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All Members of the Regimental Family

RW Update

10th December 2020

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the back of this letter is an updated list of provisional dates for 2021

Introduction

It has been a quite terrible year for most of us. Covid-19 has prevented us from meeting up since March and although we have found different ways of communicating and meeting virtually via a number of different IT solutions. However, nothing beats meeting in person and sharing stories, even if some are more far-fetched than others.... If you can reach out to those you know are on their own and could be suffering from loneliness please do so. A phone call to someone living alone or self-isolating might make all the difference. God willing 2021 will enable us to meet up in person.

Colonel of the Regiment's Message

The Regimental Secretary is not wrong that COVID has prevented us from meeting up with friends in the way that we would normally do and has caused us to cancel many events, and I would like to thank him, from all of us, for his RHQ Updates which have helped to keep us all in touch with what the Regiment is doing – thanks Chris.

I am, however, so impressed with what the Regiment *has* achieved. RHQ, like so many of us, quickly moved to working remotely which has added to some of their quality of life, with no drop-in output. The Regimental Support Team and Regimental communications teams have, with many others, continued to get the story of the Regiment widely known across our recruiting grounds and further afield. This, coupled with their excellent leadership, has helped the battalions to grow and reduced notice to terminate (signing off). Indeed the 3rd Battalion is over strength and the 1st Battalion will be at full strength in January for the first time in years. We have had way above our allocation of places at Catterick, and there are only 4 soldiers signed off. Quantity matters (being under strength means guards come around more often and other such backfill can be a real bore) and sends a great signal of a vibrant, growth organisation, but quality matters too. Both battalions have been integral in supporting the COVID response, earning credit from the Welsh Government and many more, whilst maintaining their professional war fighting skills. Another indication is the number and quality of instructors we generate for Sandhurst and the rest of the training organisation. Remarkable – well done to all of you.

At the same time our devoted cadet adult volunteers transformed their delivery on-line, back to limited face-to-face, and back on line again, keeping the cadets enthused and helping to continue to develop and support them. So much of the cadet 'offer' is about meeting up in person and training together that on-line will never be an adequate substitute, so the sooner cadets are allowed to train as normal the better. Those conditions will also enable service leavers and the rest of us to gather together once more. I have had some Zoom and Teams calls with those I

have served with, which were great fun but nowhere near as good as getting together, and, like you, I look forward to getting together once more in 2021.

Happy Christmas, stay safe, and best of luck in 2021

Remembrance Day 2020

Despite the restrictions brought about by the virus the Regimental Band still managed to honour our comrades who have paid the ultimate sacrifice across Wales on Remembrance Day.



LCpl Farquharson plays Last Post on Remembrance Sunday. And below a socially distanced service.



I hope in the New Year we will have the opportunity to honour those of our comrades who have died during this period when we could not say our farewells in our usual manner. We will organise a Memorial/Thanksgiving church service in Llandaff Cathedral and St Giles Church in Wrexham.

1st Battalion - Ex GAULISH DRAGON - Lt Huw Power

Napoleon Bonaparte is attributed to have said that “The battlefield is a scene of constant chaos. The winner will be the one who controls that chaos, both his own and the enemies.” This is a fitting analogy for both the modern nature of Urban Warfare and the deployment of nearly 200 people overseas on Ex GAULISH DRAGON in the face of a global pandemic.

It was, quite literally, the 11th hour (2300hrs) on the day before departure that B (Rorke’s Drift) Coy had the green light to deploy an Armoured Company Group to the Centre d’Entrainement aux actions en Zone Urbaine (CENZUB) in Northern France. Cutting it fine is an understatement as the Heavy Equipment Transporters (HETs), carrying six Warriors, had booked an entire cross channel ferry and had no choice but to meet their specified departure time. With the Warriors safely across the channel this meant the first expeditionary armoured exercise in eight years in France could commence. The rest of Company Group followed on with attachments from eleven other units from across the whole of the 3rd UK Division.

On arrival the Company was warmly welcomed by our French hosts the 126e Régiment d’Infanterie (126e RI) who were our training partners for the fortnight. The camp was typically “transit” and Northern European in style drawing many similarities from Normandy Barracks, Sennelager. However, the adjacent training facility far surpassed anything available in the UK. The facility had two urban areas, the smaller one known as Beausejour was comparable in size to Copehill Down, the larger one, Jeoffrecourt, simulated a vast town of 5000 inhabitants.



To enable full integration into the exercise scenario, prior to deployment, the Company trained on the French weapon systems FAMAS and AT4. This provided a rare and valuable opportunity to work with foreign nation weapons which gave the soldiers a greater perspective on the capabilities of our own weapons.



French doctrine and tactics were also taught by our hosts which we were free to apply at our discretion in conjunction with our usual TTPs. One key difference to note was the French emphasis of combined arms warfare even down to the lowest levels. Something that we as a modern Army, in our archaic role specific regimental system, sometimes find hard to achieve.



On conclusion of the initial training week the Company had a clear idea of how they best operated in complex urban terrain enabling a strong start to the FTX. The FTX was fully scored and assessed with five serials consisting of offensive, defensive and stabilisation actions. Training value is further increased by the addition of a fully resourced conventional peer OPFOR who conduct a two year posting at CENZUB, resulting in the enemy having an already intimate knowledge of the ground and likely courses of action.

The application of armour became the key talking point as both its lethality and vulnerability in the urban environment became clear as the exercise progressed. Each serial was followed by an

After-Action Review (AAR) where the performance of each commander was meticulously scrutinised.



The final action of the FTX was a Battlegroup Attack onto Jeoffrecourt with our counterparts from the 126e RI. B (Rorke's Drift) Company made a swift advance south through the industrial zone before meeting fierce pockets of resistance in the historical centre. The French initially advanced slowly from the west with intent of linking up in the vicinity of the town square. Balance was restored and the remaining OPFOR were rapidly defeated in the town centre.

In light of the chaotic nature of urban warfare all remained calm throughout the final attack. The visible progress the Company made in just two weeks was significant. This was manifest in our results which placed us in the top 9% of British Units to have passed through CENZUB, all the more impressive for a Company that has just been assisting the civil authorities over the last six months.

3rd Battalion

Since the last update the 3rd Battalion has been its usual busy self. The Battalion managed to conduct its annual deployment exercise, Ex DRAGON RESET prior to the second wave of lockdowns beginning. A mix of FIBUA training, Recce patrol competition and Adventurous training it was thoroughly enjoyed by all and good to return to field training in the time of COVID.



All good things must come to an end however, with the recent firebreak lockdown seeing a return to online training. This is now a well-worn path thanks to the tireless efforts of the TrgWO, WO2 Harrison and the PSIs. Planning has also continued apace for the Welsh Warriors Wrexham Week with several hundred counter COVID COA's pouring out of Capt "Titch" Jones' inbox.

There has also been some good cross training with the 1st Battalion, with Fusiliers managing to attend the recent Recce cadre and with others deploying to France with B (Rorke's Drift) Coy to CENZUB training area for an Urban Warfare package alongside our oldest enemies, I mean allies.

The Battalion continues to support Defence output with two Officers recently returned from Op ORBITAL where they had been employed mentoring the Armed Forces of Ukraine as part of an STTT from 3 RIFLES. Another 2 Reservists are currently mobilised on Operations at the time of this letter's publication. Additionally, the ever-irrepressible Majors Pascoe and Laing are also preparing to mobilise with teams from the Battalion to Saudi Arabia and the less glamorous Swynnerton Q-FAC respectively.



In the run up to Christmas leave, now lockdown has ended the Battalion is looking to conduct its last training event of the year and Battalion Support Weapons cadres beginning in November. Recruiting wise the Battalion is continuing to perform well, with large numbers of recruits loaded onto the next available Ph1 and Ph2 training course and having recently commissioned 2 new subalterns into the Battalion.

Cpl Anthony Lock

A Newport veteran due to march at the Cenotaph in London on Remembrance Sunday hasn't let COVID or his struggles with PTSD get in the way of raising funds for charity.

Anthony Lock, 38, has embarked on a 138 mile 'virtual' jog – the distance from Newport to the Cenotaph in London, to raise funds for The Not Forgotten, a British Armed Forces charity which supports serving and ex-service men and women.

Supported by his partner and his 15-year-old-daughter, Anthony, a former Corporal with 2 Royal Welsh, is averaging around 10.6 miles each day on a treadmill at his Newport home, despite suffering from spinal damage, arthritis and an acute pain condition.



Anthony initially hoped to raise £138.00 to represent a pound for every mile between Newport and the Cenotaph, but his fundraising efforts have exceeded his expectations and currently stand at over an incredible £2,000. He aims to complete the challenge on 8 November just in time to pay his own respects to our fallen heroes and his friends.

Anthony tells us:

"I was really looking forward to joining The Not Forgotten, fellow comrades and veterans for the march-past at the Cenotaph on Sunday, but sadly due to COVID, this significant event has been cancelled this year.

I know this has been an extremely challenging year for everyone, but a further lockdown has led to things really spiraling for me recently."

Anthony, whose motto is 'never give up, never give in' decided to set himself the challenge to take his mind off things, keep on top of his PTSD and continue with his recovery, while also giving back to The Not Forgotten who he says "really put their arms around me and offered me hope over the past year after struggling to get any support since leaving the Army."

In 2009, Anthony was seriously injured in Afghanistan and his world fell apart when he suffered both physical and mental injuries and became isolated from the world. He recently found hope with The Not Forgotten who aim to combat isolation and loneliness amongst the Armed Forces community through social activities and challenge holidays. He believes he might not be here today without their continued support.

Commenting on Anthony's fundraising efforts, Brigadier James Stopford, CBE, CEO of The Not Forgotten said: "We were really looking forward to Anthony joining us to march at the Cenotaph and are saddened that the event has been cancelled this year.

We are delighted that Anthony is part of The Not Forgotten family and has taken on this challenge to support his fellow veterans. His spirit and determination in the face of adversity is admirable and we wish him the very best of luck with his challenge."

If you would like to donate to Anthony's fundraising campaign visit <https://gf.me/u/y5rdaz>
If you are a serving or ex-member of the Armed Forces or you know of someone that could benefit from the help of The Not Forgotten, please get in touch by contacting Tel: 0207 730 2400

He had been due to march with the NFA in London for Remembrance Day but the event had been cancelled due to the lockdown, so he decided to jog the 138 miles virtually.

Over 13 days, Anthony pounded the treadmill at home before finishing the final leg at his local cenotaph in Newport this week, where he laid poppy crosses for the Not Forgotten Association and his fallen friends. Having set a goal of £138 for the charity, he has since raised over £3,000.

"Within a few hours there was about £700 donated, it was amazing," he said. "I was getting e-mails from elderly people who said they'd donated part of their pensions to it. They were humbled by what I was doing. It spurred me on. "I don't do running outside, as I find it extremely difficult. But this wasn't just about raising money, it was about raising awareness of the charity and challenging myself too.

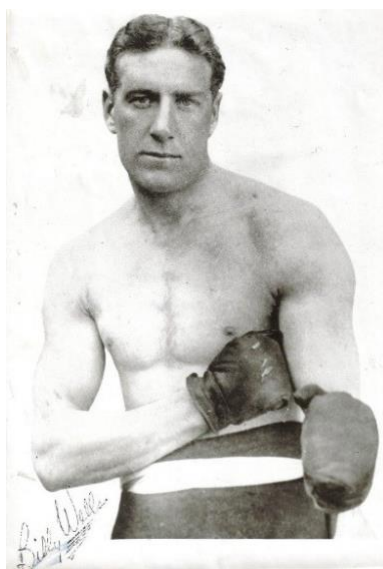
"So I ran to the cenotaph in Newport and paid my own respects. It was emotionally draining, but I got through it because of the support." Anthony still suffers the effects of PTSD to this day, but said the support from the Not Forgotten Association has been "absolutely phenomenal".

"PTSD can affect your mood quite badly - you feel miserable, constantly tired. You need to use the toilet a lot because of the anxiety," he said. "Little things like a car door slamming, a dog barking, an alarm going off, can trip you up. "

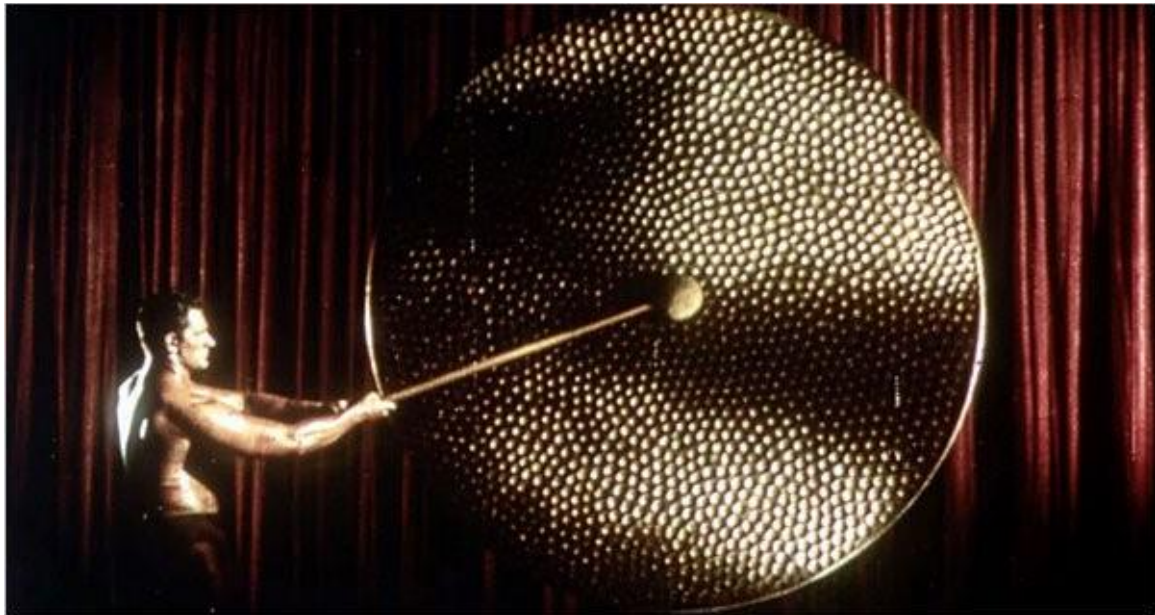
"But the NFA have been brilliant. They do much that you don't hear about. They've been going to care homes across the country and putting on shows in the car park for residents and keeping them going.

WO2 William Thomas Wells (1889-1967) South Wales Borderers - Major Martin Everett MBE

Boxer - Born in Stepney, London. Joined the Gunners in 1906 - fought under the name of 'Bombardier Billy Wells' - was British Heavyweight Boxing Champion between 1911 and 1919 - defended his title some 15 times -



Wikipedia entry states that he was WELCH. He was actually a warrant officer in SWB during WW1. Interestingly, his physique enabled him to be one of the 'gong men' on the opening titles of early J Arthur Rank black & white films.



DAVID RATTRAY
MEMORIAL TRUST
SUPPORTING **KHULA** EDUCATION

Positive changes in the face of COVID-19

Whilst best described as '*business unusual*' for us all, in KwaZulu-Natal KHULA Education has taken advantage of this extraordinary situation and opened the doors to learning to many more young people. We are so proud of all our **pupils and staff** this year who have adapted quickly to the ever-changing situation with good humour and resilience. In particular, we are **celebrating** our fantastic pupils in Grade 7 at Oscarsberg and Mampunga Schools and Grade 8 at Mampunga and Gadeleni Schools who have achieved results well above the Circuit, District and provincial average. The sky is the limit for these KHULA students!

Thanks to you, our generous supporters, the response to our Tablet Campaign and our on-going #FundourFuture Campaign has been fantastic. At a time when we are exploring new territory and moving our fundraising efforts online, you have given over **£55,000** this year via our digital campaigns. This gives us security that we can carry on our work in this special part of South Africa. The Officers' Association of the Royal Welsh has contributed £1,000 towards this education appeal.



New year, new school!

We are delighted to announce that in January 2021, we will be taking on a new, local pre-school in Amoibe. This expansion will give an additional 40 three and four years olds the opportunity of a KHULA education and comes as a direct result of parental demand and your financial support.

We look forward to the new school year in January with hope and positivity.

The prospect of a vaccine or vaccines for all in the New Year brings us hope that we will be able to get together in a series of Regimental events in 2021 and meet old friends. "**dawn comes after the darkness**," as author Lisa Wingate put it.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and the sincere hope that 2021 will be a lot better than 2020 has been. Stay safe and keep well.

Yours sincerely

Chris Kilmister

RHQ Contact Details. I remind you of our office phone and email addresses and other email addresses. Where there are 2 email addresses you should always use **BOTH email addresses:**

Our Email Addresses are:

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Our office telephone numbers are laid out below, and it is best to **use email for almost all communication**. Our mobile phone numbers are also listed:

- Lt Col Chris Kilmister **02920 781 207** or mobile **07724 856 422**
- Maj Derek Adams **02920 726 103** or mobile **07886 017 448**
- Capt Des Williams DCM **01978 316 188** or mobile **07545 243 513**
- Richard Tuffney **02920 781 395** or mobile **07555 681 493**
- Debbie Martin **02920 781 215** or mobile **07862 262 076**
- Regimental Adjutant **02920 726 105** mobile TBC (**Captain Tony Kironde-Strain**)

Provisional Diary Dates for 2021

- **Sunday 17th January** - Rorke's Drift Church Service in Brecon Cathedral and lunch in the Sergeants' Mess, Dering Lines. Unfortunately, this has been postponed until later in the spring (likely to be April). Details to be confirmed in due course.
- **Saturday 23rd January** – Rorke's Drift Dinner organised by Tony Kane in the Cardiff area. Has unfortunately had to be postponed until Saturday 22 January 2022.
- **Monday 1st March - Saturday 6th March** - 3 R WELSH Wrexham week of activities has also had to be delayed until later in the year possibly July.
- **Saturday 6th March** - Freedom of Wrexham. 3rd Battalion will not now exercise the Freedom of Wrexham in March and hope to do so in July.
- **Friday 23rd April RRW Officers' London Lunch**. At the Army & Navy Club. Peter Kerruish will put out more details in due course.
- **Wednesday 12th May**. Branch Secretaries Meeting in the Monty Club, Newtown. Agenda to follow. This is a provisional date for your diaries.
- **Saturday 10th - Saturday 17th July**. 3 R WELSH surge week in Wrexham with Freedom Parade in Wrexham on Saturday 17th July.
- **Saturday 17th or Saturday 24st July** – Brecon Reunion.
- **Saturday 4th September** – Wrexham Reunion.