

THE AFGHAN HOUND



09 January 2009

Edition 8

The Regimental 50th Anniversary Dinner

by WO1 (RSM) Jerome Tyson

January 1st 2009, 50 years ago to the day, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG) came into being after the amalgamation of the 1st Kings Dragoon Guards (KDG) and the Queen's Bays. To mark this important milestone a Regimental dinner was held so that we could celebrate our birthday in as fitting a way as we possibly could.

As you are all aware fresh food in Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) is a rarity, although getting better all of the time it is still only on the odd occasion that real meat is seen passing over the hot plate. However, with a little jiggery pokery the QM managed to acquire a couple of beef joints along with cakes and a variety of cheeses.

Invites were sent to all QDG soldiers in FOB Delhi along with our attached arms, invites also went to sub unit and department commanders that make up Battlegroup South and a final invite went to Colonel Hai from the Afghan National Army (ANA).

The tables were made to look as impressive as they can be using plastic plates and cutlery, a gavel (wooden hammer) looking stone was found and place cards were produced to give it that dinner night feel.

The evening started with people taking their seats and "Roast Beef of Old England" playing on the Padre's iPod. The Commanding Officer (CO) spoke a few words and then before and after each course Warrant Officers stood up and gave a small vignette on how the run up to amalgamation was seen from the KDG and Bays point of view.



The Commanding Officer with Guest of Honour - Lt Col Hai ANA

After a starter of soup a roast beef dinner was then served and I must admit it was one of the tastiest dinners I have had in a while, the chefs had done quite an amazing job

With cake to follow and then cheese

and biscuits the night had gone really well, but I knew that everybody was getting impatient for the toasts because this being such a special occasion the CO allowed us all to have a small polystyrene cup of port, and boy did it taste good! Once the toasts were over the evening was concluded by playing the Regimental quick marches of all the units that are under command of Battle Group South, thirteen in total.



Mr Lowe is thrilled by the company of A Squadron Leader (Sqn Ldr) and the Adjt

The whole night was a complete success and was a worthy celebration of the Regiment and all those that have served in it, past and present. To have held the dinner whilst in Afghanistan also seems fitting as operations have dominated so much of our recent Regimental history. Only time will tell what the next fifty years will bring but with the courage and professionalism shown by all ranks on current operations I feel sure that the future is in good hands.

Headquarters Squadron Notes

50 Years of The Queen's Dragoon Guards

by Cpl Stuart 'Penny' Farthing

As I sit here in FOB Dwyer, cold, wet and muddy having been tasked to write the 50th birthday edition of the Afghan Hound I am bound to wonder how many of my predecessors from not only QDG but The Kings Dragoon Guards and the Queen's Bays have spent time away from their families and loved ones on operations, I am sure that the complaints are very similar now to what they were over 300 years ago but on the other hand I am also sure that the "Family Regiment" ethos has not changed either. The pace of life at regimental duty may well have increased and the coverage of the tours we do now most certainly has, but the feelings of leaving our families to go on tour is as hard now, after my 17 years in the Regiment, as it

was in 1993 when I deployed to Northern Ireland for the first time. And it is all the more hard to be away from home over the Christmas period when it is classed as the season of goodwill to all men.

Currently in FOB Dwyer we have just had Christmas and the chefs have yet again managed to pull out all the stops and amaze us all with the Christmas fare, which was graciously served to us by the senior ranks at this location, Mr Wood, Sgt Squires, Sgt Stevens and Sgt Moffett and even Santa made a surprise appearance in the unlikely form of Trooper (Tpr) Curtis. There were also some other people in fancy dress, which brought some humour to the proceedings. We do hope that everyone back in Germany and families in the UK had a pleasant Christmas and a somewhat more salubrious New Year than we did out here.

A Squadron Notes

4th Troop Leader

by Lt Harry Pilcher

Christmas this year has been unlike any other. The sun was already beating down on FOB Dwyer out of the azure sky as A Sqn went about opening presents with festive cheer. Fresh turkey was flown in for Christmas lunch and the Officers sung carols as they served the boys with a spectacular lunch prepared by Tpr Reilly and the FOB Dwyer chefs. Amid Christmas trees dripping with decorations and a cookhouse drowning in tinsel, a superb meal was had by all. As we left Father Christmas (AKA Cpl Farthing) presented each soldier with a box of Christmas gifts from uk4u Thanks! (charity), a welcome surprise in addition to the many parcels and packages received from the UK and Germany.

A few hours later the Sqn reconvened at the cookhouse for a delicious buffet supper, with entertainment coming in the form of troop skits. As well as performances from each troop, the Officers and the Seniors took turns at successfully mocking each other, resulting in some badly bruised egos. The day was then rounded off in the traditional style with a compulsory viewing of Zulu and the scoffing of turkey sandwiches and mince pies.

Christmas Day was preceded by a three day patrol on the western side of the river Helmand and followed by a period of maintenance on both the CVR(T)'s (tracked vehicles) and Jackals (4x4 patrol vehicles). Craftsman (Cfn) Banks used this time in camp wisely to improve his poker skills. He now proudly heads the poker league, with Sgt Eggleton bemused as to how such a youngster could overcome his guile and cunning.

As the New Year draws in, the Sqn

braces itself to break the half way point of the tour and ponders on the subject of New Year's resolutions. Cpl Dale intends to lose weight through continuous laps around the 1km perimeter of camp – similar to a hamster trapped on its wheel; while Tpr Cole is considering taking up the eating of vegetables for the first time.

Most of us just hope that the weather continues to remain dry and warm and that the three day downpours are a thing of the past. However, all reports suggest this may be wishful thinking!

Fitter Section

by SSgt (Tiffany) Marcus Waugh

I have repeatedly put myself forward to write a piece for the Afghan Hound, and now, following harassment by Maj Waggett, I have finally agreed to give some column space. With the festive season now drawing to a close, so too have the first packages of Sqn R&R (rest and recuperation) and we have seen the return of some well known characters, most notably Cpl Mac (the Oracle) MacDonald. For these guys, the privilege of spending Christmas at home with families and loved ones was relished; along too with the opportunity for merrier celebrations.



REME in action

For those Squadron members in Camp Bastion, quite probably the best opportunity for celebrations ensued in theatre. To capture the spirit of season and in keeping with his German traditions the Squadron Quartermaster Sergeant (SQMS) SSgt "Jugs" Jones celebrated Christmas on the 24th of December and treated all of his guys to a rendition of his favourite German carols and a customary meal of Kartoffelsalat and Wurst. Lucky boys!

For those who remained in FOB Dwyer for Christmas the Officer Commanding (OC) had decreed that, where possible, Christmas Day should be celebrated by the guys having a break from routine patrolling. For many this was the first real day off that they had had since the beginning of the tour, almost three months ago; it was certainly welcomed.

It may surprise many to know, but thanks to the hard efforts of the supply chain and the chefs within the FOB, the Christmas spirit was indeed captured with an excellent spread of traditional food and decorations. This gave the Battle Capt an opportunity to come as close as he gets to pulling a cracker! The day was further complimented by comedy skits in the evening, and on occasion through the day there was a chance for us to reflect on our Christmas' Past, Present and Future; albeit away from our loved ones.

As I write this article it is now the 31st of Dec 08 and so from all of us here, we

wish you a prosperous and Happy New Year for 2009. And if the second term of the tour goes by as quickly as the first has then we will be home in no time. Keep safe and happy; best wishes A Sqn.

4th Troop Corporal

by Cpl David Dale

Over the Christmas period the whole of A Sqn had a real good laugh. Everyone put together a number of skits with a selected few getting the brunt of it, including the OC with his bad practical jokes. The Officers put together a funny play and the 12 days of Christmas Carol which underwent a slight but very funny change; let's hope they don't quit the Army for a singing career as there was not one James Blunt amongst them! All the junior ranks teamed up within their troops to make the night very funny with a number of plays, and a DVD which showed the life within FOB Dwyer that raised the spirits throughout. Now that the festive season has passed and with work ever increasing, the foot is back on the gas. With the New Year approaching we can only imagine the fun exploding all over the UK and hope that it brings fresh new operations that will make our time here pass much more quickly now that R&R has fully kicked in. Sgt Eggleton and the Squadron Sergeant Major (SSM) and the Battle Capt's (BC's) hat would like to wish everyone at home a Happy New Year (due to them moaning of not being mentioned enough!). Have an awesome New Year and have a drink for us from all the warriors of A Sqn!

Christmas Day

by LCpl Daniel Lewis

Christmas has arrived at last, one of the best times of year and it was not as terrible as I had first thought it might be. It was made bearable by the massive support that the Regiment and the Squadron has received from the UK and Germany, in the form of parcels and cards. Even the dinner was very good (well done to the chefs and everyone else who made it happen), although I didn't appreciate Mr Mildenhall's singing while I was eating. Some more practice needed there I think!



Santa and his helpers

I was down to be on sentry duty on Christmas Day, but kindly the seniors had volunteered to take our places, this put a big smile on my face, until the SSM, Mr Jones, started demanding a continual supply of brews from the cookhouse for the duration of his duty.

As normal with A Sqn there were skits to be done, if only the camp SSM, Mr Wood, had been there to see them he might have turned into something like the incredible

Hulk. All the skits were very funny and a merry time was had by all. I thought it was only fair that the BC, (Capt Robinson), should see how his beloved, but sadly, long lost baseball cap was doing. In the 4th Troop's video skit, it was clearly seen in the foreground.



Mr Jones finds out just how long his Christmas stag will last

As ever the CVR(T) crews have been working hard on their vehicles with the new drivers being the busiest of the lot. No wonder 'Badger' (Tpr Griffith) is getting greyer! The Jackal group are still doing their bit for the cause, attempting to find a deceptive and elusive Taliban. The Jackal is a fierce vehicle, bristling with weapons, and the crews bearing expressions that you might find in the film '300'. Clearly we are enough to scare even the toughest Taliban. I must finish with a big Thank You to the Padre. He donated over 30kg of lemon sherbets to the men of A Sqn. The only downfall is the Sqn will probably all need dental appointments when we get back from tour! Once again a big thank you to all of you back there - please keep the parcels coming! We hope you have had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

A Trooper's Perspective

by Tpr Jonathan Cole

Last week has been a very important week for me as it's been Christmas, which means down time. Although it's far from ideal being away from my family at this time of year, it hasn't been anywhere near as bad as I imagined. Almost everyone has received parcels from home and additional ones through the welfare system. We are all very, very grateful.

We are just about to go back out on the ground for a period of time, which I am looking forward to hugely, although I am sure it will be demanding times for all of us. I am looking forward to seeing in the New Year in Afghanistan, but not as much as I am looking forward to my R&R very soon.

I have just started using the internet terminals here, which are an excellent welfare asset, as they are a great way of keeping in touch with people in addition to the welfare phones. There are some occasional duties that the boys try and avoid, like staggings on the sangars (defensive positions) or cleaning pots and pans for the chefs, but thankfully they don't come round very often. There is one major reason that we can all feel that much safer in our beds, and that is the return of my commander, the Oracle, (Cpl McDonald) from R&R.

To finish I would like to thank all the people again who have sent us wonderful and very useful parcels at this time of year.

C Squadron The Musa Qal'eh Inaugural 7s Touch Tournament.

by Capt Ben Parkyn

The first thing to mention about the Musa Qal'eh Sevens Tournament is that it was actually the Musa Qal'eh Sixes Tournament. It was decided that the pitch (also used as the Helicopter Landing Site) was too small for 7s but the shirts had already gone to the printers.

C Sqn QDG had been playing touch rugby since our arrival at the District Centre (DC). It is certainly the most extreme form of rugby that I have played as our playing surface is regularly interrupted by helicopters that see us fleeing for cover from the down draft sand storms. The surface is actually large cobble stones from the Wadi bed that are perfect for turning ankles on and many of the boys opt to play in combat boots. It is the first time I have played rugby at 1100m above sea level and the lungs do burn after a sprint. Being on a high feature the view affords good eyes on the Patrol Bases that surround the DC and often you can see tracer rounds and artillery landing only a few kilometres away. We pause to guess which patrol base is in action and then its back to chasing each other around the landing pad.

At 0930 on Boxing Day the team captains met to thrash out the final points and rules on the tournament and confirm the team lists (making sure that they were all there and not on an operation, stag or in the medical tent). The teams were allowed 12 players to play two 10 minute halves with no player allowed more than 5 minutes a half. The weather was perfect and a cool clear morning quickly developed in an almost summers day with the temperature approaching 18 degrees Celsius.



"Hello Sailor"

The first game was between C Sqn QDG and the Rest of the World (RoW) which had an in-exhaustive squad compiled from Regimental Headquarters (RHQ), 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles (2RGR) headed up by their CO. The match was fast paced and frenetic and C Sqn's promise failed to materialise ("still on the bus") and despite a close run second half, C Sqn lost 4 tries to 6. A few stern words and a shuffle of players saw C Sqn beat B Company, The 1st Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal

Regiment (B Coy 1 PWRR) comfortably 4 tries to 2 in the second match against a robust set of Fijians and the odd cockney. The third match was B Coy 1 PWRR vs The Rest of the World and saw the RoW sneak past B Coy 1 PWRR. This meant that the final would be C Sqn vs RoW and the third placed PWRR would play a QDG guest team. The guest team consisted of the CO 2RGR, OC C Sqn, OC B Coy 1 PWRR, a Platoon Commander from B Coy 2RGR and a squad of C Sqn QDG boys that referred to themselves as "The Bench Warmers" ably marshalled by LCpl Comley. After much to-ing and fro-ing of the lead, the game was tied 6 tries a-piece on the final whistle and the Bench Warmers had given their all in a fully committed performance (Tprs Cook and Farrant both getting stuck into the non-contact sport).

So, to the final and C Sqn dominated the first 5 minutes of every half before letting the RoW claw back a score. With victory in sight with C Sqn one try ahead, the RoW scored a break away try to level the scores 4 tries all and force the match into extra time. C Sqn scored first with a break in mid-field but the RoW answered back. C Sqn then posted what they thought was the winning try but RoW again levelled after a dubious pass put their wing in the corner. This took the game to sudden death and with both teams with aching limbs and screaming lungs, the RoW forced C Sqn back onto their line, which was manfully defended until a breach was forced allowing RoW to score the tournament winning try.

Although C Sqn had lost, the team had played their hearts out and were the first to congratulate the RoW and could hold their heads high. The boys had worked hard all day and played some excellent rugby with only a few mistakes in defence letting them down. It was a fantastic day and a great tournament and furthered the links between the QDG and the Gurkha Battle Group on what has been a great partnership so far.

Grace for the QDG 50th Anniversary Dinner

by Padre Stewart Young

(With apologies to all serious poets!)

We gather here in celebration
of 50 years since amalgamation.

The Queen's Bays and King's Dragoon
Guards were joined as one,
1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards to become.
And looking back, since fifty-nine,
with pride in our hearts, we trace our line,
from Wolfenbittel to Musaymir;
from Sennelager to Garmsir.

First and foremost, we've always been,
proud Dragoons who serve our Queen.
And on this day, in this foreign land,
where we've been before, we take our stand,
to serve once more, under the eagle,
our badge of honour, which has no equal.

And one more time, we take our pause,
to bring our thanks before our God,
for all he's done o'er 50 years
to bless our efforts and quell our fears
as we've faced great odds and many a
challenge;

as we've fought with stealth and used our
skill, to find and fix,
any who've dared to pit their wits
against The First, The QDG
the one, the only, Welsh Cavalry.

God bless this dinner as you've blessed
these years
strengthen our comradeship, hold us dear,
and keep us safe until that time
when this tour's over
and we may dine
in that fair land from which we hail
as the hillsides welcome us back to Wales.
Amen.

Court and Social

From The Daily Telegraph, 2nd January 2009

SERVICE DINNER

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
Lt Col A.S. Richmond presided
at a regimental dinner to
celebrate the 50th anniversary
of 1st The Queen's Dragoon
Guards held last night at
Forward Operating Base Delhi,
Southern Helmand Province,
Afghanistan.

Look-alike Corner



Thundercats

BG South

STOP PRESS!!!

Crochet Update
The Kingfisher Tapestry is

23%

complete

Contact Details

Battlegroup HQ
HQ BG(S)
FOB Delhi
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A Sqn QDG
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A Squadron





C Squadron

