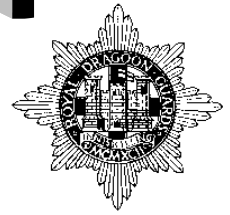


"OUT & ABOUT"



**HOME HEADQUARTERS
THE ROYAL DRAGOON GUARDS
3 TOWER STREET
YORK YO1 9SB**



01904 642036

hhq@rdgmuseum.org.uk

JANUARY 2006

This is my first set of notes for Out and About; it is a huge privilege to be in the chair and a joy to report that our Regiment is in good form.

We returned from Annual Firing at Bergen-Hohne just prior to Christmas leave. Having received our tanks less than a month before deployment, and with the crews commencing gunnery training some three weeks before first round down range (following release from our training support commitment to 7 Armoured Brigade's preparation for deployment to Iraq) it had all the makings of a come-as-you-are party. However, I have been assured by the Gunnery Gods that we came away with the best results in the Royal Armoured Corps in 2005 – both for 120mm and 30mm. In addition, we got the fleet through the mandatory pre-firing checks without a failure resulting from crew-error. This is a tremendous achievement and is, as ever, down to the hard work and approach adopted by the boys rather than anything the squadron leaders and I did.

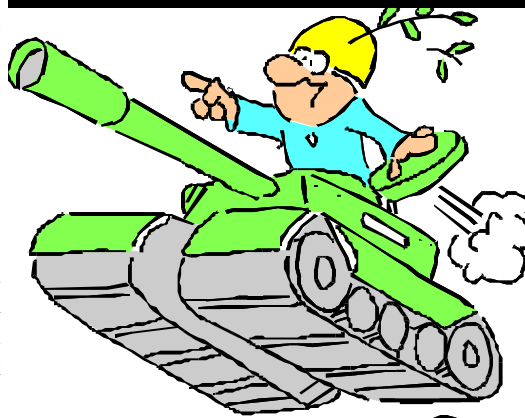
And so to 2006. To inform our activity in the coming year I have set two broad priorities:

- *Restoring the adaptive foundation. We need to re-establish our core, armoured skills, whilst at the same time maintaining our dismounted skills. I will cover this in more detail as the year progresses.*
- *Recruiting and Retention. We are undermanned; and more than slightly so. Addressing this requires a real focus on retention (two soldiers re-joined in November; one more re-joins in January and six soldiers withdrew their terminations in the last few weeks. Great news, but we need to do more). It also requires a coherent recruiting effort and we are taking this forward. As ever, if you know of good young men who are drawn to the Army, please do all you can to push them towards the Regiment.*

In the longer term, whilst the Future Army Structure will see

some major rebalancing to ensure that we are organized to face the expeditionary nature of the requirement in the coming period, the changes affecting the Regiment are relatively benign. In essence, in line with an overall rebalancing of the

COMMANDING OFFICERS NOTES



LT COL TD HYAMS

Army from a Heavy-Light mix to a Heavy-Medium-Light mix, we will now be configured with three Challenger 2 squadrons and a Medium Armour Squadron, the latter equipped in the short term with Scimitar. The Prince of Wales's Squadron remains unchanged. This is good news and gives us even broader utility. That aside, the only other headline news is that the plot sees the Regiment move to Catterick at some point from 2008. This is excellent news and will see the Regiment based in one of our two home areas.

Finally some dates for your diary: First, Cavalry Memorial Parade (Sunday 14 May). We here will be making every effort to get as many on parade as possible. Could I ask that you put the Parade in your diary now so that we can ensure a healthy Regimental contingent? Linked to this is the intention, announced by the Colonel of the Regiment, to move the Officers' Dinner to the night before the Parade. The genesis of this proposal is that the serving Regiment has missed the last three dinners; I indicated to the Colonel of the Regiment that we may well miss the next two as well. Moving the dinner to Cavalry Memorial Weekend should allow us to focus all our (official) Regimental London bonding into one weekend. Second, Dettingen Weekend (24-25 June), over which the Old Comrades Association is invited to visit us here in Munster. The weekend will include an all-ranks party; demonstrations of our roles and equipment; and the finals of the various inter-squadron sporting competitions. That aside, the OCA will be entertained by the pass-off of the Subalterns' Ride! If you are free and would like to attend do please let John know – it would be super to see you.

Lieutenant Colonel T D Hyams

Tim Hyams was commissioned into 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards in 1986. He spent his first seven years at Regimental Duty in Germany as a Troop Leader (including a tour in South Armagh), Reconnaissance Troop Leader and Adjutant. He was Adjutant before and after amalgamation. Thereafter, the Commanding Officer took pity and posted him to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst as a Platoon Commander. Following two years running the Staff College Hunt (and training officer cadets in his spare time) and married now to Kitty, he was posted to Headquarters Northern Ireland as SO3 G2, responsible for intelligence policy. After two years, and the birth of two sons, family Hyams left for the hallowed halls of Staff

College. Post Staff College, he returned to Regimental Duty in Munster as a Challenger 2 Squadron Leader. This period included a tour in Kosovo and a full training year. He handed his Squadron over in the dustbowl at the British Army Training Unit Suffield and moved to Headquarters Land Command as the Military Assistant to Commander Field Army; a fascinating two years, which included six months in Headquarters United States Central Command with Lieutenant General Sir Cedric Delves deployed as the Senior British Military Advisor during Operation Enduring Freedom in 2002. Thereafter, a brief period as the 1-Star desk officer in the Army Personnel Centre followed whilst the Army considered where to employ him as a Lieutenant Colonel. In a moment of madness the system decided he was best suited to a tour in the Ministry of Defence as SO1b Policy in the Directorate of the General Staff. His responsibilities included the Future Army Structure, the Future Infantry Structure, the Joint Special Forces Support Group, wider force development and pan-Army G2/G3/G5 issues. Lieutenant Colonel Hyams assumed command of The Royal Dragoon Guards in November 2005.

REGIMENTAL PRESENTATION TEAM

In order to further strengthen the family bond between the OCA and the serving Regiment, Major Chris Bailey will shortly be contacting Branch Secretaries to offer a Regimental Presentation at their Branch Meetings, to include an update on Regimental tours of duty and training. It is hoped this will lead to reciprocal benefits in the area of recruiting as both Branches and the Regiment are currently under strength. Before collapsing in laughter, I emphasize that we are looking for your children and grandchildren! If you have recently left RDG and are having second thoughts about civilian life, the door may still be open should you wish to make an enquiry.

CAPTAIN OATES MEMORIAL SERVICE SUNDAY 19 MARCH 2006

This year's Memorial Service will be held once again in the Royal Hospital Chapel, Chelsea. Members wishing to attend, and all are welcome, should plan to arrive at 1030 hrs. We are planning to parade with the Pensioners at 1040 hrs prior to the Church Service which will begin at 1100 hrs. Medals should be worn. There will be ample car parking in the Royal Hospital grounds. Following the service, there will be a cash bar in the 'In Pensioners Club', followed by lunch in the Great Hall, at a cost of £7.00 per head. Please book in for lunch with HHQ (cheques payable HHQ RDG).

COMBINED CAVALRY PARADE WEEKEND 13/14 MAY 2006

This year's Combined Cavalry Parade in Hyde Park will take place on Sunday 14 May at 1100 hrs. Medals are required. We have limited Seating Enclosure tickets available, but preference must be given to those with mobility difficulties. The arrangements for the Standing Area, (previously the Standing Enclosure), have been revised. The Standing Area has been extended within the secure compound, enabling families and guests to attend the service behind the Regimental detachments on the grass around the bandstand. Access to the area will be by three entry points, established at each end of the Serpentine Road, and from the Broadwalk. The Serpentine Road entrances close promptly at 1055 hrs, however the Broadwalk entrance will remain open at all times. Tickets for both Standing and Seating Enclosures, are available from HHQ on a 'first come first served basis'. It is very much hoped that we will see you all once again, following the wonderful support shown in recent years. Members are advised to arrive early (by 1030 hrs) in order to clear the various security checks, which will doubtless be in operation. This particularly applies to those in the standing and seated enclosure areas. I have been asked by the Chairman of the Combined Cavalry Committee to remind those marching that they should not carry cameras, bags or boxes.

COMBINED CAVALRY LUNCH 14 MAY 2005

The Combined Cavalry Reunion and Luncheon will be held in El Alamein and Carisbrooke suites of the Victory Services Club, Seymour Street. The Club is situated in the heart of Marble Arch. Luncheon costs will be £18 per person. Those wishing to attend should complete the proforma at the end of the Newsletter.

ASSOCIATION AGM AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Annual General Meeting will take place in the Royal Hospital, Chelsea at 1230 hrs on Saturday 13 May 2006. This will be followed by a Committee Meeting. Non-Committee members wishing to attend the AGM should notify HHQ.

VISIT TO THE REGIMENT DETTINGEN WEEKEND 22 – 26 JUNE 2006

Doubtless you will have read the Commanding Officer's invitation to visit the Regiment over the above weekend and after careful consideration of the various options the following travel and accommodation arrangements are suggested. Because of visit timings, cost and anticipated numbers attending, the hire of a coach has proved to be impractical and hugely expensive. We are therefore making arrangements to fly from Luton to Dortmund with EasyJet. The outward flight will depart Luton at 1920 hrs arriving Dortmund 2135 hrs. The return will be from Dortmund to Luton departing 1835 hrs arriving Luton at 1855 hrs. The return cost at this moment in time, booking through the Internet, is in the region of £80. Naturally that figure will increase as the flights fill up and we near departure dates. I will make the necessary booking on your behalf so would ask you to respond as soon as possible. Should the flights increase in the meantime I will still make the booking on your behalf unless you specifically ask me not to. Transport from and to Dortmund will be arranged. If you plan to make your own travel or flight arrangements you will have to make your own way from your arrival point to Munster and should you wish us to book accommodation please detail on the return. Accommodation will be in the Hotel Munich, not far from the Camp. Cost for those sharing a twin room will be £27 per night B&B. Single rooms where available will be at a cost of £39 per night B&B. Please indicate if you are insistent on a single room and we will advise availability when known. Approximate costings for flights and accommodation are, those sharing a twin room £188 and those in single £236. Do though please remember this is based on today's flight prices which can change daily. Should you wish to book in for this trip, please complete the proforma and forward with a deposit of £50 payable to 'HHQ RDG'. Do please remember that Internet booked flights are non-refundable. You are advised to insure against cancellation as well as health and do remember your E111 reciprocal health form from the post office.

<p>ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA - FOUNDERS DAY 8 JUNE 2006</p> <p>Tickets are in very short supply and we understand we will only receive four. Please bid to HHQ by the 20 March. Distributed initially to those who have not been before and then on a 'first come first served basis'. Full dress rehearsals will be held on 6 June and seating for the rehearsal may be arranged by telephone to the Royal Hospital Events Department 020 7881 5303. Normally, there are no restrictions for seats at the rehearsal. Parking will not be available.</p>	<p>BRITISH KOREAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION</p> <p>The BKVA hold a number of Branch functions throughout the year and details may be obtained from your local BKVA Branch. The BKVA will be holding a National Commemoration Day at the National Memorial Arboretum on 27 July 2006. Further details from Frank Ellison OBE BEM JP, Hon Secretary, 12 Fields Crescent, Hollingworth, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 8RJ. Tel: 01457 763699.</p>	<p>GRAND MILITARY RACE MEETING FRIDAY 10 MARCH 2005</p> <p>Concessions are offered to serving and retired military personnel and families. Prices are; Members Badge Club Enclosure £13 (Full £23) Members Car Pass Free but must be displayed in car, so please indicate how many you require. Apply with payment and SAE as early as possible but no later than 4 March to: Christopher Marriott, 9 Market Place, Faringdon, Oxon. SN7 7HL. Tel. 01367 242422, Mobile 07970 749658 or Email christopher.marriott@marriotts.co.uk Contact Christopher for further details.</p>
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Blue Badge Theft - Blue Badge Protector

This is a sad fact of life with over 6,000 Blue Badges being stolen in 2004. According to BBC Radio London, depending on the validity period left, they can be "worth" as much as £500. Many local Councils are taking great efforts to clamp down on this type of theft and fines of over £1,000 in London are not uncommon. You might be interested in examining the possibility of obtaining a Blue Badge Protector. This is a simple deterrent and provides effective security for all Blue Badge Holders. The Badge is locked into a steel case and is protected by 5.0mm thick clear plastic. It has a flexible sturdy lock and steel cable that attaches to the steering wheel. It is a highly visible deterrent that could save the mess and distress caused by a break in. There are several options available: Costs are: Single £15.99, Double £19.99, Postage Single £1.25 and Double £1.55. More details can be obtained from: Blue Badge Protector, Urban House, PO Box 321, Southport PR8 5GE. Tel: 01704 512225 or www.bluebadgeprotector.co.uk

Eligibility Change Veterans Badge

Eligibility for the popular Veterans Badge is being extended to those who served up until 1954. Defence Secretary John Reid announced the extension on Remembrance Sunday and said those who served in more recent campaigns, such as Malaya and Korea, would now be eligible. He said: "This is just a small way for the Government and the nation to say to those who served their country, 'You should be recognised and recognise each other by wearing this in your lapel'". The badges, which were launched last year, are intended to raise the profile of veterans among the public. Eligibility has been widened to include those who served in the inter-war years, and those who served between the end of World War II and 31 December 1954. Members of the Merchant Navy who took part in military operations during these periods will also be eligible, and so will the widow/ers of those who died as a result of their military service and who are in receipt of a UK war widow/ers pension.

How to obtain a badge

Men and women who served in the UK Armed Forces in World War I and II are also entitled to a Veterans Badge. The Cyprus Regiment, Merchant Navy Seamen, Home Guard, Polish Forces under UK Command, War Widows and Widowers who are in receipt of a War Widow/ers Pension also qualify. Many have already applied and received their badges. However, with immediate effect, the sole responsibility for the distribution of the badge is devolved to the MoD Veterans Agency. If you have not yet applied for your badge and would like to, please contact the Veterans Agency as follows: Free helpline: 0800 169 2277, Textphone: 0800 169 34 58, Overseas: +44 1253 866043,

Email: help@veteransagency.gsi.gov.uk Write to: Graham Taylor, Veterans Badge Office, Room 6108 Tomlinson House, Norcross, Blackpool, FY5 3WP, Download an application form from: www.veteransagency.mod.uk/vet_badge/vets_badge.htm

FREE PASSPORTS

If you're a British national born on or before 2nd September 1929, from 18th October 2004 you can apply for a free standard 32-page ten-year passport from the UK Passport Service. Fast Track and Premium services will attract the difference between the standard passport fee of £51 and the fee charged for the enhanced service provided at the counter (for example, usual Fast Track fee is £77.50, less standard fee of £51 - fee payable £26.50). If you have applied for a passport since 19th May 2004 and you're eligible for the above scheme, please apply for a refund of the standard passport fee. For further information about your free ten-year passport, or how to apply for a refund, please call the Passport Adviceline on 0870 521 0410 (Calls are charged at national rate).

INTERNET –ONLINE AUCTIONS

With the popularity of online Auctions and the frequency that Regimental items appear, it is becoming ever more apparent that members are often unknowingly bidding against each other and hence pushing the final purchase price up. As a service to our members, if you are bidding on a Regimental item, and you email HHQ letting us know, when two or more Regimental bidders are active, we will introduce the bidders to each other by email. You can then decide whether or not to bid against each other. When emailing please include the auction item number.

If you have Internet access and have received this Newsletter through the post, please register your email address and update your contact details through our web page (www.rdgmuseum.org.uk) and follow the 'Register' link. Please also inform us of any changes to your home or email address details.

DO NOT LOSE YOUR PENSION CREDITS FOR WIVES FOLLOWING THE FLAG

Home Responsibilities Protection

HRP has been available for complete tax years since 6 April 1978. It may help protect the basic State Pension and bereavement benefits of people who are precluded from regular employment because they were at home caring for children or a person who is ill or disabled. And from 6 April 2002, qualify you for additional State Pension through the State Second Pension. For a full basic State Pension HRP cannot reduce the number of qualifying years below 20. From 6 April 2020, when State Pension age is equalised at 65, HRP cannot reduce the number of qualifying years below 22.

Her Majesty's Forces and Civil Servants abroad

When a member of the HMF or Civil Servant is absent from Great Britain, entitlement to Child Benefit continues. However for administrative reasons, the Service Authority or Employing Department, is responsible for making payments. The Service Authority or Employing Department is also responsible for the notification to Child Benefit Centre of any changes in circumstances or new claims to Child Benefit that occur abroad in order that the Child Benefit Centre computer can be updated. As HM Forces personnel and Civil Servants retain Child Benefit whilst abroad, it follows that HRP entitlement is also retained. Although in HM Forces cases, payment is made via the husband's service pay account, the wife is technically the person entitled to HRP. Recording of this information is not done automatically and it may be necessary to apply for the period you were abroad.

How to apply for HRP

If you have to apply for HRP, complete form CF411 'How to protect your state Retirement Pension if you are looking after someone at home, which you can get from you local Social Security office or by contacting Inland Revenue on telephone numbers 084591 55224, 084591 58225, 084591 58226, 084591 58227.

If you need further information or advice about HRP please contact: Inland Revenue, National Insurance Contributions Office, Caseworker DM Team, Room H5014, Benton Park View, Newcastle on Tyne NE98 1ZZ

How to apply for a Pension Forecast

A pension forecast will give you an estimate of the pension you can expect to get when you reach state pension age. It will include all the qualifying years used in the calculation. The number of HRP years recorded and information about paying Class 3 voluntary contributions. You can ask for a State Pension forecast at any time prior to four months before you reach State Pension age. For a forecast of both your basic State Pension and additional State Pension, get form BR19 from your social security office or by telephoning the Retirement Pension Forecasting helpline on 0845 3000168.

Questions and Answers

Q. My wife has accompanied me on an overseas tour of duty and I understand that she may be entitled to reclaim some of her pension credits. How do I find out if she is entitled and if so how do I claim these back?

A. You will need to contact the Inland Revenue to ascertain whether your wife is entitled. If she is, they will be able to advise you how to claim. The numbers to contact the Inland Revenue on are 0845 9155224/ 0845 9158225/ 0845 9158226/ 0845 9158227.

Q. I am about to accompany my husband on an overseas tour of duty and our child will also be going with us. Do I lose the right to Child Benefit whilst we are abroad.

A. You will need to contact the Inland Revenue to find out whether you are still entitled to Child Benefit for the period that you are overseas. The numbers to contact the Inland Revenue on are 0845 3021454.

SENIOR CITIZENS RAIL CARD

For those who travel frequently by train, the Senior Citizens Rail Card is obviously advantageous and results in substantial financial savings. What is not generally known is that some councils offer a discount for the purchase of the rail card and it is therefore worthwhile checking to see if your council offer this concession. As an example, senior citizens residing in the East Riding are able to obtain their rail card at half price.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

25 February Cumbria Branch Reunion	8 June Founders Day RH Chelsea
13 March Oxford Branch Reunion & AGM	22/26 June Regimental Dettingen Munster
19 March Captain Oates Memorial Service Chelsea	27 July BKVA National Commemoration Day National Arboretum
(TBC) March NI Branch Oates Dinner	15/20 September Oostham & Elst (Creully Club Notes)
4 April Memorial Service Studland Bay (Creully Club Notes)	9 October Oxford Branch Reunion
6 April London & SE Branch Meeting Selhurst	20 (TBC) October York Branch Balclava Dinner
7/10 April Blackpool Reunion Weekend	21 October Palestine Veterans Reunion Eden Camp
8 May Oxford Branch Reunion	9 November Field of Remembrance Service London
13 May Regimental Officers Dinner London	11/12 November Creully Club AGM, Dinner and Remembrance Parade
13/14 May Combined Cavalry Weekend London	24 November Oxford Branch Blenheim Dinner
5/9 June Memorial visit Creully	

OBITUARIES

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

- Mrs E BERGE, 50 Preston Road, Hull, Humberside,
who died 16 September 2005
- Mr A BOWLEY, 5 INNIS DG, 1958 – 64, 12 Bushfield Road, West Melton, Rotherham, Yorks,
who died 27 August 2005
- Major JR CROCKETT, 5 INNIS DG, 1936 – 46, Broom Farm, Privett, Alton, Hants,
who died 11 November 2005
- Mr DB CROUCH, 5 INNIS DG, 1947 – 53, 46 Donaldson Road, Salisbury, Wilts,
who died 4 August 2005
- Mrs S DALLEY, 12 Grindstone Crescent, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey,
who died 13 January 2006
- Captain DBD DICKSON, 5 INNIS DG, 1940 – 46, 97 Cadogan Gardens, London,
who died 24 August 2005
- Mr T DOWLING, 5 INNIS DG, 1950 – 55, 38b Albion Street, Everton, Liverpool,
who died 4 October 2005
- Capt I EDMENSON, 5 INNIS DG, 1954 – 78, 2 Badshot Park, Badshot Lea, Farnham, Surrey,
who died 7 February 2006
- Mr P EVANS, 5 INNIS DG, 1976 – 92, 9 New Street, Paignton, Devon,
who died 24 January 2006
- Major LW GREEN MBE, 5 INNIS DG, 1951 – 68, 46 Oaktree Close, Pagham, Bognor Regis, Sussex,
who died in 22 October 2005
- Mr B HESSION, 5 INNIS DG, 1948 – 53, 48 Haslewood Green, Leeds, Yorks,
who died in 14 August 2005
- Mr EJ HUGHES, 5 INNIS DG, 1938 – 50, 41 Longcroft Crescent, Hawick, Borders, Scotland,
who died 13 December 2005
- Mr J NEWPORT, 5 INNIS DG, Unit 1, 54 Goulburn Street, George Town, Tasmania 7253, Australia,
who died 23 October 2005
- Mr RB SCOTT, 5 INNIS DG, 1948 – 70, 11 Westfield Place, Earlston, Borders,
who died 27 January 2006
- Mrs A STANLEY, 29 Falkland Road, Bolton, Lancs,
who died 25 October 2005
- Mr F STRINGER, 5 INNIS DG, 1954 – 56, 6 Knutsford Avenue, Eaton Chapel, Stockport, Cheshire,
who died 4 April 2005
- Mr JJ TAGGART, 5 INNIS DG, 1949 – 71, 57 Castle Grange, Lisnaskea, Co Fermanagh,
who died 30 November 2005
- Mr JG TRIMMER, 4/7DG, 1939 – 46, 5 Hopfield Road, Hartley Wintney, Basingstoke, Hants,
who died 16 January 2006
- Mr D WALLACE, 4/7DG, 1964 – 86, 2 Denton Square, Great Clifton, Workington, Cumbria,
who died 11 August 2005
- Mr M WATERS, 5 INNIS DG, 1975 – 88, 32 Leyland Drive, Mainwaring Estate, Saltney Ferry, Cheshire,
who died 12 May 2005
- Mrs F WHITEHEAD, 16 Kipling Drive, Marton, Blackpool, Lancs,
who died 18 December 2005
- Mr F YEADON, 5 INNIS DG, 1943 – 46, 2 Sutherland Close, Bexhill On Sea, Sussex,
who died 18 March 2005

REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION BRANCHES AND GROUPS

CREULLY CLUB

There is a full calendar of events for 2006 commencing with the Memorial Service at Fort Henry, Studland Bay on Tuesday 4 April at 1100 hrs. There will be the annual Pilgrimage to Creully for the Memorial Service on 6 June, again at 1100 hrs. Oostham and Elst Memorials visit will be from Friday 15 September to Wednesday 20 September. The visit will include visits to Rheinberg and Reichwald War Cemeteries, the Island Museum, Groesbeek Museum, Driel and Mook. The Palestine Veterans Reunion is on Saturday 21 October. The rendezvous will be outside Hut 5 next to the car park at 1030 hrs. At 1100 hrs the names of those in the Regiment who lost their lives in Palestine will be read out in the Chapel. Hut 29, the Remembrance Parade commences at 12.50 hrs. The Reunion will be Saturday 11 November and Sunday 12 November. There will be the reunion dinner at the Roebuck Inn Alcester on Saturday at 1900 hrs and the Remembrance Parade on Sunday at 1100 hrs; rendezvous at the Swan Inn car park, Alcester at 10.30 hrs. This will be followed by The Royal British Legion Alcester Branch Lunch. Further information of 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. E-mail: cnewton@freeuk.com. Information about the Creully Club can also be obtained from our web site. www.creullyclub.freeuk.com

LONDON AND SOUTH EAST BRANCH

There was a very good attendance of members at the Annual 'Get-together' lunch on Wednesday 10 August at Morden Hall Restaurant. Ken Austin did the raffle for welfare. The Branch AGM was held at Selhurst BR Club on Thursday 6 October when Officers re-elected were; Chairman, Paul England; Treasurer, Dick Fair; Welfare Officers, Peter Rose and Ken Austin. Paul Oakwell provided a splendid buffet and Ken Austin did the raffle. Branch members attended the Annual Field of Remembrance Service at Westminster Abbey on Thursday 10 November and later had drinks and buffet in The Royal Hospital, Chelsea, thanks to the kind offices of Lt Col Noel McCleery. The Annual Xmas Lunch was held on Wednesday 7 December at Morden Hall Restaurant when the special guests were Mr & Mrs Frank Cluer, formerly Branch Welfare Officer, and now in Northern Ireland. Ken Austin arranged the raffle for welfare. It is with much sadness that these notes are concluded with the recent loss of John Holman, a very loyal and supportive member of our Branch. Slim Ingle, formerly of the 'Skins' A and C Sqns, phoned from Australia and wished everyone in the Branch goodwill for 2006. Apparently he served in the Regiment in Palestine, WWII – Dunkirk and Northwest Europe. The Branch covers London and the surrounding counties and at all times welcomes new members and new friends who may be in the area at the time of the gatherings. Information on Branch activities can be obtained from Paul England (Chairman), 59 Guards Close, Towngate Wood Park, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN10 3RT Tel: 01732 352138. Future Event: General Meeting, Selhurst BR Club, on Thu 6 Apr 2006 at 2pm.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

At our Annual AGM held in November, we are pleased to announce that Eddie (Ted) Scott continues in the post as Branch Chairman and will be assisted by our new Secretary, George Clarke with Ian Rolleston continuing to control the purse strings as our Branch Treasurer. Both Walter Browne and Hank Johnston had been hoping to take back seats but have been persuaded to carry out the new roles of PR Officer and Welfare Officer on behalf of the branch. George can be contacted on 02890 202696 and would love to hear from all ex-members of the old and new regiment. The Annual Oates Dinner will take place in March 2006 when we hope to return to our usual Belfast Hotel for our Oates Dinner night and knees-up. Anyone interested in attending should contact George as soon as possible as numbers will be restricted. Our Branch Chairman managed to attend a Royal British Legion Cross Border Remembrance Service at Drogheda on Saturday 5 November and the branch's representation at the wreath laying ceremony at the Belfast City Hall on Remembrance Sunday got a good Press Coverage and all members involved have the photographs to prove it. It was with deep regret that we bade farewell to our old comrade and friend, Jimmy Taggart who recently died and whilst touched with great sadness, Jimmy would have smiled to know that he was being laid to rest at the same time as another Irish legend, George Best. Hank Johnston did a lovely job of piping Jimmy to his final resting place. Jimmy will be sorely missed at our meetings and our sincere condolences are offered to Noel and Jean Santry, his son-in-law and daughter, and the family circle.

CUMBRIA BRANCH

The Cumbria Branch Winter Social will go ahead as a tribute to the late Dennis Wallace and will commence at 19.30 hrs on Saturday 25 Feb 2006, at the Royal British Legion, Harrington, Near Workington. Tickets are £12 each and are available from Marty Burdon, Tel: 01900 602559, or contact Roger Bright, 188 Harrington Road, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 3UJ. Tel: 01900 604680. Email: roger@bright188.fsnet.co.uk

YORK BRANCH

The Branch had a very quiet year in 2005 because of other proposed activities which did not really materialise. However the main event for myself was my marriage to Margaret in September. The day went very well and we spent our honeymoon on a Rhine River Cruise. In June Margaret and I attended the Festival of the Sea in Portsmouth and whilst we were there we managed to visit the Regiment's affiliated ship HMS Marlborough, and, in fact had our own private guided tour. The following week the ship was due to be de-commissioned and sold on. We will be having our annual Balaclava Dinner this October, hopefully followed by a visit to Eden Camp, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Regiment's involvement in Palestine, details to follow but if any one is interested please let me know. Capt (ret'd) B Grimshaw, 28 Foley Avenue, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 8PB, 01226 759662

OXFORD BRANCH

The Branch is still going strong and recruited two new members in 2005. The 8th Annual Blenheim Dinner was as usual a great success with 59 persons attending, some as far a field as America, Ireland, Cornwall, Yorkshire and Blackpool. Our guests of honour were the Association Chairman, Noel Santry and his lady wife Jean. Jean was presented with a bouquet of flowers and Noel with a crystal glass tankard suitably engraved. Thanks were given to our Treasurer Audrey Sell, our Vice Chairman Roy Garner, Ops organiser John Walker and raffle runner Frank Cowling, also the Piper Hank Johnson and the staff of the OUOTC. Plans for the year 2006 are; AGM Monday 13 March at the OUOTC HQ, 1930 hrs for 2000 hrs, branch meetings 8 May and 9 October time and venue as above, our normal September meeting has been moved due to the OTC being closed on that date. The 9th Annual Blenheim Dinner will be on Friday 24 Nov 2006, details later. The Oxford Branch sends their best wishes for the New Year to all Association Members and anyone is welcome to join us. Please phone Jack Bellinger on: 01865 730303.

THE 5 INNIS DG OLD COMRADES REUNION

A Reunion Weekend will be held in Blackpool from 7-10 April 2006. Further information and group details from Mary Liguorish, 8 Willow Way, Sutton-in-Craven, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 7PT. (01535 635777 email MLiguorish@aol.com.

REGIMENTAL VISIT 22 –26 JUNE PROFORMA

Name(s):

Address:

..... **Tel:**

Please Book Flights from Luton to Dortmund Return.

I enclose a deposit of £50 per person, cheque payable to 'HHQ RDG'.

I would like to be accommodated: *Hotel / Own arrangements*

COMBINED CAVALRY WEEKEND 13/14 MAY 2006 PROFORMA

Name(s):

Address:

..... **Tel:**

Please Book Sunday Lunch(es) £18 per person, Cheques payable to 'HHQ RDG'

CAPTAIN OATES MEMORIAL LUNCH CHELSEA 19 MARCH 2006 PROFORMA

Name(s):

Address:

..... **Tel:**

Please Book Sunday Lunch(es) £7 per person, Cheques payable to 'HHQ RDG'