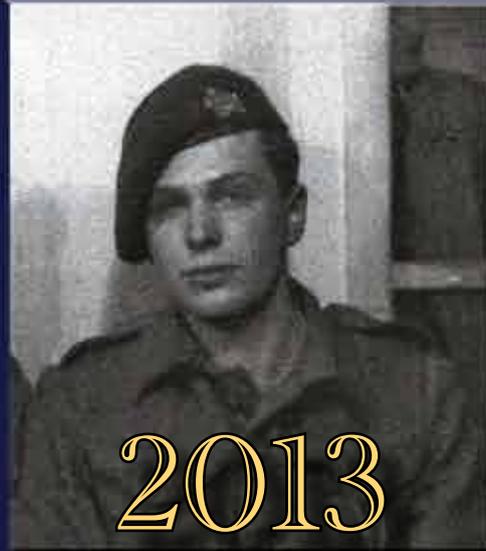




*The Journal of the
Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry Association*

The Donkey Walloper



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*The Journal of the
Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry Association*

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Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to the 2013 RGHYA Journal which features our events over the last year and also looks forward to some of the developments in the 'interesting times' that we are living through! We are all pleased that the 13 Yeomen from C (RGH) Squadron have returned safely from their Op HERRICK tour in Afghanistan attached to our affiliated Regiment, The King's Royal Hussars. This significant mobilisation shows the important role that C (RGH) Squadron, the Royal Wessex Yeomanry and the whole TA are playing in supporting the Regular Army. This is set to significantly increase over the next few years as the renamed 'Army Reserve' aims to double in size and recruiting is already happening across the county. The RGHYA will continue to do everything it can to support our Squadron.

The RGHYA continues to organise our two Remembrance events as well as a series of social events through the year. We have also successfully amalgamated our branches into a single association with a combined membership, committee and finances. The committee has worked hard to achieve this and are keen to ensure that the RGHYA continues to thrive. Communication is essential for any organisation to thrive and we are making the most of modern media to keep everybody in touch.



There are some exciting developments being planned at the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum and I am keen that the RGHYA fully supports these.

I am very grateful to the RGHYA Committee who have collectively done so much to organise our events and help the association to evolve. In particular I would highlight Major Chris Dash who has been our Treasurer for 35 years and has now handed over to Major Geoffrey Stephenson. Capt Phil Mitchell has

also worked hard both as a key member of C (RGH) Squadron and of our committee and organised our Website.

As ever I am also grateful for the support and enthusiasm of Major Alexander Bathurst as Vice-Chairman.

This excellent Journal is published by our Hon Secretary John Tyror who has played a very significant role in the RGHYA.

I am grateful to the numerous people who have contributed articles to this year's Journal and of course, thanks are also due to the advertisers, without whom, it could not be published, in this format.

I look forward to seeing you at some of the forthcoming events listed in the calendar.

Lance Ranson

The Association Year 2012

13 March 2012 - Association Meeting at The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum

This was our first event of the year and what a super event it turned out to be. About 25 of us turned up to this meeting. It was good to see Chris Etheridge and John Taylor there. Let's hope that we see more of them at future meetings, etc

We met in the Boardroom at the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum and started at 1900 hrs with drinks and nibbles, this was followed by Lt Col Ralph Stephenson giving us an insight into the

direction that the Museum hoped to be going in the next few years. The Museum Trustees have applied for a lottery grant to aid expansion and also it seems that Korean companies have expressed an interest in helping with IT hardware and software. The Museum Trustees are hoping to raise several £million, so watch your pockets!

Following on, Capt Phil Mitchell enlightened us on the fact that the four squadrons of the RWxY would be adopting one uniform and one cap badge in the near future. This was greeted with much shaking of



heads. It was also noted that there would also be a new Guidon for the Regiment. Again, it is a another case of wait and see.

Larry Birkin was conned into selling our raffle tickets this time round and a great job he did with them, raising enough money to cover the evening.

Major Ian Mountain came along with Don Hart and Beryl and appeared to enjoy themselves. It was nice to see Fritz there as well, as he can't normally make evening meetings.

I haven't named everybody who attended but I am sure that those I haven't mentioned will forgive me for this.

The formalities ended with the raffle being drawn and prizes distributed. The meeting ended at 2100 hours. Once again, our thanks must go to the Museum Curator for opening up the Museum especially for us and being so welcoming.

24 March 2012 - Birthday Party

Capt Phil Mitchell organised a small party at Cirencester TAC, to celebrate the 90th Birthday of G Sqn member, Don Hart. There were about 20 guests in attendance, from young C Sqn soldiers to Don's G Sqn colleagues. A very pleasant couple of hours were spent there. Happy Birthday Don!

30 March 2012 - RGH Spring Lunch

The morning was a little cool, but it mattered not. Twenty-eight of us gathered at the Eliot Arms, South Cerney, from 12 o'clock onwards. We were warmly welcomed and food orders were taken. It was nice to welcome members from the Cheltenham area who joined us. We then sat down to lunch at 1.30pm. After our meal Col Andy Hodson proposed a toast

to absent friends. We were then able to go into the garden, where the sun was now shining and the daffodils were blooming. This gave us a lovely setting to have a couple more drinks before it came to a close. Another perfect afternoon for our lunch and get together.

Thanks/blame must go to Andy Beard for organising this event for us.





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22 April - Katia Day Memorial Service

A couple of dozen Old Comrades and supporters turned out for this short but moving Service at the Hussars Memorial on College Green.

The Service was led by Col Ranson, Captain Mitchell laid a wreath and Chic Webb played the

trumpet calls. It was good to see a contingent from Pates Grammar School CCF in attendance.

Afterwards, everybody retired to a wonderful old room in the Cathedral where they enjoyed tea and biscuits and renewed old acquaintances.

10 July 2012 - Association Meeting held at the Victory Club, Cheltenham

Fourteen of us turned up for this meeting which was held in the superb surroundings of the Victory Club.

Gordon Jones and his colleagues had laid on a display of old weapons. Due to circumstances beyond their control, though, only a Bren gun turned up. However, this made quite a talking point.

The evening began with a welcome from Col Lance Ranson and a minutes silence for "Empty Saddles". Gordon then took those that were interested on a tour of the Club.. It is very well equipped with a billiards room, skittle alley and a dance hall. We are hoping that we will be able to use it for next June's meeting.

It was good to see our old comrades from Cheltenham in attendance. Some of our older members will remember Mike Clapham he travelled down from Nottingham to attend and George Watkins came in from the Forest of Dean.

It was good to see Gary Elliott who travelled from Slimbridge to be there and Bill Ponting and Ron Pearce.

Other comrades there were of course Rich Tanner, Colin Kingscott, Chic Webb, Jason Hawkins, Brian Griffiths, Lynn Tyror and myself.

The evening would not be complete of course without our world famous raffle. Most people won, there was only me and Brian Griffiths who didn't get a prize - such is life!



Medal Presentation

On the evening of Wednesday 1 August 2012, Gen Arthur Denaro in the presence of C (RGH) Sqn members, the RGH Trustees and members of the RGHYA Committee carried out presentations to the following people:

WO2 Salter 2nd Clasp to VRSM and WO2 Westerman 1st Clasp to VRSM.

The following received Queen's Jubilee medal:

Capt Mitchell; Lt Endsor; WO2 Salter and Cpl Howard.

12 September - Association Meeting with C Sqn (RGH) RWxY at Highfield House, Cirencester

About a dozen old comrades turned up for this get together and what a hectic evening we had.

Firstly, we joined the Sqn in a lecture given by Cpl O'Neill in which he demonstrated (with the aid of two willing volunteers) the new equipment which is becoming standard issue to the British Army.

How different it all is from when most of our members served - it seems an awful long way from Lee Enfields and SLR's,

After this session it was down to the cinema for a presentation from Capt Phil Mitchell.

His presentation was about Army 2020. In other words what the plans are for the Army in general and RWxY in particular. A question and answer session then followed in which our members took part enthusiastically.

It was then all troops muster in the bar for a fish and chip supper and of course the inevitable "Grand Raffle". We raised £73 with ticket sales (about £50 after paying for prizes) towards the cost of the evening.

28 September - Association Lunch at Elliot Arms, South Cerney

It happened again, the sun really does shine on the righteous!

A dozen or so of us met up again for our twice yearly lunch and get-together. We enjoyed a very pleasant meal and chat, it was really good to see Pat Smart and Julia and 'Thomo' there for the first time. Let's hope that we see more of them.

The weather that day was quite mixed, with some rain about but we found that after our meal we were able to sit outside in the garden again in the sun and have a couple more drinks before wending our various ways home.

See you all again in March!



21 October - Trafalgar Night Dinner

This wonderful event, organised by the Royal Naval Association is always worth attending. This year though, there were only four RGH people in attendance instead of the dozen or so who normally go along to Kings Stanley Village Hall.

This year the Guest of Honour was Captain D Sidwell, MN, who gave a brilliant after dinner speech

11 December - RGH Association (Cotswold Branch) Final AGM

This meeting, held at the Conservative Club in Stroud, marked the beginning of a new, unified, RGHYA.

The main concern of the meeting was the discussion and acceptance of, a new Constitution for the RGHYA which will encompass all the former branches and areas.

First, our Chairman, Col Lance Ranson welcomed one and all (18 members were in attendance) and then briefly outlined the progress made over the past 12 months since the reorganisation was first mooted.

He mentioned how the Association had supported member of the serving squadron by helping finance adventurous training activities. He said how pleased we all were that the 14 members of the squadron who had been on Op HERRICK had now all returned home safely.

He then handed over to the Treasurer who reported that following the receipt of the balance of funds formerly held by the Association he had amalgamated with those of the Cotswold Branch holding the former in an interest bearing account with the bank. He then explained in detail the entries in the final Income and Expenditure Account of the Cotswold Branch, copies of which he circulated amongst members present.

The Secretary then reminded the meeting of the events that had taken place in the preceding 12 months and reported that these had been reasonably well supported.

After this, the meeting was thrown over to general discussion of the draft Constitution Document and after some lively debate, a final agreement was reached and the Constitution agreed by the members present. This Constitution will be available to view on the website.

The formal meeting ended at this point and we broke for a splendid raffle and buffet and drinks at the bar.

Our thanks to Anne Evans for organising this venue and running the bar for us.

describing lightly, a life in the merchant navy. This was followed by "The Immortal Memory".

Don Hart, who attended, was given special mention, as was the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of El Alemain.

Our thanks go to Dorothy and Tim and the Stroud RNA for inviting us to this special occasion.



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Royal Wessex Yeomanry Ride

Sergeant beats a brace of captains

ROYAL WESSEX YEOMANRY RIDE, BADMINTON, GLOS

1 December

By Martha Terry

ROYAL Marine Colour Sergeant Bob Skinner cocked a snook at the cavalry regiments as he sauntered away with the Royal Wessex Yeomanry Ride at Worcester Farm, Badminton. It was a rare thrashing — he won by some five fences from Capt Hugh Vere Nicoll and Capt Claire Blakiston.

"It's nice that the Royal Marines can take something from the Army," said Colour Sergeant Skinner, who rode his own horse, the 10-year-old Rock Captain. "It doesn't happen often in these races."

The winner led the way for most of the race alongside Major Alexander Bathurst on the ill-fated Baton Charge, who fell at the third-last when in contention and within sight of the finish. Although the horse got up and galloped home loose, it later suffered a heart attack and died.

An early pile-up

THE field of 10 set off with varying degrees of conviction. Capt Guy Disney — sporting last year's winner Major-General Arthur Denaro's lightweight red hunting coat — blazed the trail on Quicolai. Having steeplechased the first two brushes, they headed with equal panache into the third, an upright post-and-rail, breasted it and crash-landed — earning him the Bobby Faulkner Memorial Bottie as first faller.

The following runners, who had been enjoying sitting behind their confident leader, all stopped and regrouped, as the next fence was a stone wall with a hefty drop, not to be attempted in cold blood.

Most ground to a halt here, some umpteen times, until yeoman Capt Vere Nicoll got the pack racing again, and they headed out to the Beaufort hedges. One of these was pretty nasty, close to 6ft with a falling groundline in sloppy mud — although there was a slower rail alternative for those wanting to get round.

By the time the field came to the finishing straight, they were well strung out, hunting round the 2½-mile course in small groups. The win may have looked easy, but it was a gruelling race in testing conditions and Colour Sergeant



Colour Sergeant Bob Skinner takes the Royal Wessex Yeomanry Ride by a wide margin on his own Rock Captain

Skinner's seventh attempt to win the Somerville Livingstone-Learmonth Trophy.

"I hunt Rock Captain with the Devon and Somerset, so I know him well," he said. "He used to be a National Hunt horse, but he was no good."

Using a bridle helps

HIS victory may just make the cavalry regiments take a Royal Marine on a horse seriously. The first time Colour Sergeant Skinner attempted the ride, he went round in a headcollar because his brand new bridle had

no cheekpieces — and came third. "I was nicknamed the Devon Gypsy because the bit was tied on with rope," he said.

Capt Vere Nicoll (Quick Fix) shaded Capt Blakiston into third in a sprint to the line, having hacked round much of the course together after the early carnage. He took home the RGH Challenge Cup as first yeoman.

Quick Fix was one of a trio — with Baton Charge and Quicolai — in the field to have been trained by Tom George. Sue Nock's 10-year-old has spent this season hunting.

Capt Hugh Vere Nicoll receives his prize from the Duchess of Beaufort



Blakiston beats her CO

CAPT BLAKISTON, who has an eventing background, looked neat on Sergeant Wildish's gun team horse Esme. The butty little mare had been on a state visit earlier in the week and jumped a good round here. After an early altercation at one fence, they were surprised to have finished in the places.

"It took me 14 fences to find a rhythm," admitted first-timer Capt Blakiston, of the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery. "I was kicking on by the end. I did manage to beat my commanding officer, although he has put that down to a weight advantage."

Her commanding officer, Major Mark Edward, was fourth, ahead of Lieutenant Doug White of the Queen's Royal Hussars, who picked up the Johnny Hills Memorial Plate as first novice cavalryman. Both he and his white-faced Weston bit the dust at the troublesome fourth, the drop, but recovered to take fifth.

The regimental ride has its origins in the 19th century when the West Country yeomanry regiments contested the Challenge Cup. The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars held it in Beaufort country from the 1930s to 1970 and it returned to Badminton in 1985. H&H

Bir el Gubi Service

At the recent annual Bir el Gubi Service at Badminton Church on Sunday 25 November, we were able to remember those from 2 RGH who were killed on 19 November 1941 and also welcome back the RGHYeomen who had recently returned from Afghanistan. It was a pleasure to see our Bir el Gubi Veterans talking with RGHYeomen who have been on operations over 71 years later.

Don Hart very memorably read the list of Empty Saddles who had been killed during the battle and he was honoured to meet HRH The Prince of Wales after the Service.

We were also pleased to welcome the new Commanding Officer of the Royal Wessex Yeomanry Lt Col Christopher MacGregor KRH, H.M Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire Dame Janet Trotter DBE also attended the Service. The Service was conducted by the new Vicar of Badminton the Reverend Richard Thomson and the RGHYA Padre Reverend Christopher Mulholland gave the Address.

The RGH Guidon was escorted by the Guidon Party from C (RGH) Squadron and the RGHYA Banner was carried by Andy Beard.

Badminton is very much the 'home' of the RGH and we are proud of our long affiliation with the Beaufort family and we are as ever grateful for the kind hospitality of the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort.



Exercise Brittany Wyvern

Exercise Brittany Wyvern 2012 was a Royal Wessex Yeomanry off-shore sailing expedition starting in Brest, France on 10 June 2012 and finishing in Gosport, UK on 24 June 2012. The Skipper and Mate stayed aboard for both weeks but crew members changed on the middle Sunday. During each week the skipper and mate took the non-sailors through the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) competent crew syllabus.

After a short flight from Southampton and long taxi ride crew One were introduced by Skipper Paul Molyneux, to HM Sail Training Craft 'Sabre' a Nicholson 55 yawl, on a wet and overcast Sunday afternoon. After a safety brief, allocation of bunks, crew jobs given out and personnel allocated to Blue or Red Watch the ship's company headed to a local French restaurant for an excellent crew meal.

Briefings continued the following morning which included both Watches hoisting, reefing and lowering sails while alongside at Marina du Chateau, Brest. The old hands became familiar with the equipment and the six novice sailor's put their new skills into action when Sabre set sail, in light westerly winds, for Camaret up the Gulet de Brest and 10 miles nearer the open sea. On route Man Overboard drills were practised.

Day two presented a force 4-5 NW wind which suited the sail south towards Concarneau with a No

3 Genoa and one reef in the Mainsail as Sabre set off into the Atlantic sailing on a starboard tack, broad reach. The wind died as we approached the tidal gate of the Raz de Seine but motor sailing and a favourable tide pushed the boat at eight nautical knots in the right direction. Settling down into Watches a few crew members found the wave motion a stomach churner but with plenty to see including a French minesweeper, a 20 strong fishing fleet to navigate through and rocky outcrops all were windswept after the 65 nautical mile sail.

Wednesday morning consisted of breakfast ashore, a whistle-stop tour of the fortified old town, knot practice and dinghy drills before departing for Benodet a short hop up the coast in bright sunshine. Tacking was the order of the day as was helming practice which proved to be very challenging for Red watch! A civilised afternoon tea, with fresh cakes, was taken in the cockpit after anchoring in Benodet bay. Sabre was secured in Benodet marina at 2000 hrs. That evening the crew headed into town for a hearty meal a decision was made to head back towards Brest the following day as an Atlantic gale was tracking towards the French coast predicted to hit our sailing area in the next few days.

To allow for a favourable tide the morning briefings consisted of points of sail, use of flares, helicopter rescue, life raft, abandon ship drills, the purser Ian Griffith was able to replenish food provisions including fresh bread for lunch! A lively beat out of Benodet was the start of a long bumpy sail into the open sea. Turning north at Pionte de Penmarc'h put Sabre onto a reach that continued the uncomfortable move through the Raz de Sein passing a racing fleet under spinnaker late afternoon. Supper of Spaghetti Bolognese was taken in Watches, at hove-to, in Bay of Douananez, watching the sun set in preparation for a night entry to Morgat. Approaching an unlit Morgat harbour was a team effort with the mate, Tony Smith, giving the skipper information from the plotter as Benny Hill kept a good lookout and the remainder of the crew helped ready the boat for securing to a very thin finger pontoon which was achieved safely at 0100hrs on Thursday morning.

With reveille at 0800hrs the crew readied the yacht for departing while the skipper spoke to the harbourmaster who advised we should not leave before midday as he thought the 2.74 metre draught of Sabre would not clear the silted harbour entrance. We slipped at 0930hrs and were clear of the harbour by 0945hrs without grounding!

A wet beat south, rounding Cap de la Chievre then reaching north into a heavy sea that kept Simon Jacko O'Neill and Paul Starbrook concentrating on trying to keep the boat on course in the rolling sea coming in from the open Atlantic. Life became easier after the turn east into the Brest Gulet and all were glad to see the marina in the afternoon. The marina was full, possibly because of the incoming storm even our pre-booked berth was taken so it was the fuel pontoon for Sabre! Saturday saw a full day of cleaning, scrubbing and drying off kit on an extremely windy but dry day which was rounded off by a crew meal ashore, a good night's sleep and crew change over on Sunday 17 June 2012.

The new crew's itinerary followed the same format as the first up to visiting Camaret but on day three Sabre moved north on the start of a 256 nautical mile trip back to Gosport. The Watch leaders, Matt Blachford and Katy Allen were kept busy setting sails and organizing helm duties on the sail to L'Aber Wrac'h. Although motor sailing due to lack of wind the trip was eventful with dolphins riding the boats bow wave, an air sea rescue practise taking place 500 metres off Sabre and the usual French fishing fleet intent on aiming at us!

The intention was to sail to Ploumanach further up the French coast but progress was slow due to the wind direction and tide so the Skipper decided to go straight to Guernsey after battling for six hours and making less progress than hoped. The weather deteriorated with heavy rain accompanied by thunder and lightning which closed in during the hours of darkness. Guernsey came into view only two miles off shore at 0530hrs, radar was used throughout the night to aid navigation and safety. This was the longest passage of the leg, 92 nautical miles.

Thursday 21 June 2012 was a stormy day spent on a floating pontoon

at St Peters Port sleeping, showering and carrying out competent crew dinghy drills, flares, knots and meteorology.

We departed Guernsey at 0800hrs with three reefs in the main sail timed to clear the Alderney race with the tide. We reached speed over the ground of nearly 10 knots in a heavy confused sea which demanded full concentration of all the crew. A mooring was taken up in Braye harbour Alderney at midday where the dinghy was launched to ferry the crew ashore. The afternoon was spent exploring Braye and enjoying the afternoon sun. Evening meal was taken on board with the boat slipping at 2000hrs for the night sail to UK.

Day 14 crossing the English Channel was an excellent night sail on a clear night with a South Westerly pushing Sabre speedily towards the Needles. Both watches were kept busy with the shipping lanes, choppy sea state and speed of the vessel. Reaching 5 miles off the Isle of Wight before dawn we changed course to go into Poole bay as we could not enter the Needles channel before 0700hrs. After gaining some time and sea-space the movement into the Solent went well and breakfast was taken on a mooring off Yarmouth, Isle of Wight. The anchor was prepared on the mooring before motoring down to Osborne Bay where we sat at anchor before moving off to arrive at Gosport by 1400hrs. The afternoon was spent preparing the yacht for handover and a crew meal was taken ashore in the evening.

In total 434 nautical miles were covered, 12 novice sailors were awarded an RYA Competent Crew certificate, Salty seadogs gained valued experience and a great time was had by all.

Capt Tony Smith (PSAO)



Lcp Allan and WO2 Westerman



RGH going to War!

The following are two accounts of Yeoman going off to war in the desert. They are given by men of different generations, one from 1939 and one from 2003. As an interested bystander, both groups seem to do what the RGH of my era did also, and that was enjoy a drink (or two)!

The Night We Went To Warsop

'Life is a slow process towards an inevitable end' read the neatly chalked words on the sentry box at the east gate of Whitchurch Airport at Bristol. We could not agree more. Only those who have endured a 24 hour guard (2 on-4 off) know how slow it can be.

December 1939 saw us, a group of 20-year-olds with four months active service, brutal and licentious soldiery of the Territorial Army, guarding this vital link in the communications of the British Empire. Such was the trust placed in us, a detachment of that proud Regiment, the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, that they forbore to issue us with firearms. Instead, to foil any parachute landing by the much despised Wehrmacht, the entire supply of pick-axe helms (12 in all) had been commandeered from the local ironmongers. There being no army manual in the use of these handy weapons we had been recommended to visit Knowle cinema where, fortuitously, Errol Flynn was appearing in 'Robin Hood'. From careful observation of this film we had picked up the basics of quarter staff combat. This, together with the firm belief that to put a paratrooper; out of the fight all you had to do was wait till he was three feet off the ground then hit him sharply across the shins, convinced us we could deal with any incursion. With this comforting knowledge, cushy billets with local families and beer at 1/-d (fivepence) a pint in the British Legion we spent a congenial Christmas in the home of rum, tobacco and slavery, (all relevant to our present way of life). Then the blow fell. Our presence at that vital point must have persuaded Hitler that an airborne invasion would be fruitless. We were to be relieved to start tank training in the Dukeries. A quick check in an old school atlas showed us that this was in Nottinghamshire, near ... where do you think? Sherwood Forest! More shades of dear Errol. 'G' Sqn, (that was us) were to be billeted at Warsop and we were to leave Temple Meads Station on New Year's Eve.

Early that evening we assembled at Squadron Headquarters — an empty shop on the Knowle

Parade. We were to march the 4 miles to the town centre and to bolster morale rifles had been borrowed from local Sea Scouts. To our joy and merriment and to his disgust Norman Panton, late on parade, found himself issued with a sweeping brush instead.



The Late J. I. Frapwell, MBE (Frap)

As it was, there were few civilians about. It was a raw evening, the way chill, the road icy. Even highly trained marchers such as we could hardly keep to our feet. Slithering and sliding on metal-studded boots we edged our way with the care of Blondin tightrope walking the Niagara Falls. Witty badinage broke the frosty air — 'get off your knees', 'they shouldn't let a knight out on a horse like this', 'you're creeping like a cat in a crypt', 'watch that bloody bondhook', 'you watch it — your clock's ugly enough already.'

At last we reached Temple Meads, all wounded still being able to walk. We assembled on platform 1 under the command of 2nd Lt. Johnny Fidler. It was his first command, but the aplomb and expertise of highly trained soldiers meant no instructions were needed to display an immaculate front.

'The train to Warsop will leave at 19.30', he said. We hurriedly worked that out to be 7.30. Twenty minutes to go. Suddenly, as if on cue, a character study from a Will Hay film appeared. Sideling up to Johnny this wizened, fragile, hunched, toothless, white-haired porter whispered in his ear: 'Blast the GWR', said Johnny audibly. Pacing up and down for a few turns he announced authoritatively, 'the train time has been altered. It will now leave at 1 o'clock, I mean one hundred hours.' Then, much less positively, 'it's no good you hanging about here for five hours, I suppose, and it is New Year's Eve, so you had better be dismissed. Don't go too far! Be back on parade at 00.30.' It was early in the war. Later on, no such licence would be given. It would soon be discovered that the best place for other ranks was in some form of confinement — barracks, jail, on parade, or even battle.

Like the schoolboys we had so lately been we greeted this announcement with incredulity, then with whoops of joy turned smartly to the right and

immediately left the station before the order could be rescinded.

Our first call was at 'The Bridge Inn', at the beginning of Baldwin Street where, to enhance the party mood, we had a couple of rounds of barley wine. We were aiming for 'The Mauritania', where the bars were on ascending floors and were romantically named 'lower', 'upper' and 'top' deck. As soon as decently possible we prepared to depart. We shouldered our rifles and Norman shouldered his brush. Suddenly, he was challenged loudly by the landlady — a ginger-haired virago of some 50 winters. 'Put that back', she bellowed. 'But it's mine', countered Norman. 'Whoever heard of a Squadie with a sweeping brush?' she inquired furiously. A good question. Protestations were useless. Cornered by such an indomitable foe his efforts to explain and avoid the inevitable wrath of the Quartermaster, were in vain. To a tirade of abuse he was bundled off the premises minus his 'shoulder arm'. Three days later Norman faced an inquiry and was fined 3/6d for dereliction of duty, the loss of Army property, to wit one brush, sweepers for the use of.

Down Baldwin Street into the old Centre we wandered to 'The Mauritania' lower deck. It was still early evening and quiet in there. Girls who normally hunted in pairs, one purl one plain, had not yet arrived. A few middle-aged couples in their 30's sat around silently surveying their beers and sweet martinis. One or two family parties were having more stimulating conversations 'what'll you have this time?' or 'it's been a funny old year, hasn't it.'

Benny who was a keyboard virtuoso, using two fingers of the left hand and all of those of the right, one at a time, wandered over to the piano on the tiny corner stage. We joined him but our impressions of the Ink Spots singing 'Bless 'em All' and 'Run Rabbit Run' only seemed to inspire dislike and disgust in our small audience. Then Jackie Fenton took over the stool and tried his showstopper. Jackie's speciality was 'Tiger Rag.' But he played it entirely with his nose, a startling if musically flawed performance and not too easy on the nose either. Our grand entertainment having flopped it seemed a good time to go and now, weaving somewhat slightly, we headed for 'The Hatchet' then downmarket, but warm, cheerful and noisy. Even the sawdust on the floor was genuine.

We had just settled there for a quiet family chat (all Regiments are families) when through the door burst five fair-headed men with the pinched noses, close-set blue eyes and the rapacious looks of those seafaring men who, a thousand years ago, caused such consternation in Nunneries. Yes, they were Vikings, just off a Norwegian vessel docked a few yards away.

Like us they were in uniform. Blue dungarees, blue sweaters, blue reefers and blue woollen caps in their case and we naturally gravitated towards one another. Most of us had dropped the subject of Norwegian early in school but they, fortunately, were fairly fluent in English. They had three words, 'Women', 'Beer' and 'Jants', the last I still think means lavatory, but I may be wrong. However, lively communication took place with much winking, hand-shaking, back-slapping and bottom-upping of pint pots. The English were very good, the Norwegians were better, or was it vice versa? Beer was very good, girls were better, or was it vice versa?

It was at this stage that Cooky discovered the Shock Machine.

Hidden in a corner at the back was this machine which, on receipt of a penny, discharged an electric current, providing a circuit was made by gripping two handles. The right hand one would turn through 180 degrees increasing the current and so the shock effect. Whispered instructions were hurriedly passed around the British contingent and we joined hands with our surprised Norwegian friends, making a circuit. With an anchor man on the left handle and Cooky operating the rheostat at its maximum, a strong electric shock passed round the circle. Even for us who were expecting it the sensation was excruciating and almost unendurable but we stuck firmly to the hands we gripped for as many seconds as we could manage. For the Norwegians the effect can only be called electrifying. Their blue eyes popped, hair stood on end, bodies convulsed. For a second they were frozen in time, then still dumbfounded by events, they went berserk like their ancestors. One fell over a table and sent about three and a half pints of George's Bristol Beer through the air; another, wringing his hands above his head, tore down the Christmas paper chains. They were, by now all roaring in disbelief. We, for our part, were collapsed in laughter and gratification at the success of our prank. The landlord decided that his pub would be more desirable without us and requested that we sling our hooks.

We went, and in the darkness of the night or the fog of alcoholic excess we lost our companions, or did they gratefully and opportunely fade away from the mad British?

Not far away, 'The Artichoke' seemed to be an opportunity for a final foray. Then it was time to retire. But now we had a fresh companion. Where had we picked him up? Wherever it was he had attached himself to us and evidently enjoyed the attachment. His name was Willett, a private soldier of the Pioneer Corps, which explains a lot. An ancient

soldier resembling 'The Ancient Mariner', fiftyish, in his cups and with a well-nigh incomprehensible Geordie accent.

We still had him when we paraded again on platform 1. It was not a good parade, but for an effort to pursue military standards after Hogmanay, not too bad. Every now and then a mysterious dent would run down the line. This, I believe, was the forerunner of the now popular sporting event phenomenon, the Mexican Wave. Periodically, someone would break ranks, turn to the right and disappear in the direction of the comfort station.

At last the train arrived. Its steam hanging wet on the icy night, six months of war griming its plate, but heavenly, to weary and bottle-worn troops. We boarded and who should be first on but Willett. Still with us and unencumbered by big pack, small pack, gas mask, water bottle, bayonet, tin hat and rifle, he was on the train and in a corner seat before we could clank into action.

Cooky was next but lurching into the compartment under the weight of his kit he tripped over Willett's outstretched feet and was propelled headfirst towards the opposite door. His rifle, slung on his shoulder, now projecting about two feet, struck the window, penetrated it and left a star-shaped hole in the glass. What now? If discovered a broken GWR window would have meant trouble. So the jagged edges of the glass were chipped out with a rifle butt so that at a glance the window looked normal, if unusually clean. The crime remained undiscovered.

Willett surveyed all this commotion with a benevolent and fatherly air. In spite of our advice, pleading and cajoling he was even more determined to transfer to what he considered a crack unit.

Eventually the train built up a speed of 70 m.p.h, lurching and grinding through the icy night. It proved to be the coldest night of the coldest winter of the war and the unremitting Arctic wind blasted through our ever-open window. Only our youth and alcoholic content saved us from death by exposure. Seven freezing hours later in the winter's frigid dawn the train stopped. We stretched, yawned and rubbed our eyes. The sign said 'Market Warsop.' Although no bees murmured and no flowers bloomed we shall always remember it. The frost-whitened platform was smudged with the black dust of a coalmining town. Even Willett was subdued. Twenty minutes later, after some inquiry and altercation, he was led away by a Provo Sergeant still protesting that he had finished with the Pioneers and wanted to be a Hussar.

This was the last we ever saw of him — the bent figure of an ancient soldier; khaki forage cap awry on his sparse grey hair casting a last appealing glance back

at us. But already hopeless, defeated and dejected. How and when did he get back to Bristol? What happened to him? I expect the call has already gone out to him, 'Come in Private Willett. Your time is up.'

So it will be one day for all old soldiers. So it was much earlier for some of those laughing lads who were with us that memorable night, the night we started an odyssey that would last six years, that would lead us eventually to the Western Desert and far beyond. The night we went to Warsop.

by The Late J. I. Frapwell, MBE (Frap)

With thanks to Don Hart for allowing us to publish this extract from his book 'When we were Young'

Chilwell and Beyond — Ten years ago ...

The build up of US and coalition forces (including a 45,000 strong UK force, 4,000 of which were mobilised TA/Reservist soldiers,) in Kuwait was well underway in January 2003 and the case for the invasion of Iraq, to overthrow the Saddam Hussein-led government, was under debate in Parliament. The British end of the operation was known as 'Operation TELIC' and the US operation was called 'Iraqi Freedom'.

It seemed as though the Gulf region was once again on the brink of yet another war; or was it the resumption of one that began 12 years earlier.

I was approached by the Squadron Admin Officer. He explained that he needed four names from the squadron to possibly go out to the Gulf and fill some job slots that were available at that time.

Being lured by the romance and mystery of the desert (along with the RGH tradition of fighting in desert campaigns) I said 'yes' and so my name was put forward. The lucky names gathered that day were Sgt. Paul Neaves, Cpl. Dennis Walker, Cpl. Rory Lipington and myself, Cpl. Darren Isles.

This was one of those decisions that I firstly had to clear through my darling wife Lisa, 'the long-haired General', and when we discussed it further that evening she, surprisingly, backed my decision, although I'm pretty sure she thought that it was never actually going to involve me.

Monday 24 February 2003

I was the first of the group to be picked up by LCpl Gough, driving the C Squadron minibus.

Our 'other halves' shed a few tears as we threw our kit into the rear of the bus and said our final farewells before being whisked away to Chilwell, near Nottingham, where the mobilisation process took place.

The journey didn't take long at all and before any of us had a chance to nap, we de-bussed and

were ushered into a large hanger where most of the processing was to take place. We dumped our kit in a holding area which soon filled up as several hundred T.A. soldiers and reservists gathered in answer to the call to arms.

We had arrived an hour early and so there was a period of hanging around until everyone arrived. We were then whisked through the reception area where soldiers, resembling military robots barked instructions at us and handed out copious amounts of paperwork for us to read and fill in.

We spent hours listening to presentations and sales pitches on PAX (Personal Accident Insurance, Wills, Kit Insurance and the pros and cons associated with having the controversial Anthrax inoculations.

The briefings were a little rushed and ran over time into tea, which I missed due to the fact that the cookhouse was so far away from the mobilisation building.

I had my initial height, weight, sight, hearing and urine tests and all seemed okay with the results.

Our accommodation was situated as far away from the cookhouse as possible. We were in 20 man rooms, sleeping on creaky 'bunk beds'. We unpacked our uniforms and then visited the NAAFI for a swift pint.

Tuesday 25 February

The day turned out to be one of 'hurry up and wait', being spent waiting for documents, medical, dental and pay/admin-checks to be carried out.

We managed to get through these successfully with few questions asked.

It was a long drawn out day that ended with a flourish of activity as the 100 strong group was split in two. Half would complete their mobilisation at a camp in Grantham, the other half in Beckingham.

Lippy, Paul and I were coached off to Grantham and Dennis was destined for 'Beckingham Palace'.



Darren Isles and Rory Lipington just before they leave JAMC South Cerney for the Gulf

When we arrived, we dropped our kit in the dorm and despite having had quite a few jabs earlier that day and being advised to lay off the alcohol we all went down the NAAFI to sink a few pints.

I slept very soundly that night.

Wednesday 26 February

Today consisted of more tutorials and tests, including: an update to Battlefield Casualty Management, a long AFV Recognition lecture and SA80 Weapon Handling Tests.

We had to pass the Weapon Tests to go to the

ranges the following day and 'zero', improve the accuracy of our rifles.

The day ended with Weapon Handling Tests, which most people passed first time, without too many hassles.

Then prep for ranges, after which a few more pints were sunk and a noisy night of snoring followed.

Thursday 27 February

We were thoroughly tested on the ranges with 25 rounds each. It was our first experience

in shooting with the L85A2 rifle which turned out to be a lot easier to clean, than the A1, with the newly designed and Teflon-coated components.

It was a relaxed half day on the range which ended up with the Beckingham and Grantham intakes meeting up for a Range Bar-B-Q. We met Dennis who had come back from Chilwell. He had received his posting information and was heading for the Gulf as a Field Hospital Guard Commander.

We three were still no nearer finding out our postings but rumours were plentiful and there was talk of Paras, Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defence Cells and Ambulance Commanders.

Friday 28 February

The main effort today was in and around the NBC Gas chamber.

The remainder of the day was pretty chilled. Lippy and I did our laundry and we bought a few items from the Garrison shop.

Saturday 1 March

The whole day was spent in Pre-deployment lectures, which included briefs on Health and Hygiene, Driving in the desert, Prisoner Of War Handling, Heat Illnesses, Mine Awareness and The Law of Armed Conflict.

The final brief of the evening was the one where we would find out the names of the units to which we were going to be attached and theatre of operation.

The names were read out in alphabetical order and Lippy and I were stunned to find out that we were heading straight for the desert in Kuwait to be attached to 16 Air Assault Brigade HQ as NBC NCOs.

Sgt. Neaves received the news that he was heading to Germany to join 28 Engineer Regiment who were also heading for operations in the Gulf.

Before being released for the night the 30 or so of us, in the 16 AA group, were given a welcome brief by their Liaison Officer.

Sunday 2 March

Sunday arrived, but it was not a day of rest. We packed our kit onto the waiting vans and we piled onto various coaches. We, that is Lippy and I were going straight to the AMC (Air Movement Centre) at South Cerney for an immediate flight to Kuwait.

On arrival at the AMC, we were issued with our Maroon Para berets, DZ flashes and 16AA HQ badges. We were then dismissed and told to enjoy our last night in the UK.

Lippy and I had our heads shaved (a No.2 all over) by one of the cooks, after which we looked a good deal more like paras.

Monday 3 March

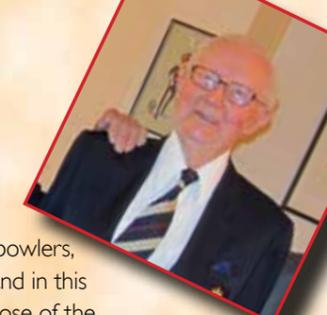
We reported to the departure lounge at 08.30hrs with our bags, which were checked, weighed and loaded onto a truck bound for RAF Brize Norton.

Tuesday 4 March

At approximately 04:00 hrs we parted company with the RAF jet and were welcomed to Kuwait with 'egg banjos' and hot sweet tea ...The story continues ...

SSgt Darren Isles

Wartime Cricket Match



Extract from The Dursley Gazette, 2 August 1941 Stinchcombe Stragglers v Royal Gloucestershire Hussars

A game is never lost until it is won. This very old saying was never truer than in the cricket match on Sunday, when The Stinchcombe Stragglers played The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars captained by Second Lieut Tommy Crossman. The match was crowded with incident, brilliant bowling, batting and what was more encouraging, good fielding. Tommy Crossman won the toss and elected to bat on a Stinchcombe wicket, which thanks to 'Coles Express' means as perfect as a wicket should be. Second Lieutenant Maunsell opened with Corporal Skinner and runs came freely when Skinner flicked an outsider from Matthews and was excellently caught by Lowes. Then followed some attractive and careful batting by Maunsell but caught in two minds by a flighted one, had his peg knocked back 51 for 2. Clutterbuck left this time being cleverly stumped by Cranfield. With the exception of Crossman the rest of the batsmen could do little with Lewis and his off spinners and the innings closed for 136.

It is many years (writes a correspondent) since I've seen The Stragglers scoreboard read 34 for 7. Such however was the case and it seemed that Marshall might easily dispose of the side for 50 if indeed they should ever reach that total. Peter Bennett however, took charge of affairs, nursing Marshall, and when he left rather surprisingly, the score was 123 for 10 – 55 well-made runs and never were runs more welcome. It was an attractive innings, well meriting the reception given him on his return to the Pavilion. Box was then joined by Charlie Wintle – the last man in and 13 runs wanted. Well did he accomplish his task? With four wanted for a win he took his courage in both hands and cracked on fizzing to the boundary amidst cheers. For the RGH, Marshall bowled amazingly well

and has joined that very small company of bowlers, either county or club by taking 10 wickets and in this match for 12-a-side taking the catch to dispose of the odd one. Truly he was backed up by good fielding, an acrobatic catch in the deep by Major Sinnott and the well placed field. For Marshall who played for the Stragglers before this war he match has therefore a special significance. Ten for 64 is a grand effort, so – congratulations.

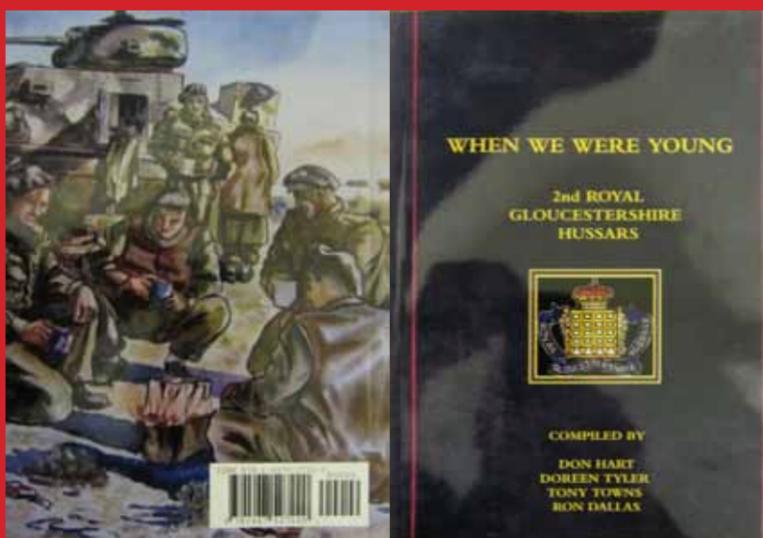
Comment in the same edition of *The Gazette* from local columnist – Mr W Hastings Neale.

And talking of cricket it is only reasonable, even in wartime that we should recognise and take our hats off to merit when we meet it. It was when playing against a strong batting side on a local field, hardly a week ago, that a young cricketer, Trooper Marshall whose home is at Dursley, in a 12-a-side game dismissed ten batsmen and caught the eleventh. And in offering congratulations to this talented trundler we are wondering how often such a performance has been recorded. Many bowlers has we know have taken all ten wickets, but were they engaged in a 12-a-side contest. There are many bowlers – bowlers of pace – who on perfectly prepared fields can be played by class batsmen with a measure of technical ease. But let a more deft and designing bowler come on with a spinning act cunningly developed and someone – even very good batsmen are going to get rattled. And once rattled they are at the mercy of he attack and in a moment of hesitancy are likely to become its victims. And those who have faced up to our cricketing friend say that the flight and spin he imparts to the ball are uncanny and he bowls with design, cunning and variety. Who knows that given fair opportunity he may rise to join that select band of bowlers such as is represented by Wilfred Rhodes, Jack Hearne, Mr Vallance Jupp and Mr J C Clay.

Match Details

Royal Gloucestershire Hussars				Stinchcombe Stragglers					
2nd Lieut R Maunsell	b	P Bennett	33	D Guy	st	Crossman	b	Marshall	3
Cpl Skinner	c	Lowes	12	D Russell	st	Crossman	b	Marshall	15
*Cpl Clutterbuck	st	Cranfield	12	*C Monks	c	Sinnott	b	Marshall	2
2nd Lieut A E Mitchell	lbw	Lewis	7	*P Bennett	c	Clutterbuck	b	Marshall	55
*2nd Lieut G M Crossman	b	Lewis	29	*A Matthews			c&b	Marshall	2
Sgt Hoy	b	Lewis	16	L Lowes			c&b	Marshall	0
Tpr Ponting	b	Lewis	0	W Cranfield	st	Crossman	b	Marshall	0
Cpl Wheeler	b	Lewis	5	*W Lewis	c	Ponting	b	Marshall	5
Major Sinnott	b	Lewis	8	V England	c	Marshall	b	Hoy	12
Tpr Cutts	b	Lewis	0	F Russell	c	Clutterbuck	b	Marshall	24
Cpl Gardner	not out		4	C Box			not out		21
Tpr Marshall	b	Matthews	6	C Wintle			b	Marshall	7
	Extras		14				Extras		5
	Total		136				Total		151
*Footnote				Cpl Clutterbuck	RGH	Played for Glos County 2nd XI pre-war			
A Matthews	Stragglers	Played for Gloucestershire pre-war		G N Crossman	RGH	Played for Hertford Minor County pre-war and Stinchcombe Stragglers pre-war			
C Monks	Stragglers	Played for Gloucestershire pre-war							
P Bennett	Stragglers	Played for Glos County 2nd XI pre-war							
W Lewis	Stragglers	Played for Glos County 2nd XI pre-war							

Doug Marshall



'When We Were Young'

This book is now available direct from me (Don Hart, 11 Port Elizabeth House, Greystoke Avenue, Bristol BS10 6AN. Tel: 0117 959 4095) at a cost of £15 including p&p. Cheques to be made payable to RGHYA PRI.

All profits are going into an RGH Charity account for the benefit of our members in need.

C (RGH) Squadron RWxY Review of 2012

The deployment of a significant number of the Squadron's personnel on Op HERRICK 16 at the beginning of 2012 saw those back at home stretched to our limits fulfilling its responsibilities to the Regimental and local annual forecast of events. In addition later in the year Capt Charlie Coventry and the SQMS were mobilised to support the Olympics.

The majority of those Squadron members mobilised worked with D Squadron of The Kings Royal Hussars on the warthog vehicle (pictured), providing mobility support. Before deployment they acquired their licenses and vehicle operating skills to be fully integrated within the Squadron. All returned safely at the end of October and recommenced training with the Squadron in November.

Those at home continued to support key national and regional events such as Badminton, Ten Tors and our own local charity events, such as the Cirencester Midnight Walk which required unprecedented levels of commitment from those Soldiers, Officers and Permanent Staff who remained back in the UK.

The Squadron cracked on with the essential field, gunnery and military assessment training that needed to be completed. This included a Challenger 2 live firing period in the summer.

Concurrently the recruitment machine continued to do its thing and the Squadron has welcomed a number of new personalities to the fold.

There was time for some fun during the year: Capt Smith organised a sailing trip to France, members of the Squadron went skiing at the beginning of the year and a number of people obtained boat skipper qualifications.

August marked the departure of the Squadron Leader, Major Duncan Attwell as he deployed to Afghanistan to support the US reconstruction efforts. However the Squadron was left in the very capable hands of Capt Phil Mitchell who along with Capt Tony Smith and the Permanent Staff team worked tirelessly to ensure C Squadron fulfilled all its obligations. Duncan should be safely home at the time of reading this, as he is due back in February.

Another change in the year, was the Squadron saying goodbye to our 9/12th PSI S/Sgt Fleetwood ("Fleety"), who moved on to a position with the Royal Yeomanry. To keep it in the family, his replacement is his brother, another 9/12th Lancer and just shows it is a small world.

October 2012 marked the return of 12 Brigade from Op H16 and even before POTL was officially over, the Squadron started to see the return of some familiar faces looking somewhat leaner and browner than they did in November 2011, when they were originally mobilised. So with ranks beginning to swell once again, the Squadron marched proudly through Cirencester to mark Remembrance Sunday.

November is also the month when the Squadron commemorates the RGH's involvement in the Battle of Bir el Gubi in North Africa. However this year the dinner was attended for the first time by Capt Don Hart, a surviving member of the RGH who participated in that battle. This was a very special occasion and the significance of the dinner was amplified when Don stood up and bravely gave the 'empty saddles' toast to the Squadron. With a number of the H16 team also attending it was poignant

to reflect on the Squadrons past and present endeavours.

The big announcement in the year was the FR2020 plans and in particular the expansion of the reserves, it is anticipated that 2013 will be an exciting year for the Squadron and the Regiment as a whole. The Regiment's Main Effort under FR2020 remains with Challenger 2 to provide support to the regular army's three Challenger 2 regiments.

Point to note we are now Reserves, not TA!

One of the key points of FR2020 is the expansion of the Reserves and therefore the Squadron needs recruits, so please if you know of anyone who is interested point them our way.

Capt B Hickey and Capt Phil Mitchell



As part of the growth and development of the Regiment, 2012 witnessed the removal of the Squadron's complement of GS Landrovers. Anticipation is running high for the arrival of a new fleet of WIMIKs, which will be used for mounted skills to be practised.



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Tel: 01285 648351 Email: RWXY-CSQN-PSAO@mod.uk



TA

Pate's Grammar School CCF

The last year has been a busy one for Pate's Army section. Adventurous Training remains a strong part of CCF life, and we began the year with an expedition to the Brecon Beacons, taking cadets from years 10-13 onto the hills for walking and navigation training. Fierce winds and blistering hail could not deter the hardy few, and forced even the most capable to focus on their skills: however, all of the groups rose to the challenge, and received valuable preparation for future expeditions on Duke of Edinburgh or Ten Tors.

Pate's also sent a detachment to the Katia Day Service at the RGH war memorial at Gloucester Cathedral. The small service was attended by a few cadets, current Hussars and veterans, and provided a great opportunity for the cadets to refresh our links

with our cap-badge; the old hands being only too glad to relate the story to the young cadets. We also served refreshments after the service, and took advantage of the opportunity to meet members of the regiment and maintain our links with them.

More spit and polish followed with our Annual Inspection and the formal end of the CCF year. We were inspected by the current CO of the Royal Wessex Yeomanry, and used the opportunity to show him our cadets in training, with activities such as climbing, rifle-shooting and a CQB paintball lane. After this it was on parade, with the ceremonial handover of SNCO positions, and a chance to recognise the achievements of cadets over the year. Parents, guests and younger pupils watched the parade, and all were impressed by the standard of drill and turnout on display.

The highlight of the CCF year for many is the Annual Camp at the end of the school year. This year the contingent went to Crowborough, and the cadets enjoyed a wide variety of activities, with the assault course and competitions day proving especially popular. There was also a chance to be shown around some of the armoured vehicles and heavy weapons being used by the Army on

operations, which put some of what we do in its wider context.

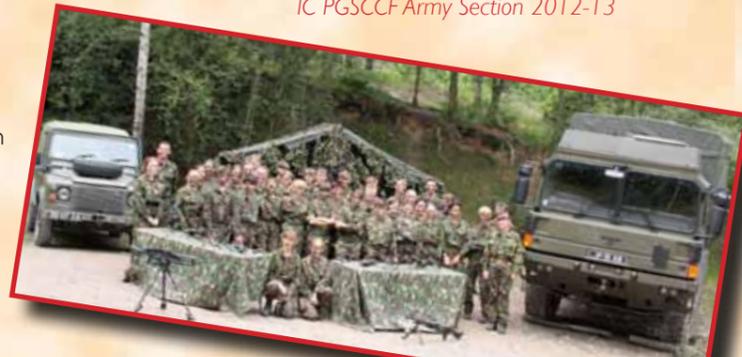
At the same time, Pate's cadets were representing the contingent at the Schools Rifle Meeting, held at Bisley. Over four days of cadet shooting Pate's competed with the whole breadth of the CCF, with seven cadets staying on to shoot the Imperial Meeting immediately afterwards. Pate's were remarkably successful over the two competitions, with everybody shooting to an extremely high standard, and several being capped to represent the Cadet Forces and international teams.

The CCF has conducted two Field Training Exercises in the past year, at Caerwent in South Wales, in which the Army Section played the dominant role. Both of these 48-hour exercises tested cadets of all ranks in their military skills, providing basic field-craft instruction to the most junior and allowing the seniors the chance to lead sections and platoons. They provided an invaluable opportunity to sharpen our skills in a practical setting, incorporating skill-at-arms, navigational ability and physical fitness as well as field-craft.

The final major event of 2012 was Remembrance Day, on which Pate's Army Section had the huge honour of leading the parade through Winchcombe. The parade is always well-attended by local people and former servicemen, and this year's was no exception: once more the smartness of the Pate's contingent on parade was hugely impressive, and the band's efforts made us all stand that bit taller and march that bit prouder.

The Army Section continues to thrive at Pate's, with another exercise planned for March as well as a repeat of the events mentioned here. We have had an excellent year and expect another just as good, through which we will be proud to wear the RGH cap-badge and be part of the regimental family.

*SSgt Sam Sharma
IC PGSCCF Army Section 2012-13*



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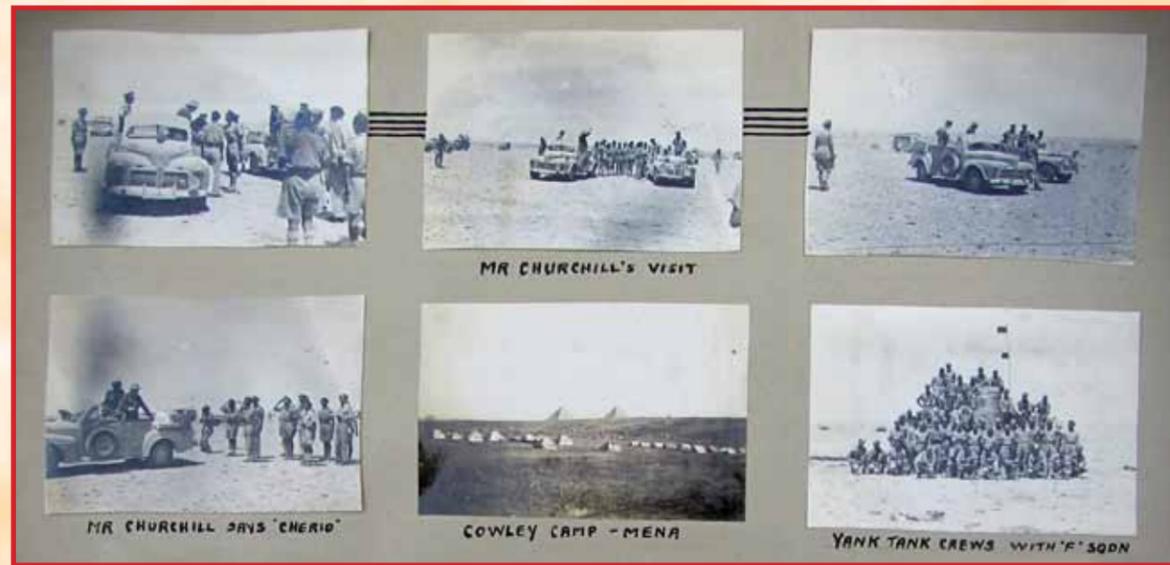
RGHYA LUNCH

to be held at the
Eliot Arms, South Cerney on
Friday 22 March 2013
at 12 noon

Come along and enjoy a meal
and a drink with your old
comrades

RSVP the secretary with names
and numbers for catering, please

Pages from our History



HELP OUR HEROES

The role of the TA has changed dramatically and now we see the RGH Squadron of the RWxY committing more manpower to Afghanistan in one Op HERRICK phase than for the entire Balkans War.

Not since WW2 has the RGH been "up the blue" in such numbers. One of our most esteemed "old comrades" of 2RGH is the driving force behind the raising of funds to support today's RGH soldiers. Don Hart (assisted by Ian Mountain) has produced the book "When we were young" and I have managed to transfer his original recordings to CD. All you have to do is buy a copy ... the money goes into the RGHYA fund to support the serving squadron.

WHEN WE WERE YOUNG — Libya 1941-42

Is the story of the 2nd Royal Gloucestershire Hussars told in their own words, the early days of enlistment and training, the stark realities of Desert Warfare and of life "up the blue". This 10 CD set is edited from the original cassette tapes narrated by Don Hart and digitally reproduced on nine disks, with a bonus 30 minute DVD, "Proud to be a Yeoman". Each set comes in a wallet with RGH cap badge logo. Only a limited number of sets to commemorate the anniversary year will be made.

Available at a cost of £25 including UK P&P. Please make your cheque payable to RGHYA PRI. You can order direct from me via email: lj.birkin@hotmail.co.uk

A day out (or so) to Minden

The following action, which is narrated by John Banbery (ex 1st RGH) took place during April 1945.

In September 1944, 30 members of the 1st RGH volunteered for the 6th Airborne Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment.

The regiment, having just returned from Normandy, had formed a heavy troop, of four tanks, in each of its two Sabre squadrons. As we had recently trained on Centaurs some of us gravitated into these Cromwell troops, which also incorporated the four light airborne tanks.

At the time of this incident, three ex-RGH members crewed tanks in 'B' Squadron - Pete Talbot, Bob Arkell (yes, related to the brewers) and myself. It was apparently going to be an interesting day, not only did we have a new tank commander, Bill Round (an aggressive, decisive commander), but the tank commanders had also drawn for leading vehicle, instead of taking it in turns. We drew the short straw again. Unusually, the Colonel and the RSM waved us off.

We travelled with Sgt. Johnston's carrier, driven by Mick Hood, directly behind. During the day our gunner Terry Lovewell had a field day shooting up a barge and an armoured car gently re-charging its batteries. I popped a 36 grenade in the top of a German SP going in the same direction as us and we crossed three bridges, or was it four? Two had big holes in them and one had a couple of 1000lb aero bombs wired for trouble. We discouraged the Jerries who were about to press the plunger and went on. We also ran over several cars that were parked badly in the road.

When the batteries came into sight Bill Round radioed for instructions and the Sqn. Leader, Maj.

Selwyn told us to push on. We discovered later that the batteries were 12 x 88mm's

manned by Germans and 8 x 88mm's manned by Italians put there for anti-aircraft protection of Minden. We went past the guns at speed firing a few rounds of Besa but it was too dangerous to traverse the turret for fear of hitting telegraph poles etc. Past the batteries, we paused in a village whilst the battery guns fired airbursts at us. Unknown to us our support squadron was being shot off the road. Our troop commander led us into the outskirts of Minden and we stopped at another blown bridge for the night. I saw Steve Brown drive a jeep (with a German housewife acting as intermediary) carrying a badly wounded officer into a hospital in hostile Minden. That night Bill Jowett (our driver) and I were nearly scalped by two Panzerfausts (bazookas) that demolished an adjacent garden wall whilst we were on guard. The next morning we gingerly crossed the gap blown in the bridge and went to the main bridge in the centre of the town. The Sqn. Leader took our tank up to the edge of the bridge to view the demolitions under sniper fire. The proceedings were enlivened by our Sqn Sgt. Major, Fred Murray, arriving with a lorry and trailer full of fuel and ammo, well within sniper range. We left Minden after paying a visit to the big army stables for the benefit of our regular cavalrymen. We moved out and then paused to clean guns, have a wash and shave and watch one of our second drivers (hull gunners) have driving practice in which he managed to flatten a military police 15 cwt truck, making it two dimensional.

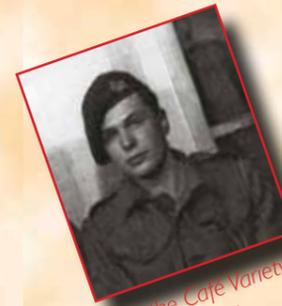
Three of the four tanks in the troop were 'battle weary' reconditioned Cromwell's, supplied as battle replacements.

One had a jammed turret and the main gun had to be laid by the driver, one had a very unreliable 19 Set and our vehicle had no remote firing gear for the 75mm, so I fired the gun using a spanner.

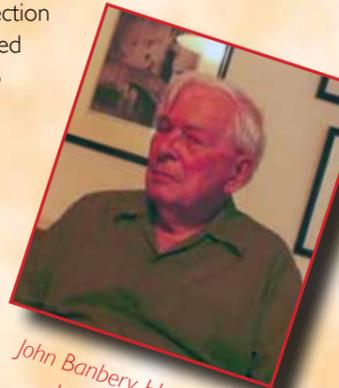
We had only a four man crew, our second driver had joined the troop sergeant as a battle replacement for the driver and our driver Cpl. Bill Jowett, was later awarded a much deserved MM for this and other operations.

Sources: Derek (Mick) Hood; Terry Lovewell and Walter K Shroeder - His book: 'Stars & Swastikas' (German Battery Gun Crew)

John Banbery (ex 1st RGH)



At the Cafe Variety, Brussels, 15 March 1945



John Banbery, Harpenden, 14 August 2012



Our mode of transport on the Baltic Coast in late April 1945

Obituaries

Captain D F S Godman - RGH 1960-65



Desmond Frederick Shirley Godman was born in January 1926. His great-uncle, John Godman, had been a 15th Hussar and was posted to the RGH as Adjutant early in WW1. John Godman's Operation Order for the Suvla Bay landing at Gallipoli in August 1915 still

survives. His Commanding Officer, Lt Col Bill Playne, was severely wounded in the advance on Chocolate Hill. John Godman later commanded 15th/19th Hussars.

Desmond served in the 1st Royal Dragoons, signing up on his 18th birthday towards the end of WW2. He left the Army in the late 1940s to start farming and re-joined the colours in 1960 when he signed up with the RGH.

He combined his yeomanry service for five years with life as a dedicated farmer and countryman in the North Cotswolds. He had married Jan in 1953 and they lived with their four children at Great Rissington Manor near Stow-on-the-Wold. Desmond was a keen hunting man and from there he hunted in Captain Ronnie Wallace's (IRGH, WW2) heyday with the Heythrop hounds.

Desmond played a prominent part in the county community for the next

40 years. He joined Cotswold District Council as an Independent councillor in 1976, serving the Council for nearly 20 years and being its chairman from 1991-93. He was given the title of Honorary Alderman in 1995.

Among his other roles, Desmond was High Sheriff in 1982 and made a Deputy Lieutenant in 1986. He also sat on The Bench for many years. He was a trustee of Cotswold Archaeology 1994-2010 and assisted in the running of Moreton-in-Marsh Show for about 30 years.

Desmond and Jan had moved to Compton Abdale in 1989. His last RGH regimental duty was to take the Salute on the village green as the Romani Ride trooped through Compton Abdale en route from The Gutings to Badminton in August 2011, three months before he died at the age of 85.

Captain Sir David Money-Coutts KCVO - RGH 1951-67



David Money-Coutts was born on July 19th 1931 and died on June 25th 2012 after a long illness, which he bore with his customary courage and determination. He spent his childhood in Ayrshire and was educated at Eton. After National Service with the 1st The Royal Dragoons in Germany and Egypt (where he contracted polio, but made a

full recovery), and New College, Oxford, he joined the family bank (Coutts & Co.) in 1954 becoming a director in 1958 and Chairman from 1976 until 1993.

Throughout a very busy life of work, charitable and public service interests, one of David's abiding interests and loves was the RGH, in which he served for 16 years. He always spoke of his TA days with great fondness and pride, and this was reflected at his packed memorial service in St Martins in the Field, when Penny, Lady Money-Coutts, his widow reflected that he had five passions in his life, his family and home, Coutts & Co., Eton, rowing and the RGH.

David had a reserved manner and was a stickler for exactness. It was said that he knew army regulations better than those who had drafted them! He described himself as a self-contained perfectionist who can be bloody-minded. But brusqueness disguised a genuine, kind, considerate and wise person with

a somewhat hidden but genuine sense of fun. Often portrayed as the last of the gentleman bankers his most important principle in life was to respect other people irrespective of who they were. Above all else he valued integrity and honesty. For example staff at the bank were encouraged to admit mistakes to both their managers and their customers, and woe betide anyone who blamed the computer!

'Muddy-Boots', as he was known by many in the Regiment, was for many years Signals Officer, a responsibility for which he was ideally suited. An early annual camp, which he always took as part of his holiday entitlement, found him attached to the Royals in Germany, in an independent role as a sort of liaison officer. Rapidly losing radio contact with all the other units in the Brigade, he tuned in to whatever other nets he could find, not knowing whether they were friendly forces or 'enemy'; giving himself

a likely call sign and amused himself by sending in false reports, until eventually finding his squadron. At a later camp he found that by replacing the standard rod aerial of the 19 sets, which gave them a range of 10 miles with a wire he could increase the range so that contact could be made with Moscow, much to the confusion of the Russians.

In 1967 the TA was effectively disbanded and the regiment reduced to a cadre of eight people. David was

instrumental in the formation of the RGH 1967 club, which consisted of those officers who had been kicked out of the TA. A week was spent in South Wales acting as 'enemy' for the small cadre of members of the Regiment. The 1967 Club has continued since then, with Capt. 'Boots' acting as its secretary for 25 years, until eventually merging with the Officers Dining Club.

Recognising his personal role as banker to the Royal family, he was

appointed KCVO in 1991. Well-respected throughout by the financial establishment, and by all members of the Regiment, of which he was so fond, he will be missed by many. It was fitting that as his memorial service ended the congregation left to a rollicking version of the Regimental March, D'ye Ken John Peel.

Empty Saddles

Mike Leach G Sqn (Jan 2012) 	"Frap" J I Frapwell MBE G Sqn (25 May 2012) 	Jim Ferris G Sqn (22 June 2012) 	Mr David Moody (6 August 2012) 
Raymond Douglas Victor Kingscott C Sqn, early 1960s (Jan 2012) 	John Newport G Sqn (18 June 2012) 	Sir David Money-Coutts (25 June 2012) 	Mr Alan Perrins G, B and HQ Sqn (23 November 2012) 



Presentation of the Guidon

The postcard is available from the RRI

The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry Association

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Home



Calendar



Annual Newsletter

This website is managed by the Regimental Association with the approval of the Regimental Trustees. The views, comments and opinions expressed therein do not necessarily represent the views comments and opinions official or otherwise of the HQ, or The Royal Wessex Yeomanry Regiment.

The Association

The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry Association offers membership to all who have served in the Regiment or in the RGH squadrons of The Royal Wessex Yeomanry, including individuals who have been attached to the regiment and the widows and dependants of past members of the regiment.

The Aims of the Association

The aims of the Association are to promote Regimental traditions and support serving members of the RGH squadron of The Royal Wessex Yeomanry. The Association will safeguard the name of The Regiment and the interest and welfare of those who have served in or with it, or other members.



This web-site is dedicated to all who have served with the RGH

Facebook Group: Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Yeomanry Association (Cotswold Branch)

See your website, go to: www.rghya.org.uk

PRI Shop



Cloth Berret Badge - £9.00 plus p&p



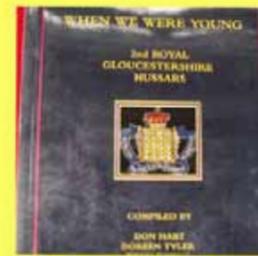
RGH Design Coaster - £1.75 plus p&p



Regimental Silk Bowtie - £22.00 plus p&p



RGH Band CD - £5 + p&p



RGH Book "When We Were Young"

A collection of individual memories and experiences of those who served with Second Royal Gloucestershire Hussars - £10.00 plus P&P



Postcard 50p each + p&p



Regimental Cravat - £17.00 plus p&p



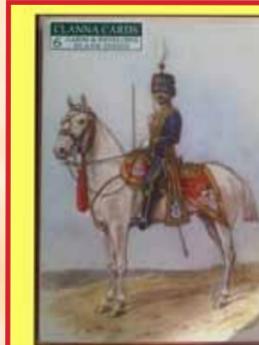
100% Polyester Fleece - £16.00 plus p&p



RGH Design Magnet - £1.50 plus p&p



RGH Plaque - £20.00 plus p&p



Regimental Cards pack of 6 - £3.50 plus p&p



SNCO Metal Badge - £14.00 plus p&p



Silk Regimental Tie - £20.00 plus p&p



RGH Design Mousemat - £4.00 plus p&p



Car Windscreen Sticker 75p + p&p



RGH Design Placemat - £3.50 plus p&p



100% Wool Regimental Ski Jumper - £65 plus p&p



Regimental Stable Belt - £17.00 plus p&p



Pewter tankard with engraved RGH sipher - £90.00

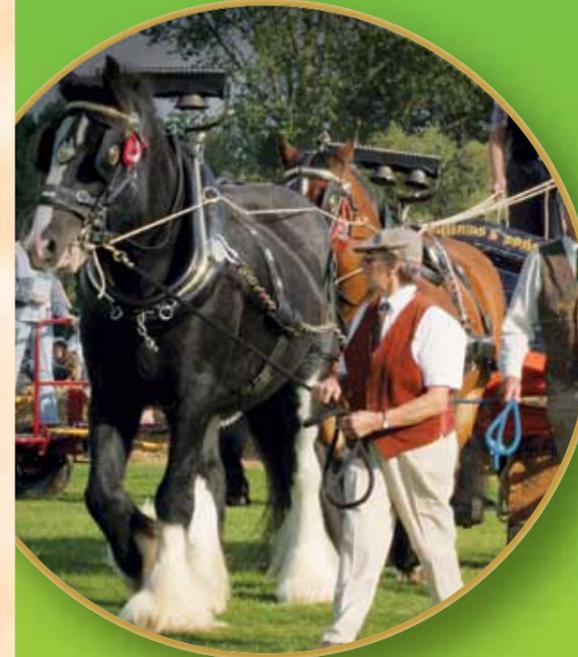
RGHYA Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
2013			
March	19.00	RGHYA Meeting	Soldiers of Glos Museum, Glos
10 March	12.00	KRH Lunch	Victory Club, Cheltenham
22 March	12.00	RGHYA Lunch	Eliot Arms, South Cerney
31 March		Easter Sunday	
19 April		RGH ODC	Frampton Court
21 April	15.00	Katia Service	RGH War Memorial
11 June	19.30	RGHYA Meeting	Battledown Brewery Tour, Cheltenham
8 September	09.00	Frampton Country Fair	Frampton on Severn
11 September	19.30	RGHYA Meeting	Cirencester TAC
27 September	12.00	RGHYA Lunch	TBA
10 November		Remembrance Sunday	Various
November	19.00	Bir El Gubi Dinner	Cirencester TAC
22 November		"Sharpshooters" El Gubi Dinner	Victory Club, Cheltenham
24 November	10.30	Bir El Gubi Service	Badminton Church
10 December	19.30	RGHYA Meeting	Skittles @ Conservative Club, Stroud
2014			
March	19.00	RGHYA AGM	Soldiers of Glos Museum, Gloucester
28 March	12.00	RGHYA Lunch	TBA
20 April		Easter Sunday	
25 April		RGH ODC Dinner	Badminton House
27 April	15.00	Katia Service	RGH War Memorial
June	19.30	RGHYA Meeting	Victory Club, Cheltenham
10 September	19.30	RGHYA Meeting	Cirencester TAC
26 September	12.00	RGHYA Lunch	TBA
09 November		Remembrance Sunday	Various
November	19.00	Bir El Gubi Dinner	Cirencester TAC
23 November	10.30	Bir El Gubi Service	Badminton Church
9 December	19.30	RGHYA Meeting	Stroud Conservative Club

FRAMPTON COUNTRY FAIR

SUNDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2013

Gates open 9.00am



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ON THE FOLLOWING RECENT
OPERATIONS:**

- Op GRANBY — Kuwait
- Op LODESTAR — Bosnia
- Op PALATINE — Former Yugoslavia
- Op AGRICOLA — Kosovo
- Op TELIC — Iraq
- Op ALTHEA — Bosnia
- Op HERRICK — Afghanistan

