



Riflemens' News

The Royal Green Jackets

1st June 2001

Issue No: 08

MESSAGE FROM THE REGIMENTAL COLONEL COMMANDANT RGJ

As we look forward to the next six months, there is already much going on. 1 RGJ have arrived in Weeton Camp and are busy turning it into a camp fit for Riflemen. 2 RGJ are back in Bosnia, but because they are well up to strength, and this is their third Balkan tour in three years, they are rotating the companies at the three month stage. This has gone down particularly well with the families who have endured more than their fair share of separation. We wish both battalions well in their new assignments.

The TA companies and the Cadets are being particularly hard hit by training restrictions caused by foot and mouth disease and by shortages in Man Training Days but, in a true Rifleman-like way, are striving even harder to work round these difficulties and achieve productive training, in order to gain the necessary qualifications and earn promotions.

The Association is wrestling with the issues of being self sufficient as an even bigger and better edition of Swift and Bold is distributed and another, better organised, Reunion looms.

Plans for the first regimentally organised Battlefield Tour to France in 2002 are well advanced and the inaugural Greenjackets Durbar is already filling up for the week 13-20 October 2001.

These are just a few of the areas of activity in which the Green Jackets family is showing the way. As I prepare for my own retirement in the Autumn, I am particularly struck by the way all elements of the Regiment are supporting each other, a real band of brothers. I am happy to tell you also that we are fast approaching full manning and have an exceptionally high operational reputation. All this further increases the good name of the Regiment.

NEWS OF THE FUTURE

1 RGJ

The Battalion is settled in at Weeton Camp, 5 miles from the centre of Blackpool, with the tower visible on a clear day.

With our own training area and skills house within the Camp perimeter, we have been the only unit in the Brigade able to carry out individual and

collective training up to platoon level.

This month, as part of our new role as Arduous/Mountain troops, we are sending approximately 20 men to attend a Mountain Cadre with the Royal Highland Fusiliers in Scotland.

Exercise **POND JUMP WEST** in Canada during July and August will be the highlight of our training year. It will

provide us with excellent opportunities for field firing and company training without the restrictions we have had to endure during the foot and mouth crisis, as well as allowing us to make use of the fantastic adventure training facilities in the Rockies and the ever popular R&R out there in Canada and America.

On return, the time will be spent carrying out RAAT tasks,

the Bramall Trophy, our Inter Platoon Competition, followed by a Battalion SAAM. Now that we have Sgt **Page** as Battalion Recruiting SNCO we will also be kept busy providing Satisfied Soldiers to all our recruiting centres and along with the RRP providing platoons/companies for KAPE tours up and down the Country.

All of this will lead to the culmination of this years training when we will take on the role of Spearhead Land Element and be ready for deployment world wide at short notice. We are looking forward to this exciting new role

2 RGJ

As we write we are midway through our deployment to Bosnia on OP PALATINE. The main body are in post awaiting the arrival of Challengers, Warriors, CVR(T) and other support vehicles.

The Battalion deployment has been split into a two company rotation in order that the Riflemen can spend more time with their families.

B and C Coys deploy first into Banja Luka Metal Factory and Mrkonjic Grad Shoe Factory and will be replaced by A and R Coys at the end of July. Battle Group HQ has moved into the Mrkonjic Bus Depot. During the deployment there are plenty of opportunities for the platoons to conduct adventure training at Brač and field firing at Manjaca.

A number of TA Volunteers and Regular Reservists have joined the Battalion as reinforcements for the duration

of the deployment. By now they will be fully integrated into the Battle Group.

On our return from Bosnia we will be running JNCO, Mortar, Milan, Warrior Gunnery and Driving Cadres. It is also planned to enter a team in the Cambrian March Competition. In the longer term we shall be preparing for our move to Warminster in early 2002.

There are a number of changes taking place in the Battalion over the coming months. Maj **Bull** has taken over as Bn 2IC until July when he will replace Maj **Sanders** as OC B Coy. Capt **Richardson** leaves for RMA Sandhurst in August and Maj **Emck** returns as Bn 2IC. WO1 **Bullard** has taken over as RSM from WO1 **Lee** who has been commissioned and is now Unit Welfare Officer. WO2 **Aveston** assumes an appointment as RQMS in Belize in August, while WO2 **Fawcett** returns to the Bn as RQMS(T).

The remaining part of 2001 will be taken up with the Recce Platoon entering a team for the Cambrian Patrol Competition, and the remainder of the Company involved in live firing, battlefield tours and study weekends.

LONDONS (RGJ)

Over the next six months F (RGJ) Company will be busy with Annual Camp at Pirbright where we will be administering CENTSAM and undertaking promotional cadres.

We will be sending eight Riflemen to Cyprus with the RRV on Ex LION STAR with

the flights being funded by the Regimental Trustees.

After block leave in August we have two Regimental training weekends, one field firing at CPTA the other involving a Battlefield tour during September. There is also a Company Officers and SNCOs dinner night at Davies Street.

October sees us providing a Guard of Honour for the Haberdashers' Company, field training over one weekend and taking part in the Regimental CPX on another.

During November we will be taking part in Remembrance Day parades/services and ITD weekend training.

Finally in December we will be involved in Company weekend field firing, and the much looked forward to Regimental Carol Service at St Georges, Hanover Square.

Training in G (RGJ) Company has been cut back dramatically during the foot and mouth crisis and some quick thinking had to be done to plan how to utilise all the extra training time.

In fact the time will be well spent by doing some extra company recruiting and personal weapon training.

At the time of writing we are busily preparing for annual camp which has been split this year between being the admin unit for CENTSAM and battalion run cadres.

There have been a number of changes within G (RGJ) Company: Lt **Sykes** and **Edgar** have joined the company and the following promotions have

taken place: Cpl **Read** to Sgt, LCpl **Bathram** to Cpl, Rfn **Chamberlain** and **Gallagher** to LCpl.

Towards the end of the year we will be heavily involved with the Lord Mayors Parade, Remembrance Sunday and other ceremonial commitments, finishing up with the Regimental Carol Service in St Georges, Hanover Square - a fitting way to end the year with Riflemen past and present.

RRV (RGJ)

A(RGJ) Coy aim to carry on with the successful promotion of our Regiment within Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

Our recruiting efforts continue, concentrating on High Wycombe where we are keen to establish a rifle section to complement the existing Mortar platoon. The Infantry appears to be more attractive to the young than the Royal Signals also co-located there and our efforts are paying off.

In Oxfordshire we will support The Lord Mayor of Bicester's Carnival in July, FOX FMs party in the park in Oxford and we plan to donate a Christmas Tree and lights to the City of Oxford. The Waterloo Band will perform a Carol Concert at the Lord Mayor's grand "switch on".

July sees us leading a multi cap badged Company Group on Ex LION SUN in Cyprus, when elements of E Coy will be with us. We hope that the new CO Lt Col **Winser** will visit during the climax of the exercise, an amphibious landing.

Members of the Company not involved in Ex LION SUN will attend annual camp at Sennybridge. The MILAN Pl are hoping to join 2 RGJ in Germany for a training exercise.

We say a fond farewell to Maj **Truman** who hands over command to Maj **Griffin** at the end of July.

To summarise we are in good shape and in a strong position to meet the challenges ahead.

Here at E (RGJ) Coy foot and mouth disease has severely affected the communities in which we live.

One implication of the measures taken to control the disease has been the severe constraints placed upon training, particularly weekend FTXs and career courses.

As these notes are written, we are beginning to feel a little more optimistic about foot and mouth. Ex **EXECUTIVE STRETCH** (the annual civilian management development weekend) is now back on the agenda, and we hope to see a return to normality before too long.

The RRVs main deployment to Cyprus should be unaffected by foot and mouth. Lt **Turner** and Sgt **Ansell** will be deploying 10 Pl as part of the composite A Coy Gp (being found from across the RRV), and hope to be in the sunshine by July, all things being equal.

The remainder of the Coy are looking forward to a live firing package at Sennybridge in September, which will give us the chance to catch up on the "field time" we have missed this year.

We have welcomed 2Lts **Ridley** and **Toomey** into the Coy, one of whom is likely to take over 10 Pl when Lt **Turner** moves to A/Tk Pl at High Wycombe after Cyprus.

Recruitment figures for 2001 are well up on 2000, so we hope to be despatching the core of a second rifle platoon on CIC later this year, which will mean that E Coy is approaching critical mass for the first time in years.

The Mor Pls style has not been cramped by the fact that several of the key personalities have deployed on operations to the Former Republic of Yugoslavia, but we are looking forward to "the return of the prodigal sons" in the autumn.

Finally, Maj **Clark** will hand over command of the Coy to Capt **Smith** (the current 2IC) at some point in the next six months, as he moves on to become the 2IC at 145 Bde BSTT. He has led the Coy with style through a difficult, transitional period in its history, and we wish him the best of luck in his new appointment.

ITC CATTERICK

Life at the ITC remains busy and full of challenges. Field firing at Warcop has been disrupted by the Commoners Rights dispute but the foot and mouth outbreak has had a much more serious effect, closing all training areas.

With no option but to freeze training it might mean that soldiers will be arriving in Battalions early with only

limited exercise and shooting experience but there is a slight possibility that we may be able to secure training areas in Scotland.

The trial for the Combat Infantryman's Course (Single) continues successfully. The reduced wastage rate of combining Phase 1 and 2 has been an obvious advantage, whilst training teams have gained from being able to train recruits from start to finish. It now appears that within the next 18 months we will see the infantry training all soldiers in a single phase.

The opportunities for RGJ permanent staff to get away continue to be good with Lt Davis recently joining the PWO as part of a range team in the Oman for 6 weeks. Earlier in the year Cpl Evans completed a skiing course in France.

27 of the permanent staff posts here are occupied by RGJ personnel. Recent arrivals included Cpl Bell, Cpl Barclay and Cpl Hodges from 1 RGJ and Maj Roberts Lt Davis and Cpl Case from 2 RGJ. Departing with thanks include Cpl Dennis, Cpl O'Connor and Cpl Braithwaite to 1 RGJ and Capt Scrase-Dickins to 9 RIR and Sgt Cox to 2 RGJ.

ATR WINCHESTER

Times are certainly changing in the training world, and nowhere are these changes more obvious than at the Army Training Regiment (Winchester).

'Project Straight-through' - a plan to minimise the amount of time recruits have in which to

get 'cold feet' prior to the start of training - has meant that there are as many Royal Green Jackets training other arms as there are training the Light Division. This has led to a noticeable change in the attitudes of the training teams and has probably been a good thing for the Officers and NCOs of the Regiment to endure.

The flip side of the coin is that for the first time Light Division recruits are being trained by AGC instructors. The impact that this will have on the recruits is unclear and it will certainly be interesting to see how they fare at Catterick alongside their more conventionally trained brethren. One thing is certain, the stands will be full of anxious Light Division experts (if there is such a thing) during the pass out parade.

The issue of non infantry cap badged personnel training future steely-eyed dealers of death co-exists uncomfortably with the other major development here, the relocation of all infantry training (phase 1 and 2) to Catterick. Although Catterick is not ready for such a move as yet, it has now very much become a case of when rather than if simply because the current phase 1 syllabus is not turning out enough recruits of suitable robustness to fuel the infantry's need, a failing that is not helped by the difficulties experienced in trying to maintain cap-badge integrity throughout training. It seems to be a great shame that it is now too late to return to the old depot system, particularly since no-one really seems to know

what will happen to "The Home of the Light Division" once all the Light Division recruits are moved north.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

Armed Forces Operational
List No 15

CBE

Brigadier JMJ Balfour OBE

REGIMENTAL DIARY 2001

Regimental Pocket Diaries for 2002 can be ordered now. They cost £3 each and are ideal presents for family and friends.

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)

REGIMENTAL CHRISTMAS CARDS

The RGJ Association sell the same Christmas cards as the RGJ Officers Club, but without ribbon. The cost is £3.50 for 10. This years card is a colour reproduction of the picture The Rifle Brigade in Canada 1870 a winter scene of Riflemen in action wearing snow shoes and firing the Whitworth Rifle. Orders enclosing payment should be sent to:

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