



Grenadier Guards Association

FOUNDED 1913

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

President: Colonel E.H. Houstoun OBE

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Distribution: All Grenadiers

Newsletter Autumn 2008

1st Battalion

The Battalion returned from their Post Operational Tour Leave in mid-January.

During the period, April to August, this year, the Battalion has provided the Roulement Rifle Company Group, for the Falkland Islands. Life for a company group, in the Falkland Islands Winter consisted of platoon rotation of Patrols, Live Firing and a Quick Reaction Force. The period culminated with a Company level live firing exercise, with close air support, helicopters and support from the Royal Navy Guardship. The Falklands Winter consists of snow, sleet and extremely strong winds, so the companies are really being exposed to the elements – Last year intense heat, this year intense cold!

The Battalion moved to Wellington Barracks during July and it is now carrying out public duties, until the New Year. Then it will have an overseas exercise to Kenya, in early 2009, which marks the start of training for its return to Helmand Province, Afghanistan. The Battalion should have been presented with new Colours in the spring of 2009 but this has now been delayed until May 2010, so as not to disrupt pre-deployment training for

Afghanistan. It will, however, provide street-liners for the Queen's Birthday

Parade in 2009; thereafter, it deploys on Op HERRICK to Afghanistan, starting in September 2009. It is currently ear-marked to be the "manoeuvre" Battlegroup of 11 Light Brigade, which means that it will operate as a Battlegroup, rather than being split up as it was during the last tour (and as it has been during all its operational tours since Op GRANBY in 1991!!!!)

Nijmegen Company

The Company moved to Woolwich, in September last year. The barracks has excellent facilities but is extremely inconvenient for married men settled in the London – Windsor – Aldershot triangle; and for travelling to London and Windsor to mount public duties – a journey time of 2hrs from Woolwich to Wellington Barracks is not uncommon! Woolwich, as a district, is NOT a nice place to be, with many ethnic minority groups operating in gangs and at each other's throats! The Colonel visited Nijmegen Company at Woolwich in March, where he saw for himself the pros and cons of life there. The Company found No. 4 Guard on the Queen's Birthday Parade, which was deemed to be an "excellent

parade". The Company has now deployed to the Falkland Islands, as a Company Group, for 6 weeks in December, which will give them a break from Public Duties – and at least they'll get the Falklands Summer! I saw the Company training in Wales at the end of September and in spite of some pretty filthy weather, everyone was on very good form and looking forward to operating as a company and away from London.

Recruiting is going very well and the Regiment is the best recruited in the Household Division and one of the best in the Army. The outflow from the Battalion, so far, is nothing out the ordinary, bearing in mind that quite a lot of people delayed their departure from the Regiment, because they WANTED to serve in Afghanistan. Obviously, both recruiting and retention are critical aspects of Regimental life, and recruiting success tends to be in proportion to the quality of the Recruiting Sergeants sent out by the Regiment; just as success in training recruits is in proportion to the quality of the instructors, at ITC Catterick.

The Regimental Band

As usual, the Band has been busy. In February 2008, it became the Resident Band at RMA Sandhurst for a couple of months; this gave a welcome break from London, although it was still surprisingly hectic. Since then, it has been heavily involved in ceremonial and has been giving sterling support to The Colonel's Fund Appeal, both at the opening event at the Guildhall in London and at a Band Concert in Lincoln Cathedral, prior to the granting of the Freedom of the City to the Regiment. The Colonel visited the Band in Wellington Barracks in June and managed to speak to everyone. In August, it carried out a two week Regimental Band Tour in aid of The Colonel's Fund; this was largely successful although some venues were inevitably stronger than others. It has just returned from Germany, where it was providing

musical support for British Forces stationed there.

Regimental Headquarters

Regimental Headquarters has been busy too. This year, the Regiment was honoured, firstly, by the naming of King's Company Bridge at Aalten in Holland, on 5 May 2008 in commemoration of that town being liberated by the King's Company, on 30th March 1945 and secondly by the granting of the Freedom of the City of Lincoln on the 8th May. At Aalten, parties from the Queen's Company, RHQ and the Association attended, supported by three musicians from the Band. At Lincoln, The Queen's Company and Nijmegen Company, with the Regimental Band, commanded by the Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, marched through the City with Drums Beating, Bayonets Fixed and Colours Flying! This was a fantastic occasion and the Mayor and City of Lincoln could not have been more welcoming and enthusiastic hosts. The Lincolnshire Branch of the Association held their annual Dinner Dance that evening, which was also a huge success.

Regimental Remembrance Day took place at Wellington Barracks on Sunday 18th May and was attended by HRH The Colonel. All members of the 1st Battalion not in the Falkland Islands, and Nijmegen Company attended the Parade. This was a welcome move, which made the Day much more meaningful and it is a development which I hope will continue in the future. As it was, there were some 1200 people on parade, along with many more spectators and there was a rousing moment when the Association gave 3 cheers for the serving Regiment.

Of course, the biggest event for RHQ in the latter part of 2007 and this year has been the creation and Appeal Year of The Colonel's Fund, which, obviously, you are all well aware. The Fund will seek to help any Grenadier who has been affected by recent active service. The Fund has been set up to give the Regimental Trustees the widest possible discretion in its use, but it is

envisaged that the greatest area of need will be in dealing with mental health problems, which may take some years to emerge and may arise after an individual has left the Regiment. As well as trying to direct those in trouble towards the appropriate medical treatment, I think that the fund will be largely used to pick up the pieces of lost jobs, broken homes and financial difficulties – so often the inevitable consequences of post traumatic stress. We are also considering ways in which the Fund can be used to develop a system of “best practice”, in terms of keeping in touch with people who have finished their service in the Regiment and thereby having a chance of identifying and dealing with problems early on. The response by members of the Regiment has been fantastic and many people have been enormously generous, both as individuals and through their branches.

Grenadier Day took place at Lille Barracks, Aldershot, on Sunday 29th June and proved a thoroughly enjoyable day, with the weather being mercifully and uncharacteristically kind.

In summary, the Regiment is in good heart and in good shape and is looking forward to the challenges and adventures that 2009 will throw at it!”

Major GVA Baker.

The Regimental Adjutant

5. Grenadier Day 5th July 2009

We are strongly considering holding Grenadier Day in Wellington Barracks. The Battalion has an exceptionally busy predeployment training Phase and we are toying with the idea of doing something a little different. Maybe, having a smaller arena where the Corps of Drums and the Regimental Band can perform around the Barrack Square, we may have a number of side shows where you are able to get up close and personal with attractions similar to Chain Saw Sculpture; a couple of other side shows are being investigated. If anyone has any

bright ideas please let me know at RHQ. We will, of course, have room for each Branch to have their own stalls, as usual.

Grenadier Day at Littlecote 2010

The President had written a short ‘Working Paper’ relating to the possibility of a trial use of Littlecote, as the venue for Grenadier Day, in 2010. The Paper is attached.

Grenadier Day should continue to be free (less travel). If the Battalion was ‘at home’ then that was where Grenadier Day should be. Consideration would be given to the use of Littlecote but only if the Battalion was deployed on operations. So long as Littlecote was free, it would provide a splendid venue. The committee agreed that the funding of a Littlecote option in the future would be dependent on the identification of a sponsor. The committee agreed that the President and General Secretary would visit Littlecote with Colin Knight and John Southern before Christmas.

The President will update the ‘working paper’ as a result of the guidance provided by the Executive Committee.

6. Employment and Poverty ‘Food for thought’

Due to the current economic situation, the poverty line is set to rise significantly over the next few months, if not years. According to Dr Barnardo’s, many families living on low income have only about £10 per day per person to cover all their day to day expenditure, including necessities such as food and transport. It also needs to cover occasional items such as new shoes, clothes, school trips and activities for their children; and replacing broken household items such as washing machines and kitchen equipment. In addition to this, it must pay for all household bills, electricity, gas, water, telephone bills and TV Licences. A family of two adults and two children requires to be earning £346 each week, to be above the poverty line. This amounts to

around £16,608 per annum and includes child benefit allowance. I suspect that these criteria fit almost all Guardsmen with a family.

Statistics show that over the past 9 months of 2008, the Grenadier Guards Association has had a significant increase in debt related grants; and that 26% of all cases were financial in one way or another. This fact has also been borne out by the Army Benevolent Fund Annual Statistics.

Attached is a pie chart showing the Associations current Individual Welfare Expenditure, January to September 2008. This trend is likely to continue. Assuming it does at the same rate, we will need to find a substantial increase in our individual welfare budget (currently £40,000 per annum) since as in 2007, the budget is expected to be exceeded by at least £3,000. The 2009 budget has been raised to £45,000, to offset this continuing trend. Between 2007 and 2009 the budget has been raised by 3.48%. On the face of it, this is not a vast rise but to raise the budget higher would have an impact on items such as Supplementary Benefits, £20,000 per year, Christmas Gifts £11,000 per year and Holidays for the Elderly £8,000.

A key factor to limiting the draw on our Charitable Funds is, of course, ensuring that all Grenadiers have a worthwhile job after leaving and even more important - job satisfaction. The more financial difficulties former serving Grenadiers and other Servicemen find themselves in, the more they will turn to the charitable organizations, Social Services will direct them to the Royal British Legion and SSAFA, who will direct them to the Associations and the Army Benevolent Fund. With the unemployment figures expected to reach 2 million before Christmas 2008, the highest for 17 years, I believe the Ministry of Defence has a duty of care to all Service Leavers, giving them proper guidance and sound advice, some of which is available on the Mod website.

The Household Division used to have its own employment organization; this, I

believe, should be resurrected and properly staffed. A number of potential employers are contacting me searching for potential employees. An increasing number have found suitable employment via 'Networking', which must still rank as one of the best ways of securing a job.

On the subject of networking, There are a number of very well connected "Captains of Industry" who could be approached via the individual Regiments' Officers' Clubs; every Regimental Association should be approached to canvas those who may know of anyone seeking to employ an ex Household Division Guardsman/Trooper. The consolidation of available employment would need a dedicated website which could be perused by Officers and Soldiers leaving the Regiments.

If you have any jobs please inform the General Secretary. I am currently the Household Division Employment Contact.

T. A. Rolfe.

4. Grenadier Gazette

At the time of writing, many of the Branch Reports are in but by no means all. They were due in to RHQ by 1st November, but any received after 30th November 2007 will not be included in the 2008 Gazette. It would be shame if your Branch was not represented in the 2009 issue. We could do with lots of photograph but each one should be accompanied by a write up

6. Meeting

The Annual General Meeting for 2009 is scheduled to take place on 21st March, 2009. All are most welcome to attend. The format will be the same as in previous years, with a period set aside to enable Branch Secretaries to bend the General Secretary's ear, prior to the AGM. Lunch afterwards, will remain the same as in previous years.

7. Regimental Remembrance Day Black Sunday

Black Sunday 2009 will take place on the 17th May. As many of you will be aware, the initial form up and march into the Chapel no longer takes place instead, those attending the services simply take their seats prior to the service, to enable everyone that needs a bench to bunch up and allow as many people to sit down as possible. Please fill up the seats from the front of the chapel.

8. The Mareth Cross 16th March 1943

For the first time in many years, there will not be a Mareth Cross Service. There will be however, a Wreath laid by the Regimental Adjutant at the same time as a wreath is laid in the Chapel Cloisters.

9. Security

A continued reminder to Branches and their members; you must not give out names, addresses and telephone numbers of members to any one not authorized to receive them. The correct procedure is for the person making the request to write to the Branch concerned. The letter should then be passed to the individual, for him to make the decision as to whether to make further contact or give out his/her phone number.

10. Funerals

Should you receive a request for a serving Soldier or Drummer to attend a funeral in Home Service Clothing, you must contact the Regimental Adjutant, at Regimental Headquarters, not the Association. Requests of this nature are not always granted.

11. Branch Lunches and Dinners

Branch Secretaries are requested to make clear the request for an Officer

of the Regiment to attend their Dinner or Lunch, as the guest speaker. Details of accommodation and location are to be passed directly to the Regimental Adjutant, at Regimental Headquarters.

12. Branch Accounts

All Branch Secretaries are requested to advise their respective Branch Treasurers, of the need to ensure that Branch Audited Accounts are with the General Secretary, by 1st February 2009. Please make arrangements now with your Auditors, to ensure that this deadline can be achieved. Any Branch Account not compiled in the correct format, will be returned to the Branch President. Any Branch Treasurer not familiar with this format is invited to speak to the General Secretary, at anytime during working hours.

- In general terms the following course of action should be taken:-
- Branch Accounts audited by a Professional Accountants do not require supporting documents.
- Those accounts audited by two members of the Branch must include the following:
- Bank/Building Society Statements and the Audited Account, as at the 31st December 2008.
- Reconciliation between Bank/Building Society Statements and Audited Accounts i.e. unrepresented cheques.
- Certified list (signed by the Treasurer and the Auditors) of significant assets i.e. stock of for sale items, stocks and shares, property and cash in hand.
- Professional Accountants must audit all accounts, in excess of £7,500.

Can I please remind all Treasurers that the Association will continue to pay 50% of your General Administrative costs up to a maximum of £250 You must ensure that a copy of your invoices accompany the Branch accounts.
No invoices no Admin costs paid!

13. Notices

British Cyprus Memorial Trust

General Sir John Waters has asked me to write to you on behalf of the British Cyprus Memorial Trust, which has been established to honour the memory of the 372 British servicemen, who died on active service during the Cyprus Emergency 1955-1959, the 50th anniversary of the ending of which falls next year. You can find full details of this on our website at

<http://www.britishcyprusmemorial.org>

We hope you can support this project, firstly, by promoting it to your members as best you can, and also by agreeing to link this website to your own which would help us enormously over the next months, to ensure that your members know about this important 50th anniversary memorial in Cyprus, and are able to register their own support.

Donald Crawford, Secretary to the Trust
British Cyprus Memorial Trust

14. The Regimental Calendar

Once again the Regimental Calendar co-ordinated by L/Sgt Jay Ellingham is about to go to print. Copies will soon be available; £1 of every copy sold will go to The Colonel's Fund.

15. Shop Stock

A copy of the Shop Stock Price List is attached; it is also available on the website. Please place your orders with George Turton well before Christmas, to

save disappointment. George is in the shop on Wednesday and Friday of each Week.

16. Obituaries

A list of those who have passed away since January 2009, is attached. May they Rest in Peace.

17. Diary of Events for 2009

The Diary of events is attached.

18. Website and Email +

The Web Site for the Association is at:
www.grenade.org.uk and at
www.grenadierguardsassn.freeserve.co.uk

The Website for the Battalion is at:
www.army.mod.uk/Grenadier

Jim White, formerly a Signals Platoon Warrant Officer in the 1st Battalion is contactable via:

James White - jim@grenadier.eclipse.co.uk

Those wishing to undertake research should send their requirements to:

grenadierenquires@grengds.com

The Regimental Adjutant can be contacted on:

regtladj@grengds.com

For contact with Association HQ:
The General Secretary

regltreasurer@grengds.com

Association Non Commissioned Officer
L/Sgt Ellingham
assnnco@grengds.com

Orderly Room
L/Sgt A Bayliss
regtlaffairsnco@grengds.com

For Derek Money, the website manager:
DerekMoney@grenadierguardsassn.freeerve.co.uk

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the President and all at Regimental Headquarters, to wish each and everyone of you a very happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year. And may 2009 bring all that you wish for to you and your families.

T A Rolfe
Captain (Retd)
General Secretary
Grenadier Guards Association

Attachments:

1. Grenadier Day Littlecote Working Paper.
2. Welfare Pie Chart.
3. List of Obituaries to date.
4. Diary of Events to date.

Thursday, November 27, 2008