

"OUT & ABOUT"



HOME HEADQUARTERS
THE ROYAL DRAGOON GUARDS



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AUGUST 2003

Some of you may have read my foreword in the Journal. The last seven or eight months really have been most bizarre, no better encapsulated than the Regiment's sudden and hasty departure back to England to fight fires at the end of the OCA visit to Munster in March. One minute we were there having a wonderful weekend of parades, sport and entertainment with our Old Comrades, and the next we were on buses driving back to Cumbria, Yorkshire, Northumberland and Kent to cover the fireman's strike. And then, when we got there, we spent two days getting our Green Goddesses ready and re-occupying our temporary fire stations before the strike was called off fifteen hours before it was due to start and we all got back on our buses and went back to Germany. Total cost to the taxpayer – about £33,000; and that was our seventh trip backwards and forwards, most at relatively short notice!

I am delighted to say that Op FRESCO, which was interesting and fun in the early days but frustrating and intrusive latterly, is finally over and the Regiment now has a clear direction for the next twelve months. At present, the bulk of the Regiment is in Canada providing the OPFOR or enemy to the exercising battlegroups at the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS); it is from there that I am writing. We finally arrived out here in late April and will finish at the end of October but, thanks to the cancellation of one of the Medicine Man exercises in the middle of the training season, the deployment now includes a six week window back in Germany during August and late September. That has been a real bonus; it means we can take summer leave with our families and begin the rather daunting task of sorting out our tanks and trucks back in Munster, many of which were cannibalised or 'loaned' to the units deploying to Iraq on Op TELIC.

BATUS really is an amazing facility, undoubtedly the best in the world, and a fantastic training opportunity. At the height of the season, there will be nearly 5000 soldiers here (5% of the Army), exercising in almost a thousand square miles of seemingly limitless Canadian prairie, and the high tech gadgetry to facilitate that training is extraordinarily impressive. The 'live' battles are fought using weapon simulators – in effect lasers to simulate bullets and shells – which are fitted to every firing platform. Each soldier and vehicle on the battlefield is electronically tagged with a satellite beacon and every action we take – moving, firing a shot, hitting or missing, selecting a different nature of ammunition, climbing off the vehicle, putting on our gas mask and so on – is recorded

by the electronic monitors which we wear night and day and beamed back to Exercise Control (Excon).

The complete battle picture is then played out live on a huge 30 ft by 30 ft digital map at Excon and in turn beamed back to the laptop computers of the exercise controllers on the ground, who can see at a glance what every tank or infantryman is doing and what they are firing at. If you try and drive through a river without a bridge, the system will beam a message to the on board computers that will stop your vehicle moving and kill your radios, whilst announcing, in a very polite female voice, that you have now drowned! If you step into a minefield, the same polite female will inform you in your Personal Audio Connector Device (an earpiece) that your leg has just been blown off and

you need to start hopping! The thing I find most uncomfortable is the gas mask monitor which measures the amount of breath you put through your respirator. If you don't put your gas mask on in the requisite nine seconds or if you try and sneak a breath whilst you are in a chemical environment, the system remotely kills you. Even going for a 'shovel recce' with big brother watching is now a surreal experience and I have to admit that once or twice I have felt like saying 'I'm a Commanding Officer ... get me out of here'! All rather difficult to describe unless you have experienced it but in the modern lexicon I guess it's a bit like a combination of a giant game of paintball, Playstation 3 and 1984 all rolled into one – horribly realistic but, of course, it works and there is no better proof of the quality of our training and the British Army's professionalism than the astonishing success we have recently witnessed in Iraq.

Once this OPFOR tour is finished, we then enter our Training Year in 2004, which will be another extremely busy eight months, followed, on present plans, by a six month deployment to Iraq in November next year; never a dull moment in the modern Army!

Let me finish by expressing my thanks to all those members of the OCA who took the trouble to come and visit us in Munster in March. Secretly, I had hoped that more would answer the clarion call but I can genuinely say that every member of the Regiment thoroughly enjoyed entertaining you and the pleasure and pride that you appeared to derive from the visit was a huge fillip to all of us.

COMMANDING OFFICERS NOTES



LT COL NCC FREEMAN

BOURNEVILLE, BOISEY le CHATEL AND s-HERTOGENBOSCH 2004

Arrangements are already being made by towns and villages in France and Holland to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of their liberation. Booking on ferries and cross channel services will be heavy, hence this initial feeler to decide on our requirements. We are well aware that our likely attendees are already in the endangered species bracket and may not be able to travel next year. A further letter quoting costs and full details and calling for a firm commitment and deposit will be circulated later following initial expressions of interest. As Bourneville prefer a visit on the actual date of their liberation, we plan to attend on 27 August. Boissey-le-Châtel was liberated the previous day. s'Her-
togenbosch propose to dedicate a new memorial which will list all who were killed during the battle for their city and this will include their annual day of remembrance, the 25 October.

ACTION required by all who intend to travel: Brain into fast forward and complete the proforma at the end of the Newsletter indicating how many are likely to travel in your party and preferred accommodation requirement.

60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE D-DAY LANDINGS - CREULLY JUNE 4 - 8 2004

As stated in the last Newsletter, hotel accommodation during this period is very heavily booked and disappointment awaits many who have not pre-booked. HHQ have reserved accommodation (Bed & Breakfast) at the Chateau du Baffy, Colombiers-sur Seulles, 2 kilometres from Creully, and organised a coach departing 4 June returning 8 June 2004. Individual Creully Club members have already booked in and deposits received. There are 3 twin rooms remaining at this moment in time. We do have a number of reserves awaiting allocation of rooms but wish to offer these to D-Day veterans in the first instance. This will be your last opportunity for these rooms which will be allocated in mid September if no further veteran takers are forthcoming. (Please telephone HHQ ASP). The coach, ferry, accommodation and Remembrance lunch have been booked as a package. The cost of the package (coach, ferry, accommodation and Remembrance lunch) is £245 for those occupying twin rooms and £290 for single. Should you wish to book please forward your deposit (payable to 'HHQ RDG') of £100 per person to HHQ as soon as possible. Quite naturally, the price could alter slightly due to currency fluctuations. Considering how far in the future this event is, you are strongly advised to take out cancellation insurance.

Remembrance Lunch 6th June: Due to an expected increase in numbers, lunch on the 6th June will be in the Chateau du Baffy and not the Hostellerie St Martin. Cost of lunch will be £25 for those not booked on the package. Would those making their own arrangements please book in for lunch using the proforma at the end of the Newsletter.

CENOTAPH PARADE REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2003

The RBL will be organising the Ex-Service contingent attending the Parade and Service at the Cenotaph, Whitehall on Sunday 9 November. Those who have served under command of British Forces and War Widows are eligible. Please be aware that standing in Whitehall for at least an hour and then marching at least a mile and a half, possibly in inclement weather, can be physically demanding. Anyone wishing for tickets, which are required, should apply to HHQ by 5 September. HHQ will then bid for tickets on your behalf.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE WESTMINSTER ABBEY 6 NOVEMBER 2003

The opening ceremony for this year's Field of Remembrance Ceremony will take place on Thursday 6th November at approximately 1120 hrs. (*RDG Plot Number 192*). Members are requested to be in position by 1100 hrs at the latest. For safety and security reasons, only one nominated person per regiment/association will be allowed to stand in front of each plot irrespective of its size (this person should be clearly identifiable). All other persons must stand in the area at the rear of the plots, and should remain in position until after the departure from the field of the reviewing party.

Following the service a buffet lunch will be available in the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, at a cost of £7.00. Please notify HHQ if you require lunch in order that bookings can be made. Please follow up your telephone booking with a cheque payable to 'HHQ RDG'. A Committee Meeting, for Committee members will take place after lunch, to be held in the Conference Room, Royal Hospital.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

This years Christmas Card, which should once again prove popular is taken from an MA Hayes Watercolour, *Inniskilling Dragoons 1835*. Orders for this year's card can now be placed. The card will be available at a cost of 35p plus p&p. Early ordering is advised in order to avoid disappointment later. Those with access to the internet can see an example of the card on the 'Notice' page of the museum web site. (www.rdg museum.org.uk) (A poor black/white example is on page 7)

STOCKING FILLER!

A suggestion for the man who has everything! A limited stock of the 1998 Video Recording of the Regimental Standard Parade is still available from HHQ at a cost of £15 plus p&p.

How to Survive a Heart Attack Alone – This article could save your life

Let's say it's 6.15pm and you're driving home (alone of course), after an unusually hard day. Suddenly you start experiencing severe pain in your chest that starts to radiate out into your arm and up into your jaw. You are only about five miles from the hospital nearest your home; unfortunately you don't know if you'll be able to make it that far.

What can you do? You may have been trained in CPR but the course neglected to tell you how to perform it on yourself. Since many people are alone when they suffer a heart attack, this article seemed to be in order. Without help, the person whose heart stops beating properly and who begins to feel faint, has about 10 seconds left before losing consciousness. However, these victims can help themselves by coughing repeatedly and very vigorously. A deep breath should be taken before each cough. The cough must be deep and prolonged, as when producing sputum from deep inside the chest. And a cough must be repeated about every 2 seconds without let up until help arrives, or until the heart is felt to be beating normally again. Deep breaths get oxygen into the lungs and coughing movements squeeze the heart and keep the blood circulating. The squeezing pressure on the heart also helps it regain normal rhythm. In this way, heart attack victims can get to a hospital. Tell as many other people as possible about this, it could save their lives! *From Health Cares, Rochester General Hospital via Chapter 240s newsletter AND THE BEAT GOES ON ... (reprint from The Mended Hearts, Inc, publication, Heart Response).*

HELP - Skins Car Badge

Lawrence Payne, ex Skins Band is looking for an older version of the Skins Car Badge for a classic car. The type he is seeking is round type made in the 1960s and early 1970s. Anyone who can help please contact him on Tel: 01202 625375.

THE SECOND WORLD WAR EXPERIENCE CENTRE

The Second World War Experience Centre was created to save a crucial part of our heritage. The aim of the Centre is to rescue the surviving personal evidence of the men and women who participated in WWII in whatever capacity. We are concerned not only with prominent soldiers, sailors and airmen, but with the daily civilian and military experience of all manner of men, women and children in every community during wartime, both Allied and Axis. The collection we are preserving for posterity includes wartime letters, diaries, photographs, maps, newspapers, books, official papers and 'three-dimensional material' evoking the period as well as tape-recorded interviews with veterans. The intention is to make such material available to researchers, students and to the general public so that an understanding of the experience of those who fought in this conflict can be developed and remembered. Should any member have WWII material or recollections they would be willing to record, either in written or tape-recorded form, please contact the Centre. If anyone has a few hours to spare on a regular basis, we have an urgent need for more voluntary help, for example in tape-recording veterans for our oral archive. The Second World War Experience Centre, 6-8 York Place, Leeds, West Yorkshire LSL 2DS. Tel: (0113) 2450475 Fax: (0113) 2349265 E-Mail: enquiries@war-experience.org Website: <http://www.war-experience.org>

Palestine Reunion Day by Jeff Jeffreys

A reunion for members of the Forces and Palestine Police will again be held at Eden Camp Museum, Malton, on Saturday 18 October 2003. Entry to the Museum site is again free to those members that served in Palestine between 1945 and 1948, plus spouses/partners and supporters. The programme for the day will be similar to previous years. The NAAFI Restaurant will be open by 10am, and I suggest we meet up there soon after it opens and have a chat and a coffee/drink. The parade will form up at 12 noon for a short march/stroll! to the Camp Cenotaph. The Camp Administrator will make a short welcome address, which will be followed by one from a former senior Army Officer and a Palestine Policeman. After the sounding of the Last Post and Reveille, wreaths will be laid. I will lay the wreath on behalf of the Regiment. The formal part of the day finishes with the singing of The Holy City (The Palestine Police Anthem) and the National Anthem, both accompanied by the York Concert Band. Those attending will find a display of Palestine memorabilia in Hut 13 and a display of Police uniforms in Hut 22. Plaques dedicated to both Military and Police will be found in the Chapel of Remembrance, Hut 29. Last year we had 12 members of the Regiment present, plus some spouses/partners. Perhaps we could raise a few more this year! Please wear your medals if attending, and a beret and badge (if possible). Wearing a nametag would be helpful. I look forward to seeing you in the NAAFI at 10am!

OBITUARIES

We regret to inform members of the following and offer sincere condolences to all relatives and friends

Mr D CALEY, 5 INNIS DG, 1945 - 49, 72 Hurst Park Road, Twyford, Reading, Berkshire,
who died 6 May 2003

Mr WH CLARKE, 4/7DG, Wartime, 1 Farm Close, Pentrigh, Ripley, Derbyshire,
who died 23 April 2003

Mr PJ CRANSTON, 5 INNIS DG, 1970 - 76, 6 Drumhaw Park, Lisnaskea, Co Fermanagh,
who died 4 April 2003

Mrs ANNE GIBSON, 15 Mathilda Gardens, Sandy Row, Belfast,
who died 11 July 2003

Dr EOL HOSKINS, 4/7DG, 1948 - 50, The Old Stables, Taliaris Park, Llandeilo, Dyfed,
who died 5 December 2002

Mr A LEAFE, 4/7DG, 1963 - 69, 52 Lanethorpe Crescent, Darlington, Co Durham,
who died 16 May 2003

Capt AJL MACREADY, 4/7DG, 1941 - 46, Hazelwood, Hemmock, Newton Abbott, Devon,
who died 16 May 2003

Mrs MILLY NICHOLSON, Flat1 Woburn House, Woburn Close, Blackwall, Derbyshire,
who died 31 May 2003

Lt MT FLYNN, 4/7DG, 1945 - 47, Burningfold House, The Common, Dunsfold, Surrey,
who died 18 April 2003

Miss KATHY POTTS, Ghyll Royd Nursing Home, New Ghyll Royd, Guiseley, Yorkshire,
who died 23 March 2003

Mr H TILLOTT, 4/7DG, 1934 - 45, 81 Northwood Road, Broadstairs, Kent,
who died 16 February 2003

Mr JH WHITE, 4/7DG, 1957 - 80, 26 Austin Street, Bulwell, Nottingham,
who died 29 March 2003

Mr EW WINFIELD, 4/7DG, Detail unknown but probably 1930s,
who died 21 March 2003

Mr WF WALLER, 5 INNIS DG REME Attd, 1958 - 64, Roselyn, Reskivers, Tregony, Cornwall,
Who died 15 July 2003

THANKSGIVING SERVICE A Service of Thanksgiving will be held for the life of Captain Tony Macready, 4/7DG 1941 - 46, at 1130 hrs, Thursday 11 September, at St Lawrence Jewry, Guildhall Yard, Gresham Street, London EC2. All are welcome.

OCA Golf Society

Tony Marsh, who is floating the idea of an Association Golf Society, has asked for the following to be printed in the Newsletter. The Golf Society Membership would be open to serving and OCA Members of the Regiment and if enough people respond he is thinking of expanding it to a golf contact list using a web page on the Internet where any member of the society can contact everyone to arrange a game of golf if visiting an area where a member is located. However to set this up he needs to be able to contact interested people. If you are able to assist can you ask interested people to contact Tony direct in the following ways: Either by e-mail to TMarsh4059@aol.com or write to, Tony Marsh, 19 Oxenden Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 3NJ. You should include the following information. Name and Nickname, EMail address and or Home Address, if a member of a Golf Club or not please state and if yes please include its name and location. Handicap.

SUEZ CAMPAIGN MEDAL

On 11th June, the Prime Minister announced that the sub-committee of the Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals (the HD Committee) had recommended the award of the General Service Medal 1918-62 with a new clasp for service in the Suez Canal Zone between 1951 and 1954. The detailed qualification criteria for the medals and clasp would be submitted to HM The Queen for approval in due course. Veterans of the Canal Zone, or the next-of-kin of those who have died, will need to apply in writing to the appropriate medal office, giving full name, date of birth and Service number. **It should be stressed that they should not do so until the qualification criteria have been announced.** If the medal offices are swamped with requests for the medal before the necessary preparatory work has been completed, all they are doing is diverting staff resources from their primary task of issuing medals to answering unnecessary correspondence. Potential claimants should bear in mind that it will be some time before issue of the medals and clasps will begin and that the distribution programme is expected to take three years to complete. The address of the Army Medal Office is follows: Army Medal Office, Government Buildings, Worcester Road, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire WR9 8AU. It is a basic principle of the Honours and Awards system that medals are not issued unless qualification has been proved from official records. Regrettably, there is a lack of detail in many Service records of the 1950s and some people who believe their service qualified them for a medal and clasp will not be able to receive them because of the absence of satisfactory evidence. In such cases the medal offices may approach claimants for additional information that may confirm eligibility. In common with other campaign medals, all applications will be dealt with strictly in the order that they are received. Even after The Queen's formal approval to institute the medal has been given, and the design, manufacture and delivery of the new medals to the Medal Offices has started, (not likely for several months) there is likely to be a delay in issuing them due to the initial backlog of applications that will, inevitably, build up as veterans and their families realise that a medal is now available. Whilst understanding it will be difficult after waiting so long for a medal, the MOD is asking veterans to be patient. Claims will be acknowledged on receipt, but if individuals have not received a further communication about their application, or indeed a medal, after several weeks, they are being asked not to contact the medal office again. All the available resources will be concentrating on recovering the necessary Service files from the Departmental archives, checking individual eligibility and preparing medals for despatch. If the staffs of the Medal Offices have to stop this work to answer additional correspondence it will simply delay the issue of medals further.

Funeral Payments From The Social Fund – From the BLESMA Magazine

As may be aware, funeral expenses will be paid by the Veterans Agency when a deceased War Pensioner was in receipt of the Constant Attendance Allowance or the Unemployability Supplement with assessment of 80% or more. However, where this does not apply you should be aware that, in certain circumstances, claims might be made to the DWP for payment from the Social fund. The following guidance is provided by the DWP. 'If you are having trouble paying for a funeral that you have to arrange you may be able to get a Funeral Payment to help you with the cost. The person who has died must have been resident in the UK at the date of death and the funeral must normally take place in the UK. However, in certain circumstances, a Funeral Payment may be made for a funeral, which takes place elsewhere in the European Economic Area (EEA). Members of the EEA are: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. However, the amount awarded will be restricted to the amount, which would have been paid if the funeral had taken place in the area where the deceased had lived in the UK.'

To qualify, you or your partner must be receiving one of the following benefits: Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Working Families Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Disabled Persons Tax Credit and it must be reasonable for you to have taken responsibility for the funeral expenses.

This will usually mean you were the partner of the person who has died. Or, if they had no partner, you were a close relative or close friend of the person who has died. We would ask you about the financial circumstances of any parent, son or daughter of the person who has died. We may also have to ask about the financial circumstances of other close relatives of the person who has died. A Funeral Payment will cover the costs of a simple, respectful, low cost funeral within the UK. We will pay all necessary burial or cremation costs and up to £600 for any other funeral expenses. (**You may not be entitled to a payment if expenses have been met by a pre-paid funeral plan.**) You can claim a Funeral Payment from the date of death and up to three months after the date of the funeral. Funeral Payments are usually made by girocheque, made out in the funeral director's name, which is sent to you for you to give to them. If you get a Funeral Payment from the Social Fund, it will have to be paid back from any estate of the person who died. The estate means any money, property and other things like insurance policies that the deceased person owned. A house or personal possessions that are left to a widow or widower will not be counted as part of the estate". If you are not sure if you would qualify, contact your DWP Office. To claim, complete Form SF200 **Funeral Payment from the Social Fund**, available from your DWP Office.

DID YOU KNOW In 1745 the Regiment (7DG) was engaged at Fontenoy where its Colonel Sir John Ligonier was directed to attack the trenches. The Cavalry under the Command of Lieutenant General Sir James Campbell were ordered to support him. Sir James being killed by a cannon shot, the Duke of Cumberland placed himself at the head of the Regiment and advanced through the hottest of the fire to support the right flank of the Army. Though the Regiment contributed greatly to the hour of the day, yet its loss was comparatively small, Quartermaster Heath wounded, in addition to whom 3 men and 16 horses were killed, and 4 men and 6 horses wounded, and one man missing. Every man and horse was present with the Regiment except the man who had been left behind at Brussels, having been shot through the thigh a few days before in a duel. The conduct of a Trooper in this action deserved to be recorded. His name was Thomas Stevenson, his horse having been shot early in the morning, nothing more was seen of him by the Regiment until the next evening, when he joined it at Ath, the men of his Troop insisted that he should give an account to himself, that he was unworthy of being a Ligonier, and that they would not allow him to remain in the lines, Stevenson requested a Court Martial to enquire into and justify his character and conduct. The Court having been assembled next day, Stevenson produced Lieutenant Izard of the Welch Fusiliers, who declared that on the morning of the action, the prisoner came to him, and informing him, that his horse having been killed, he was desirous of having the honour of carrying a Firelock in the Grenadiers under his command. The request was complied with, and through the whole of that day's action, Stevenson behaved with uncommon intrepidity and was one of the nine Grenadiers that Lieutenant Izard brought out of the field. Stevenson was restored to his Troop with honour, and the Duke of Cumberland next day presented him to a Lieutenancy in the Regiment with which he had behaved so well.

THE CREULLY CLUB Annual Remembrance Service

Twelve members and wives set out from Aldbourne in a mini-coach driven by Dave Hart for Normandy on 5th June 2003 destination Bayeux and the Hotel d'Argouges. We arrived around mid-night. Next morning, 6th June was the day of the Annual Remembrance Service at Creully. A stop was made at the Memorial on the way to the Mairie, to find that the flag posts had been cleaned, chairs laid out, communications system ready and proudly waving from the flag poles the new 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guard flag flanked by the Tricolour and the Union Flag. The Roll of Honour was placed in front of the Memorial. The party assembled in front of the Mairie with the Ancien Combattants, the Mayor of Creully M Roger Levert, and the two deputy Mayors, Madame Tanniou and M. Gilot. Led by Pipe Major Iain Hutton and Billy, the drummer the long column which included Dave Hart with the Banner, Geoff White, the trumpeter, representatives from the serving Regiment, Brigadier Bobby Baddeley, Capt John Ford and Capt Alan Henshall HHQ marched to the Memorial. We were joined by Nancy Graham, sister of the late Lt. Col. R B James, DSO & Bars, Essex Regiment, commanding officer of the 5th East Yorks, 69th Brigade who we supported in 1944. Col James was killed in action 3rd August 1944. On the march we passed the French Memorial and paid our respects with an 'eyes right'. The Mayor and Brigadier Baddeley gave the addresses at the Service, the names of those of the war time members of the Regiment who had died during the last year were read out and the names of those killed in action during the campaign in N.W Europe. A floral tribute was laid by the Mayor and wreaths laid by Alan Gregson on behalf of the Creully Club and by Capt. John Ford on behalf of the Regimental Association. The Service was interspersed with French translations by Vince Vincent. On completion of the Service a similar Service was held at the French Memorial to honour the 28 young men of Creully who were killed in World War 1 & II and the War of Indo-China. After the Service there was a vin d'honneur in the Chateau by kind invitation of the Mayor and Commune during which the Secretary signed the 'Livre d'or'. This was a great honour for the Regiment, only five had the honour to sign it previously. Also a presentation was made of a large aerial photograph of Creully taken in 2002 with a view to the sea, in fact the path the Regiment had taken in 44. A Regimental History was presented to the Mayor. 20 sat down to lunch at the Hostellerie St Martin with the Mayor and Deputy Mayors as guests. There was a get-together in the evening with musical accompaniment. Next day the party attended the Memorial Service at the Verrières crossroads well supported by a contingent from the Durham Light Infantry. The address was read by the Mayor M Christien Marie. Charles Batkin laid the wreath and a floral tribute was laid by the Commune of Verrières/Lingèvres. Afterwards the party marched from the school to St Martin's church where the 50th Division Memorial is for a Remembrance Service. The address was given by M. Morin, President of the Ancien Combattants. Wreaths were laid by Dick Eagles, surviving member of Sgt Harris' crew who saved the day on 14th June 1944 by their heroic action and Richard Atkinson on behalf of the Durham Light Infantry. A floral tribute was laid by Aurore Fiant, the 12-year-old grand daughter of local farmer M. André Legér, and a firm friend of ours. A vin d' honneur was held afterwards during which time a Regimental History was presented to the Mayor who promised to learn English! and copies of the photographs of Lingèvres in 44; the originals had been given to the Creully Club by Eric Johnston. Fortunately there was a welcome respite during a very hot day – no complaints about that – and we all sat down to a very pleasant meal at the restaurant at P'tit Poucet' at Ver-sur-Mer and recovered our strength. Then at 16.30 hours was the unveiling of the plaque on the blockhouse on the beach by the Mayor who gave the address. We were joined by a large contingent of Ancien Combattants and a large crowd watched the ceremony. The background of the participation of the Regiment during the landing was explained to the onlookers, the names of those killed on 6th June 1944 were read out. Floral tributes were laid by three local children and the wreath on behalf of the Regiment by the Secretary, Cecil Newton. A verre d'amitie followed in the restaurant. A pleasant evening was spent in a local restaurant. There was an early start next day at 6.30 hours when the exhausted Secretary was woken up by a gentle knock on the door – thanks Jan. The exhausted alarm had been ringing for an hour. Well you know what they say – "If you are an old tank man and *not* deaf then there must be something wrong with you". We all arrived back safe and sound thanks to Dave Hart and Alan Henshall who made sure we did not fall out of the bus. Each year, the Creully Club hold a Service of Remembrance at the 4/7DG Memorial in Creully on the 6th June. The Club Reunion, AGM and participation in the Remembrance Day Parade, take place each November in Alcester. Details of these events are available from Cecil Newton, and suggestions and comments for the AGM are also welcomed by him. Further information on any of the above and details of the Creully Club may be obtained from Cecil Newton, 1 Grasshills, Aldbourne, Marlborough, Wilts, SN8 2EH. Tel: 01672 540356.

Dettingen Reunion – Cumbria

The annual Dettingen Reunion at Workington was even more vibrant and enjoyable than ever. Nobody knows how to lay on and enjoy a party like the Hill Billies and this was one to beat all. Some 120, essentially 4th/7th, old comrades assembled at the Royal British Legion Club on 28 June for a reunion that went on strongly well into the night, part motivated by an entertainer who mixed his repertoire of somewhat dubious jokes with many nostalgic songs of the Sixties. This was of course the era in Munster involving the core of the Hill Billies and most of the other guests. A valuable selection of raffle prizes, and an amazing array of bottles, had been presented; the main prize won by Mrs Vakecegu. Apart from the local Cumbrians, we were delighted to have attracted Bobby Baddeley from Dorset, Jack Turner from Durham, Derek Lawson from Australia, The McDougalls from Fife, Ivor Partridge (not seen since Aden?) from Newcastle, Bill Couchman from Plymouth, Sam Vakecegu from Hereford and many others who had travelled far with their wives to be there. Many congratulations to Chairman, Marty Burden, Secretary, Dennis Wallace and Treasurer, Butch Miller for putting on a great show. Don't miss it next year! The Cumbria Branch meet regularly and all are welcome and encouraged to attend. Details of Branch membership can be obtained from Mr Dennis Wallace, 2 Denton Square, Great Clifton, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 1UF ☎ 01900 61890.

LONDON & SOUTH EAST BRANCH

After the quieter months of January and February, the first event of 2003 attended by many members was at the Royal Hospital Chelsea on Sunday 9 March. The Annual Memorial Service for Capt Oates in the Chapel was followed by a most welcome opportunity to visit the In-pensioners bar and then to enjoy a 3 course meal with wine in the Great Hall, the arrangements having been made Colonel Noel McCleery. The following weekend several members made an enjoyable visit to the Regiment in Münster, at the invitation of the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Freeman. A General Meeting was held at Selhurst on 3 April when hospitality and buffet were provided by Paul Oakwell and Ken Austin ran a successful raffle. After many years as the Branch Welfare Officer, Frank Cluer will be leaving shortly for Northern Ireland. His efforts throughout have been much appreciated and Frank, in reply, said that he had much enjoyed his duties for the Branch and promised to keep in touch. Social events for the year were suggested. On 11 April, L&SE were very well represented at the weekend Annual Capt Oates Reunion held at the Norbreck Castle Hotel in Blackpool, the arrangements having been made by Gordon Nixon and Derek Holmes (regimental friends). During the afternoon we were honoured by the visit of our Colonel in Chief, HRH Prince Charles. On the Saturday evening some 270 members much enjoyed the dinner and entertainment, which as always, was the highlight of the weekend. On Sunday 11 May, the Annual Cavalry Memorial Parade was held in Hyde Park followed by a Regimental Lunch at the Victory Services Club, again attended by many Branch members. The visit to HMS Belfast (London Bridge) was made on 11 June when Lewis Tickell used his vast knowledge about the ship to the advantage and appreciation of the party. Members attended the Annual Irish Regiments Parade in June when Ken Austin laid a wreath at the Cenotaph on behalf of the Regiment. Several Branch Korean Veterans were present at the Service of Thanksgiving attended by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at Westminster Abbey on 9 July to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the end of hostilities in the Korean War. Lunch was afterwards taken by Regimental Association veterans at the Royal Hospital,

Chelsea, thanks to the good offices of Col Noel McCleery. An unusual event - a boat trip from Westminster to Greenwich was enjoyed by many members on 16 July. There was a very full commentary on board this very historic trip which included a mention that members and friends of The Royal Dragoon Guards were on the trip. Inevitably the party on its arrival in Greenwich found a splendid riverside hostelry, the Yacht, for lunch and drinks. Afterwards members were free to find their own interests in Greenwich. A small party attended the 'Not Forgotten' Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 24 July when HM The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were present. A 'Get together' lunch will be held at Morden Hall Restaurant on 6 August when David Hart will be special guest. The Branch Annual General Meeting will be at Selhurst HQ on Thursday 25 September at 2pm. The Annual Christmas lunch will be held on Wednesday 3 December at Morden Hall Restaurant when Major Gene and Mrs Cooney will be special guests. The Branch covers London and the surrounding counties and at all times welcomes new members and any friends. All enquiries to Paul England (Acting Branch Chairman) - Tel: 01732 352138.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

The Branch enjoyed the company of Maj Noel and Mrs Jean Santry at the Branch Dinner on 28 March where Noel spoke of the excellent Regimental Weekend in Munster. Details of the Northern Ireland Branch of the Association, are available from Matt McAdorey (Secretary) ☎ 0282 565 4162.

A VON & WEST COUNTRY

The next meeting of the Avon Branch will be on Sunday 19 October 2003 at the White Horse Inn, Buckover, on the A38, just 6 miles north of M5 junction 16. Traditional Sunday lunch is on the menu and members will be contacted during September for their returns. Details of the function and Branch membership can be obtained from Mr Joe Monks ☎ 01225 790881 during the evening or write to Anjoluc, 92 Hazelwood Road, Melksham, Wilts. SN12 6UX.

WESSEX BRANCH

Details of Wessex Branch of the Association, are available from Eugene Hamilton, 214 Britten Road, Basingstoke, Hants, RG22 4HR. ☎ 01256 414541 (evenings).

OXFORD AREA

The next meeting of the Oxford Branch will be a Ladies Night, shared with Oxford RTR Association, on Monday 8 September 2003 at OUOTC Oxpens Road, Oxford, 1930hrs for 2000hrs. The 5th Annual Blenheim Dinner has been booked for Friday 21 November. Details of the functions and Branch membership can be obtained from Mr Jack Bellinger, 29 Bagley Close, Kennington, Oxford. OX1 5LS or ☎ 01865 730303.

YORK BRANCH

The Branch still maintains a hardcore of supportive members at each meeting and attracts visitors from other Branches. As we are so wide spread, we only meet twice a year, in March and October. The Annual Balaclava Dinner will be held at Worsley Barracks, 1900hrs for 1930hrs on Friday 24 October. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Barrie Grimshaw on ☎ 01226 759662 who will send them the menu.

A BOUT NEARLY OUT

This year's 'About Nearly Out' Reunion weekend, held in Blackpool from 11 - 14 April 2003 was a tremendous success. Our Colonel in Chief, HRH Prince Charles, honoured us with his presence at a reception on the Friday afternoon, where most had the pleasure of meeting him. Many, many old friends met once again, in some cases the first time for many years, and socialised until very late each night in the comfort of the Hotel. Over 281 members attended the Dinner on Saturday evening, mostly ex-Skins, but it was a great pleasure to welcome 4/7DG members proudly wearing their ties and members from the serving Regiment. Our Northern Ireland members were very well represented and one member had even travelled from the USA to be at the reunion. This is a non-geographic gathering and its huge success is down to the tireless work of Gordon Nixon and Sherlock Holmes ably assisted by Ted Lowery. Next gathering will be 16 to 19 April 2004.. Further information and group details from Gordon Nixon, 48 Teasdale Close, Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 8AS ☎ 0161 682 0535.

Warning: Buying a Used Vehicle

The DVLA has issued a warning to purchasers of used vehicles. They are advised to be particularly vigilant when checking the V5 registration document (log book) accompanying such vehicles. Suspected blank registration documents, destined for destruction, have been stolen. To date at least 20 documents have been used to accompany the sale of stolen cars which have had their identities changed to match those of legitimate or written-off vehicles. Police investigations are ongoing, but early indications are that several hundred of these documents may be in circulation. It is not possible to be precise about the serial numbers of each of the stolen documents, but they fall into the following two categories:

- (a) Those that bear the prefix AP in their serial number (at the top left hand corner of the document) and fall within the following ranges: AP 8022601 to AP 8024400, AP 9424801 to AP 9426600, AP 9430202 to AP 9432000, AP 9448201 to AP 9450000. In some cases, the document reference number at the bottom right hand corner of the form may be missing.
- (b) Those that bear the prefix AN fall within the following ranges: AN 8854201 to AN 8856000, AN 8857801 to AN 8859600. These are faulty documents which, on close examination, will bear a serial number in slightly lighter print than the rest of the document. The serial number may also be out of alignment. These serial numbers were duplicated by the printer after the faulty batch was rejected and so there will also be genuine registration documents in circulation bearing these numbers. If you wish to check whether the document you hold is genuine, phone the DVLA's helpline on 0870 241 1878. If anyone is offered a vehicles for sale accompanied by one of the stolen registration documents, they should contact the police immediately.

The DVLA recommends that anyone buying a used car privately should take the following steps:

1. Always have sight of the registration document V5 prior to purchasing a used vehicle;
2. Be satisfied that the seller owns the vehicles or is entitled to offer it for sale;
3. Ask the seller for proof of identity;
4. View the vehicle at the address shown on the registration document;
5. Check that the vehicle identification number (VIN) sometimes called the chassis number - corresponds with the number on the registration document. This number can usually be found on a metal plate under the bonnet;
6. If you have limited knowledge of vehicles, take an experienced person with you;
7. Be wary of handing over cash to someone who has been contacted through a mobile number;
8. Check if the vehicle has been seriously damaged, notified as stolen or is subject to outstanding finance. The following companies provide this service for a fee - Carwatch UK Ltd (vehicles history check) 0870 0107899, Experian (car data check) 0870 6000383, HPI Ltd 01722 422422.

Millions unclaimed in war pensions by Paul Nuki Daily Telegraph

Thousands of former servicemen and women are missing out on millions of pounds in war pensions. Some could be losing up to a £100 a week. The Royal British Legion has launched a campaign to make people more aware of their rights and persuade them to apply for the benefits. Anyone of any age who was injured or contracted a disease while in the forces is entitled to claim. Deafness and post-traumatic stress disorders, two of the most common problems, are covered, says the Legion. "Many people are under the impression that a war pension must be restricted to service during a war and an injury such as a gunshot wound", said a spokesman. "This is not the case. Anyone with a disability incurred or made worse due to their service in the Armed Forces is entitled to claim". The amount of money received depends on the condition. Lump-sum payments are available to people with a condition less than 20% disabling and a weekly pension ranging from £19.78 to £98.90 is paid if the condition is more than 20% disabling. Those who think they should claim should contact the Legion, which won more than £18m in benefits in the year to September 1993. Royal British Legion War Pensions helpline: 0253 858858

REGULAR FORCES EMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATION

The RFEA assists ex-regular men and women to resettle and find employment, any time up to the national retirement age and as often as necessary, provided they served a minimum of three years in the ranks, or, were medically discharged regardless of time served. This service is now also extended to those who were subsequently commissioned, and widows/widowers provided the spouse died in service. Employment Consultants have all had a full and successful Service career themselves and have worked in commerce or industry, placing them in a unique and strong position to offer registrants free personal counselling and local job finding advice and employers access to a responsive free recruitment service. The service is available from 34 Branches throughout the United Kingdom. Branches are listed in Yellow pages or local directories. Alternatively contact Head Office at 49 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG or ring 0207 321 2011.

LOOKING FOR AN EMPLOYEE OR A JOB?

The RFEA has just launched a major development to their Web site (www.rfea.org.uk). Candidates can view a sample of current local vacancies from the 34 branches throughout the UK. This site sets itself apart from thousands of employment web pages by only advertising vacancies from companies looking for ex-Service personnel. Companies who may not currently employ ex-Servicemen and women, can view a sample list of candidates with qualifications, skills, experience and potential. Many have also had valuable employment experience since leaving the Armed Forces.

DIARY DATES

8 September Oxford Branch Ladies Night
25 September London & SE AGM Selhurst
18 October Palestine Reunion Day
19 October Avon Branch Reunion
24 October York Branch Balaclava Dinner
6 November Field of Remembrance Service London

9 November Cenotaph Remembrance Parade
21 November Oxford Branch Blenheim Dinner
27 November Regimental Officers Dinner
3 December London & SE Branch Christmas Lunch
4-8 June 2004 Creully Memorial Visits
27 August 2004 Proposed Bourneville Visit
25 October 2004 Proposed Hertogenbosch Visit

SABRATHA LIBYA 1949 Ronald Addyman served as a National Serviceman in Sabratha in 1949. He has recorded his NS recollections on the Burton Salmon website and doubtless those who served in Libya at that time will be interested. The address of the website is www.aboutburtonsalmon.freesserve.co.uk/RA_RNS.htm

ROY NIPRESS 5 INNIS DG 56/65 would welcome contact from old friends. 111 Holgate Road, Dagenham, Essex RM10 8DD.

NORMANDY RECOLLECTIONS Thierry Chion is a 31 year old historian currently writing his third book about WW2. He wishes to hear of personal memories, anecdotes, wounds, rest, smells or whatever else, between June 1944 and May 1945. Sketches or photos would also be appreciated as would humorous stories of the war. Should you wish to contact Thierry,. His address is 1 impasse Felix Leclerc, 76160 Saint leger di Bourg Denis, Seine Maritime, France.

DD TANK 'CHARIOTS OF THE LAKE'

Chariots of the Lake, by RB Jarvis describes the history and development of the DD Valentine & Sherman tanks from their initial fresh water trials at Fritton Lake through to D-Day and the subsequent river crossing actions in Holland, Italy and Germany. Interviews with former crewmen are used and allow the reader to follow the experiences of a tank crew from their first encounter with the escape training apparatus, to their experiences of launching the tanks at sea and their ultimate fate on the D-Day beaches. Details from Heritage Workshop Centre, 01502 587500.

From the Church Notice Board

There will be a meeting in the South & North ends of the church, children will be baptised at both ends.

Tuesday at 4 pm will be an ice cream social. Ladies who are giving milk come early.

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Smith to lay an egg on the alter.

The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the church basement on Friday afternoon.

Tonight's sermon; what is hell? Come early and listen to our choir practise.

For those who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.



The 2003 Regimental Christmas Card