF - being provided by I Coy, and last, but not least, an Association guard made up from the branches at Aylesbury, Oxford and here at Milton Keynes. This is the first time that the complete RGJ family will be on parade and we look

opposition for the newly formed 16 Air Assault Brigade and should prove to be an interesting, though demanding exercise. The platoons will be deploying directly into the field and will remain tactical throughout the 2 weeks of Camp.

The WO's and Sgts Mess have been given the task of organising and running the RRV Christmas Draw on 2 Dec under the guidance of the CSM, WO2 Barry, the standards for other companies to follow will be set!

We also look forward to welcoming the following personnel back following their service with the regular army: Sgt N Loydon from RMTTC at Chilwell, LCpl D Maccuaig from Kosovo with 2 RGJ, Rfn M Holt and Rfn G Phillips back from 1 RGJ in Belfast. On a sadder note the imminent departure of Sgt M Dicks on commissioning and posting to another company looms ever closer. He will be the oldest second lieutenant ever (allegedly!)

We continue to recruit and train to the best of our ability in true Green Jacket fashion.

## **ITC CATTERICK**

**ITC Catterick continues to produce soldiers ready to take their place on operations.**

Frequently trainees pass out and find themselves in an operational theatre sometimes within only a few days. This is particularly evident for the Riflemen joining 1 and 2 RGJ.

There have been some changes to the training programme here at ITC and indeed a combined phase one and phase two programme was re-introduced in May. This will be similar to the old 22 week basic training course but has been extended to 24 weeks. It is pleasing to report that this part of the trial will be run by a Light Division training team. The introduction of Operations in Built up Areas training has proved to be a worthwhile addition and has been a great success. The reintroduction of GPMG training has provided

greater variety and interest and results in an enhanced capability, which was obviously lacking at platoon level.

The course loading system often means that non RGJ staff instruct Light Division platoons but wherever possible this is kept to a minimum. The Mentor system whereby each company is allocated a RGJ NCO continues to be a success in providing a point of contact and advice, and importantly to supply a feeling of Regimental integrity for the trainees.

27 of the permanent staff posts here are occupied by RGJ personnel with Lt Col DW Brown commanding the 1st Bn.

Recent new arrivals have included Cpl Atkinson and Cpl Dennis from 1 RGJ and Lt Egan and Sgt Ryder from 2 RGJ. Departing with our thanks are Cpl French from 1 RGJ and Sgt Healy from 2 RGJ.

Infantry training at ITC Catterick reflects the requirements of an ever more committed Field Army and as such draws increasingly upon the expertise and dedication of the JNCO's here, who put in many extra hours to ensure the success of the Trainees when posted to their Battalions.

## **ATR WINCHESTER**

**The uncertainty of the future of training Green Jacket recruits at Winchester continues but there have been no concrete developments to date.**

The infantry is still keen to combine Phase 1 and Phase 2 training at a centralised location and we currently have a Light Division training team from ITC Catterick with us, looking at our training methods before trialing a platoon early this summer. If this trial cuts down wastage rates, the infantry will have to argue its case before any agreement to combine the two phases of training is made.

As mentioned in the last issue, the Army Foundation Scheme (AFS) Company here has now been

scrapped and recruits do a one week induction course instead prior to immediate entry to Phase 1 training, which remains at 11 weeks. The whole 12 weeks training will be done with C Company and 20 (Corunna) Platoon have been formed to cope with the extra numbers. If all platoons in the company are full, C Company will be training total of 240 recruits of which 160 will be Light Division.

In addition to the Army Air Corps in the Company manned by AAC instructors, we are now training AGC (SPS), RAC, RLC, R Sigs, Int Corps, RGBW, RRW RWF and even Military Police recruits! We are delighted to report that the Infantry recruits continue to do well and the Company has won the Winchester Cup for the Best Section in an intake nine times out of the last twelve. (This despite the fact RHQ have tried to make the competition cheat proof!) We also look forward to retaining the trophy for the shoot against the Winchester and District branch of the Association which we won with recruits in their third week of training.

The Association weekend over 8/9 July will be occupying some of our energies this summer when we look forward to meeting many of you.

## **HONOURS AND AWARDS**

### **New Year Honours 2000**

**CB**

**Major General ARD Pringle PJHQ**

**MBE**

**Lt Col F Cox ACF NW London  
WO1 MJ Morgan Waterloo Band  
WO1 AF Hands 20 CTT**

### **Operational Honours 2000**

**QCVS**

**Major MR Winsloe  
Lt S Coulson Int Corps att 1RGJ**

*dsk/min.prod.*