



# THE HELMANDI DRAGOON

*Newsletter of The Light Dragoons  
England's Northern Cavalry*

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## Commanding Officer's Foreword. *Lt Col SJ Plant MBE*

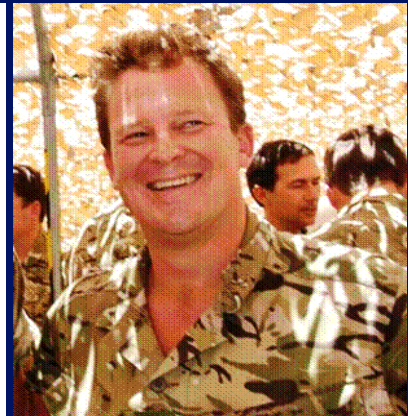
Welcome to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of *The Helmandi Dragoon*. It seems like only yesterday that I was penning the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, so time is certainly flying by. This is unsurprising as we have all been exceptionally busy. Very much at the forefront of our thoughts has been Tpr Royce who was very seriously injured in an IED blast on 2 May. The casualty evacuation drills undertaken by B (BRF) Sqn on the ground were first class in every respect and I was at the Role 3 hospital in Camp Bastion when Tpr Royce was flown in. The calm professionalism and efficiency of all the medical and welfare staff at the hospital was absolutely evident and I saw, first hand, why our medical facilities here in Afghanistan are considered to be the best in the world. Tpr Royce now embarks on a long and tough journey back to health and a day does not go by when we do not think of him and his family at this difficult time. They can count on the support of the serving Regiment and the broader Regimental family in the days, weeks, months and years ahead – we will all be there for him.

You may well have heard that 3 troops from A Sqn are in the process of re-rolling as I write. 36 members of the Sqn will form 3 Police Advisory Teams (PATs) and go under command of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, The Welsh Guards. I've been impressed with the Sqn's positive receipt of this news and they are right to be upbeat as it demonstrates

that the campaign continues to move in the right direction. I have been struck by the increasing levels of capability and confidence of the Afghan National Security Forces and it is right that we monopolise on this by switching focus to mentoring and advising, such that the Afghans are able to continue to takeover responsibility for security from us. Light Dragoon soldiers will be excellent in this role as they seek to build empathy and rapport with Afghan counterparts. It is very much a role that sits on the Main Effort.

I was fortunate to recently visit what was formally called FOB KEENAN – the place where the RSM and I (and 15 other LDs) spent nearly 7 months in 2009. I mention this because it represents another example of the improving situation in Helmand Province. I was able to patrol with much greater freedom than we had been able to in 2009 and it demonstrates that our efforts then, and the efforts of those who came before and after us, have had an effect. That the Afghan locals are determined to take responsibility says it all.

I receive regular reports from our officers and soldiers who are working beyond the ISTAR Group and the majority have contributed again to this newsletter. Each time I hear from them, I get a strong sense of the



Lieutenant Colonel SJ Plant MBE  
Commanding Officer,  
The Light Dragoons

commitment, ingenuity and determination to succeed. Hard and dangerous work is made easier when it involves such high levels of professional fulfilment and the fruits of our labour are tangible. I am, of course, in daily touch with A Sqn, B Sqn and the Brigade Troops Echelon. Spirits remain high and all are doing brilliant work

I also keep close tabs on the goings on in the Rear Ops Gp. The team in Swanton Morley continue to keep the home fires burning and I am told that improvements in the weather have made all the difference. I have received photographs of a number of wives sipping cold drinks at Fakenham Races last Sunday (which certainly made me feel a bit thirsty) and I understand that a good day was had by all. Equally, the planning for the Wives' Club calendar seems to be taking shape and the end results are eagerly anticipated.



## Editors Notes

*Regimental Sergeant Major Dave 'Sting' Rae*



**Above: The RSM and Editor**

Dear Reader,

Time for the second issue of your favourite monthly rag, 'The Helmandi Dragoon'. I hope you enjoyed the first issue and if you didn't get to see it then I apologise; be sure to ask any of the contributing article authors who are all on the mailing list. They should be able to produce a copy for you to peruse.

The feedback from those in theatre has been very positive and proves that we all wish to know what our fellow Light Dragoons are getting up to around TFH. I hope it was received well in the UK. The articles have been fairly informative and some even have a touch of humour but, even for me who has the opportunity to engage with most by travelling around the bazaars, it was still good to hear and see that all are well and in high spirits.

This month you will hopefully get more of a feel for the tone of operations throughout the summer months. All Sub Units are now fully immersed in their varying roles and have been fully operational for quite some time now.

Thank you to all authors for taking the time to engage, however, if you send in an article short of substance or unusable photos then inevitably you will end up on the receiving end of some dubious editing which may not be as flattering to you as you would have wished for; evil I know but I am a real life hack now. Photographs make an article and there are some amazing ones out there. Get them in, you may just have the photo I am looking for to allow me to add the cherry.

Another word of warning must also be issued to those of you who are naive enough to ridicule the editor (usually Young Officers). I admire your attempt at crack and we all enjoy it and please keep it coming. The flip side of the coin is that if it is remotely ridiculous or lacks credibility then I will, in turn, evoke my editorial right to destroy you with the most hideous lies, slander and fabrications. I don't need to tap into your phone, I will just make it up.

Times are interesting and from an RSM perspective, from what I have witnessed to date, the boys and girls are relishing what's ahead of them and are producing positive results. They have not waited for a bedding in period nor expected one, instead they have lent in and set off at a higher pace and tempo than what I suspect our predecessors experienced throughout their whole tour. It's the only way.

Credit where credit is due.

*Military terminology can be impossible to read to those not exposed to it on a regular basis. See below for common abbreviations which may appear throughout the articles:*

**ANSF - Afghan National Security forces**  
**ISAF—International Security Assistance Force**  
**TFH –Task Force Helmand**  
**CF—Combined Force**  
**ISTAR - Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance**  
**BRF - Brigade Reconnaissance Force (B Sqn)**  
**FR - Formation Reconnaissance (A Sqn)**  
**PMAG - Police Mentoring and Advisory Group (D Sqn)**  
**RSOI—Reception, Staging & Onward Integration Sqn - Squadron**  
**CO - Commanding Officer**  
**OC - Officer Commanding (Squadron Leader)**  
**QM - Quarter Master**  
**RAO - Regimental Admin Officer**  
**RQMS - Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant**  
**SSM - Squadron Sergeant Major**  
**SQMS - Squadron Quarter Master Sergeant**  
**SSgt - Staff Sergeant**  
**Sgt - Sergeant**  
**Cpl - Corporal**  
**LCpl - Lance Corporal**  
**Tpr/Pte - Trooper/Private**  
**ECM - Electronic Counter Measures**  
**HME - Home Made Explosives**  
**IED - Improvised Explosive Device**  
**ANA - Afghan National Army**  
**AUP - Afghan Uniformed Police**  
**ALP - Afghan Local Police**  
**GLE - Government Lead Eradication**  
**HAF - Heliborne Assault Force**  
**GAF - Ground Assault Force**  
**Wig/Pipe/Hoop - An idiot of the highest order**  
**Totes - Officer chat meaning 'Totally'**

# A Squadron (The Empire)

Captain Luke Dodington

The end of April and majority of May has passed in a flash for The Empire. The Squadron finally finished RSOI and joined the action by taking responsibility of Formation Reconnaissance based from MOB Price near Gereshk. The guys had a useful first run out in tandem with the outgoing Queen's Dragoon Guards showing them the sights, sounds and experiences of their tour. And it was on the 'Warm-up Op' in true A Squadron style, that 2<sup>nd</sup> Troop under command of Lt Jamie Harle and Sgt Mark Bowman had to be first to have any form of incident on HERRICK 16. They managed stylishly to almost flip a SPARTAN down a reasonably flat decline and whilst clearing a large working area for recovery assets to come and assist exposed a slice of unexploded ordinance that would need to be disposed of before any further action could be taken. This coupled with numerous medical issues slashing manpower to a bare minimum ensured that 2<sup>nd</sup> Tp (Always First) posted the inaugural 9 LINER, 10 LINER and recovery request for The Empire. A massive well done all round!

Special note this month goes to 3<sup>rd</sup> Troop, where the crew commanders (especially Sgt Sampher) and Troop Leader have been giving some of the most textbook reporting ever heard on a HERRICK tour. Barely a moment goes by in SHQ where one of the afore mentioned cannot be heard banging on about something they are tracking/observing/scanning. In terms of professionalism and dedication to the art of FR they make the diehard fan's spine tingle every time they step out of the gate. 4<sup>th</sup> Troop have had a relatively quiet month mopping up a few minor training deficiencies, but contributing hugely to SHQ work and vehicle maintenance in MOB PRICE. Lt Paske lost no time is getting his artistic hand working improving living conditions for the officers and the Afghanistan branch of the Cavalry and Guards Club will be officially opened hopefully in early June. In the meantime most soldiers in his troop are busy searching for Lt Paske's daysack, which has been lost along with his marbles since the RSOI. Anybody who happens to chance upon this rouge slice of admin is asked kindly to pass it back along the appropriate chain to us here in MOB Price and they will be graciously rewarded with the weeks supply of Stilton Mr Paske was storing in a Gore-Tex pouch within the daysack.



**'A room for the night please Innkeeper...for 12 please'**

1<sup>st</sup> and Fire Support Group (FSG) Troops have had a busy month both on deliberate Ops with the squadron and also contributing to the Royal Welsh Battle Group in the Northern Gereshk Valley. There is not much dirt to be got on either Troop except the state of the ginger rich top lip slugs being sported by their members. Cpl Harper and Lt Whitten's examples are being considered as this article goes to press for the charity 'nastiest tache' award run by the Royal Logistic Corps in Bastion. Good luck guys!

The most recent news from the Empire regards our future role. It has been decided that 3 troops from the Squadron will be re-rolled into Afghan Police Advisor Teams (PAT). The news was welcomed by A Squadron and although there is obvious frustration and disappointment across all ranks it is a decision that the troops involved are relishing and massively proud to be involved in. Partnering the Afghan security forces is the most Important aspect of the work us and our NATO partners are doing here and A Squadron is in a great place to provide support. Our pre-tour training in the UK ensured that every man experienced partnering in every aspect of operations. So now it has come around A Squadron is prepared and will respond accordingly, with professionalism and dedication.

**Craftsman Hunt on hollibobs in the sun**



**A Squadron on the move**

## B Sqn (The Guards) - Brigade Recce Force

Captain Chris Fenton

### Foreword by the Officer Commanding 12 BRF

It has been a busy month for the BRF. We have almost planned and then had cancelled as many operations as we have planned and executed and when not ensuring that the equipment is fit for purposes and all the 6" tables and 5" benches are accounted for, the boys are to be found at the various training areas continuing to hone their skills. It has also been a difficult month for all, seeing that many of our number have had to be returned to UK for further medical treatment. That said we have been comforted in the knowledge that they will be receiving the best medical treatment possible: Tpr Royce; Cpl Pallintina; Cpl Howe; Gdsm Flynn; LCpl Demain; and SSgt Jester (a US Army attachment) remain in our thoughts

### The Wrong Trousers

B Squadron's second month in theatre has been a tale of trousers. The harsh, rocky terrain has led many of the boys to spend hard-earned cash on "Crye Precision" trousers. This upmarket combat clothing comes with such luxuries as in-built knee pads, extra pockets for fighting necessities (i-pods, cigarettes...), and reinforced panels in the areas most likely to experience wear and tear. The Squadron as a whole has put these Special-Forces proven products through their paces, with SSgt Simpson highlighting a few notable areas of concern for Crye: the reinforced groin panel proved no match for Simmo's ample thighs as he straddled an irrigation ditch in central Helmand.

Having seen the effectiveness of these precocious pants, other prominent figures within the Squadron have focussed attention on trying to acquire them on the 'black market'. The Squadron Leader, having searched high and low in both Camp Bastion and Camp Leatherneck, the adjoining US Forces base, has finally triumphed. After sampling numerous knock-off alternatives, donated kindly by representatives of all of the attachments with whom B Squadron has had the pleasure of working, Major Dalby-Welsh was overheard extolling the virtues of the Crye trousers to anyone who would listen.

American helicopters have started to make more regular appearances as our mode of transport for short term operations. As with all new airframes we have to be familiarised with them before we "jump on board". As the troops were briefed, they were filled with confidence when the loadmaster briefed that the Sea Stallions were supposed to leak oil over the travelling troops when in transit and should it stop that is when it is time to worry...

After the Squadron's 6 week "safari" on Exercise ASKARI THUNDER in Kenya last year, warthogs were amongst the boys' favourite animals. Having now spent a significant amount of time in their armoured namesakes, this opinion has drastically changed. The hand over take over is now complete with the Warthog Group with the KRH in the hot seat. And hot seat is certainly the operative word, as the temperature rises considerably, troops are racing for the vehicles with "working" air-conditioning systems. For those slow off the mark, they must embrace the punitive delights of slow roasting, lightly basted in diesel fumes. Delicious.

In other news there have been some new arrivals in the Squadron with Tpr Sykes who has made a hasty recovery after suffering at the hands of a vicious bouncy castle attack just days before the Squadron deployed (as reported in the last edition). Tpr Goodall arrived at the same time and although new to the Regiment, his enthusiasm has ensured that he has quickly settled in to 1<sup>st</sup> Troop. A familiar face from the demanding BRF course, Sgt "Shaggy" Lockheart has arrived to bleed us dry of the latest information to ensure he can pass it on to the HCR when they embrace the fun that the Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing have to offer.

In essence the Squadron has been incredibly busy. The pace of life has meant that the Sqn has executed a total of 12 Operations in the month of May. Many of which have been at short notice. The BRF continue to make a dent in the Insurgent ability to target ISAF and ANSF, with finds ranging from weapon systems to large numbers of IED components. This has been made possible by the incredible drive that the boys continue to display and has been helped hugely by the support received from friends and family at home. Keep the parcels coming, they are hugely appreciated!!!

Fed up with Ops the boys audition for parts Downton Abbey



## BTE - Brigade Troops Echelon

Major 'Milly' Milson

Episode two of the BTE saga and the inspections have begun, the first of which was a visit by the Commander Bastion and his team. 'Elf and Safety, you just cannot get away from it, even in a war zone. It all went well, with the Commander going away happy and understanding what BTE are all about, which is more than I can say about most people over here. LCpls "Muscles" McMeiken and "Whispering" Windmill were singled out for the exceptional hard work and preparation they had put in for the inspection, which puts them at the top of the BTE Bloggers League.

The rest of the J4 team are up to their eyes in work and it will not diminish for the foreseeable future. Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Main) Topps and RQMS (T) Thirlaway are still relaxed and smiling (like a pair of assassins), with SSgt Ford picking up secondary jobs, BTE Quiz Master and stand in PTI. There were complaints from some of the younger members about his music round being too old, especially from Pte "Wagbo" Marshall, who is only ten. Sgt Buchan's poorly knee left a gap in the PTI market and Micky jumped in to take over, even getting on the phone back to the ROG trying to get a white vest sent over. Cpl McGuffie has taken to dragging the OC into the ammo bunker on a regular basis, steady Guff. LCpl Macaskill has emerged as the J4 joker, regularly murdering all and sundry from first thing in the morning.

Cpl McHale and LCpl Yard are coping with the MT stuff, under the watchful eye of Sgt Buchan. They had their advisory visit last week and now fully understand the work they have on. Luckily the QM is also MTO trained, bonus!! Sgt Claude Allen is still the busiest man in NATO and LCpl Yeats is dreading him going on R&R. In fact Yoda is on R&R now and we are wondering if he will come back!!

LCpl Ball has arrived in town and hit the floor running. He will be a jack of all trades by the time we are finished here. Cpl Dixon got a bill for £4million, luckily he has receipts and Dimmers moved the entire armoury ISO's by hand (well he could have).

The Adjutant has been on remedial pistol training. Unfortunately when your top slide falls into the Loading/Unloading bay in front of the boys it tends to get noticed. Not that anyone took the mickey out of him. The RSM has continued his travels, getting around TFH to see the boys and girls, wherever they are. He is to be commended for being the only man in Afghanistan who can get his Osprey plates to fit properly, even with the transit covers still fitted (Ed: at least they are snug and I actually get to wear it!)

SSgt Young continues to keep a watchful eye over the youthful J1 team. I am not comparing her to a mother hen, but she is a wise old(er) bird. The SSA, Sgt Whitehouse remains loved up and with all the tokens of affection from you know who, it must just be a matter of time before Thirla is a best man (Ed: bet you would rather dye my hair ginger, oh it already is). Capt Bassett has selected a team of AGC Ninjas (none of ours) to compete in the Triple Crown Competition and is busy whipping herself into condition. We do not understand how, as she is only half a Kit-Kat behind our own undoubted eating king, Cpl Reade.

Pte Hewitson likes sunbathing, but should just be careful when she does it. The EME and ASM keep nipping up to PRICE to get in the air miles and even though nothing exciting happens, poor Stubbsy still has to sit and listen to past tales of glory. No wonder he sits counting nuts and bolts in his ISO container. Never mind, the new ASM, WO1 Lye is in town, welcome to Puzzle Palace. Overall we are on a high, as R&R is about to start and more to the point the first QRL recce has been and gone: now that is progress.



Brigade Troops Echelon - CAMP BASTION

## ROG - Rear Operations Group

Major Will Leek

It has been a pretty busy month again for the Rear Ops Group. SSgt Dawkins and his team fought the RDG to a narrow loss in the UK Cav Cup final. The team was commended for a 'bloody good effort for a ROG'! Praise indeed! We sent a marching contingent (OC, SSM, SQMS Bower & 2Lt Twyman and 8 troopers to Windsor to take part in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Muster which was a great success. I like to think that we added a bit of style and panache to the proceedings. That and Trooper Hunter's arse-eating trousers! It was a once in a lifetime experience and one that we will all look back on fondly (less Trooper D+E (Du Plessis) whose bladder took a bit of a hammering during one particularly long rehearsal!)

The ROG rotation of Vehicle park, guard, MST and then combined training continues. We have shipped off all of the 102 vehicles to the HCR and we are slowly back-loading other vehicles to base overhaul (there may not be much left by the time you get back!) The Vehicle park is slowly being licked into shape by the EC dream team of SSgt Mudd and Sgt Broughton. On the MST front we have benefitted from the experience of those BCRs who have gone through RSOI and who can now swing lanterns during our MST training. It is useful to keep the more experienced soldiers skills levels up and it introduces those soldiers straight from training to some of the complexities of Afghanistan. We also completed a MATTs week and have sent Sgt Haddock away to be qualified as a C-IED instructor. We have just finished a Phase 2 Sigs course where 20 troopers were qualified. LCpl Dobbs is now back at RD and being trained as a PANTHER commander; we firmly have one eye on making sure that we gain as many qualifications as possible to facilitate the Regimental reORBAT post H16.

On the social side we sent a strong contingent down to Cav Mem, attending the association branch reunion on the Saturday night, parade on the Sunday and then a short stop at the Paxton's Head for tradition's sake.... We also enjoyed a fabulous day at Fakenham races, organised by the RQMS(T) where the WOs & Sgts mess staff and the chefs put on a great spread in the best LD traditions.



## OCCD - Operational Co-ord Centre District Sergeant Major Paul 'Tree' Stone

Well, by the time you read this article, the Operational Coordination Centre District (OCCD) team will already have completed more than half of their tour (time flies when you're having fun in Gereshk!). R&R is well underway with Sgt Price being the first to return home; the prospect of returning to the UK with a Squaddie tan and arms like knotted string, Op Bronze and Op Massive are definitely well underway. Sgt Alfie (I came second out of 2 in Bovington's Got Talent) Moon is the lead call sign in the tanning department, although I'm not sure his interpretation of Op Massive is correct (capital D springs to mind). Baby Oil and protein shakes aside, there has been a lot of hard work put in to the mentoring of the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) at this location, and with some strong relationships being formed, the absolute key to the success for the PMAG mission.

SSgt 'Bommer' Grahame and his side kick, Cpl Purvis, have been very busy building a strong link with their Afghan counterparts in District Police Headquarters (DPHQ), with information being passed and critically being received (a level of trust is required before they are content to give us information) which has led to a number of successful operations by the AUP, mentored by ISAF. But I now need to give you a feel for some of the random and out of the blue events that we deal with here in Gereshk:

*The AUP reported they had arrested a man who was found walking down Highway one near Yakchal, an area that is notoriously dangerous and one that we do not slow down for when we drive past. On return to DPHQ we were presented with a blond-haired traveller decked out in Berghaus and walking boots, with apparently not a care in the world. The visitor turned out to be an Ukrainian backpacker called Pavliuk Mkhailo, who was carrying a passport with stamps that included Pakistan and Iran and entirely oblivious to the personal danger that he was in. He said: "They are such kind and hospitable people and always welcome me in". It became apparent that his plan was to head on to Kabul so that he could visit the Chinese embassy to get a visa and continue his journey east. The AUP debriefed him in excited tones, exhorting him to avoid such areas, before sitting him down to lunch and then offering him a bed for the night when it was clear that his bus was not until the next day. Our interest was pricked by such a cool customer in the face of excited AUP and ISAF and so we checked his kit and, eventually satisfied that he was not a Russian Jason Bourne, we cleared his onward movement. With such a colourful passport we did not fancy his chances – cries of "Good Luck you mentalist!" accompanied the waving off.*

The OCCD has also become a Mecca for a multitude of visits ranging from Carolina Farmers to Danish Generals. The team has become well practised in looking extremely busy (with shirts on) and not playing the very addictive computer game Alien Tower Defence (if you haven't played it yet don't, as you'll get no sleep, Major Colbeck Sir!). It has been great to see some friendly fellow Light Dragons

to break up the combination of Danish Policemen and Welsh Guardsmen that form the rest of the group here.

The first Regimental visit came in the form of the Adjutant and RSM who dropped in, smoked all our tabs, drank all our posh coffee before disappearing again. (Don't tell my Mam I smoke you wig!!)

The Padre was next up and his visit was great fun as, to earn his keep, he decided to help cook our evening meal, which very nearly ended in a bout of D&V after serving up his signature dish of raw beef burgers and a side order of flies (nice one Padre). The constant threat of self-inflicted food poisoning has now diminished somewhat, with the arrival of a proper chef (he's even passed the course). And after some initial teething problems, like small portion sizes quickly rectified by the SSM. All is now well on the food front at the OCCD – we even get proper lunches, instead of microwave scrambled eggs on toast.

Looking to the near future the OCCD should soon be getting an uplift of manpower in the form of another Police Advisory Team (PAT), which could be formed from troops belonging to A Squadron The Light Dragoons as the transition from ground holding to mentoring continues. So if anyone from the Empire wants any advice from some old sweats in the mentoring and advisory role, please feel free to pop in to our location for a brew and a chat (you know where we live).



**Major Colbeck attends an Afghan banquet, probably followed by a trip to the D&V tent**



**Partnered patrol into Gereshk. ISAF and AUP**

## ANCOP - Afghan Civil Order Police

Captain Rowley Gregg MC

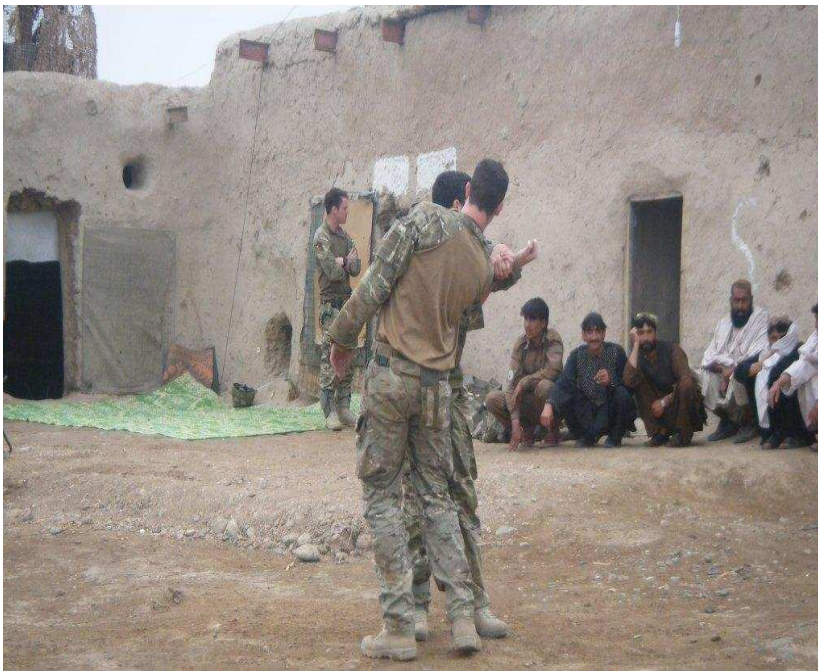
Since the last Helmandi Dragoon was written the ANCOP Special Support Kandak have been conducting C-IED, SWAT (Close Protection) and plenty of Physical Training. They have supported the relief in place of various Kandaks across their area of operations (AO) and have achieved success during the Government Led Eradication of poppies programme. The Mentor Group has deployed with them on numerous occasions and have witnessed some professional soldiering by the patrolmen - they displayed many of the skills and drills that have been taught to them throughout Op Herrick 16 thus far. They seemed controlled under fire and at times were utterly fearless (if not a little gung-ho). The United States Marine Corps soldiers based in ANCOP Barracks alongside us have been very helpful in enabling members of the SSK Mentor Group to head out on joint patrols with the ANCOP. For one of them, it is the second time that he has encountered the Light Dragoons—the first being on the football field playing for US Marine Base Miramar against the touring LD football team in California last summer!

The Mentor Group have been heavily involved in the new 5 Brigade ANCOP Ops Room build and have built many bridges into furthering the relationship between the Brigade Headquarters and the SSK chain of command. We hope to head to Kabul along with the SSK Head Quarters staff to address the logistical nightmare that the ANCOP are experiencing. They are very good at deploying to new areas but find it extremely difficult at using their own supply chain to keep them equipped and in good order - ANSF sustainability whilst on the ground is an issue that all ISAF are doing their best to fix.

The LD ANCOP Police Advisory Team (PAT) in NAD E ALI under Lt Josh Clacy have been busy getting to grips with the mentoring of the 3/5 Kandak around their AO and have taken time to understand the dynamics and distribution of the Kandaks chain of command. Unfortunately, they have not been given any vehicles as of yet so have had to take part in a lot of tabbing between check points in order to conduct sustainment training to the patrolmen. They have been involved in a number of operations with the ANCOP and have taken part in many joint patrols. It has been busy period but also very rewarding and the boys are all on excellent form.

The ANCOP PAT in Burma are also finding themselves extremely busy. They are attached to the Royal Welsh whose mission is to provide security for the Local Nationals and to overwatch and clear the main supply route in their AO. The PATs responsibility is to provide and oversee sustainment training to the entire 1/3 Kandak who are based in sixteen Check Points stretching across the entire route.

Overall, it has been a successful period for both the SSK MG and the ANCOP PATs.



**Teaching the Afghans how to bust some shapes Moon Monkey style.....techno, techno, techno, techno.....SICK!!!!**





## PAT - Police Advisory Team

Lieutenant Josh Clacey

The LIGHT DRAGOONS Police Advisory Team have been incredibly busy over the last month working in the NAD-E-ALI District of Task Force Helmand. The PAT have continued to take the responsibility of mentoring and advising the Afghan National Civil Order Police, (ANCOP) which has certainly had its challenges. Most of this activity has revolved around visiting a large number of ANCOP check points, and conducting joint patrols and operations. The team have also been involved in teaching a number of subjects to the ANCOP so they are capable of an ANCOP led training programme. Most recently, the team have ventured into the western Dashte (desert) and conducted a successful partnered operation with the ANCOP, finding enemy weapons and ammunition.

NAD-E-ALI is one of the more successful areas of HELMAND Province. Two years ago, ISAF troops were being shot at everyday on patrol, now, the majority of the security in the area is provided by the Afghan security forces who continued to be mentored by British troops. The Afghan security forces are grateful for our support and locals are happy that security is being provided by their own people. Whilst attending a security Shura, one local elder said he has not seen security like this for ten years! This is incredibly rewarding for British soldiers serving in Helmand, and demonstrates that significant progress has been made since HERRICK 10.

The team are currently without vehicles, so have spent much of our time in Patrol Base Kalang, co located with B Coy, 1 Royal Anglian and Lt Freeman, where we have been kindly delivered around the battle space on request. The recent operation gave the team the opportunity to work alongside Lt Freeman, who the Anglians entrusted with leading a troop of Mastiff vehicles. As the Light Dragoons team made their way through the early hours of the morning on foot, Lt Freeman's new troop of Anglians were kindly marking the line of departure with their headlights showing all to the enemy which was greatly appreciated.



ANP on patrol with PAT



Sgt Rix and how he would look with upside down head



Recruits receive their 25m swimming certificates

Sgt Rix has been feeling quite sorry for himself after a lack of post, however was more than happy with a weeks supply of Slim Fast from Mrs Wild, LCpl Wild's mother. This was short lived, and Sgt Rix managed to finish the afore mentioned week's supply in one day, and have room for a 24hr ration pack! He was quoted as saying, "Life's not all about food you know".

We have experienced a minor non battle casualty in Sgt Bedeman, however nothing that a long hard look in the mirror cannot cure! Sgt Bedeman jarred his back whilst reaching for a water bottle, and subsequently had to be evacuated back to base by B Coy 1 Royal Anglian. His own personal diagnosis was overheard as "Looks like this might be a Bastion job". Whilst ice cold coke and ice cream in Bastion is an attractive proposition, closer inspection suggested that he might need a day off!

Whilst the ANCOP policing and soldiering has some room for improvement, their volleyball skills do not, and we have not yet won a single game from them. In a game saving move, Tpr Tate put himself on the line and managed to twist his ankle! Since receiving a cuddle from the Shawqat nurse he seems to be back on track and will soon be back on patrol.

It has been a busy yet successful month in Theatre and PAT are looking forward to what lies ahead.

## ALP - Afghan Local Police

Captain Will Carver



**The team rescue a poorly Desert Hawk**

After the inevitable drag of RSOI and bedding into the PMAG HQ in Lashkar Gar, the past 7 weeks have happily gone amazingly quickly. It is clear that the Afghan Local Police are at the forefront of the plan for transition to Afghan security responsibility, and I am very lucky to be witnessing this process in action. As the ALP coordinator in PMAG HQ, my time has been split between time in the office, attempting to marry up UK policy with the reality on the ground, and fact finding amongst the Check Points themselves (well, actually about 90/10 in the office's favour!). Hopefully this pattern will continue, enabling me to build slightly more of a tan than the office bound Capt Gregg, who visits LKG regularly in order to keep up to date with the pudding menu on offer in the DFAC, and to escape being bullied by his team.

As I mentioned in my previous article, the ALP are the newest and most controversial of the Afghan National Police forces. However, even at this early stage they are clearly having an effect on the ground, with security improving in areas that their check-points have been established. Local people have embraced the concept of being paid to take responsibility for their own security, forming an impermeable boundary to the INS, taking the pressure of the otherwise stretched ISAF and ANSF regular forces. The ALP appear enthusiastic, well trained and well equipped, ready to take the fight to the insurgency to protect their families under the umbrella of GIRoA. Well, that is the aspiration anyway....

In some cases this really is happening, and the ALP are at the centre of their community, drawing legitimacy from the local people and strength from the support of ISAF. However, in far too many cases they lack equipment, their pay is late, and their training rudimentary, leading to fragile morale, effectiveness and several self-help get-rich-quick schemes. It is our job to make sure that these issues are resolved and the ALP fulfil their potential. To make matters worse, the INS recognise the threat that the ALP are to their cause, and are targeting them as a result.



**Capt Carver meets the Afghan Local Police Commander**

As you would expect, there are some comedic moments when dealing with an Afghan version of Dad's Army, at various stages possibly involving backhanders, gold watches, bumblebees and other things. I so prefer not to relate to them here. In my limited travels so far I have had the pleasure of seeing Lt Freeman in Nad e Ali, happily going native with the Royal Anglian version of TOWIE, currently busily searching for some Chelmsfordesque fake tan to make up for the fact he has hardly left his Ops Room, and the PAT with Lt Clacy and Sgt Rix. These two scarily seem to be bearing more and more of a resemblance to one another...but that will become more evident as photos emerge throughout the tour! Over a quarter of the tour is now complete, and there is plenty of work yet to be done, but it looks like being fascinating all the same.



**Capt Carver with Lt Clacy's PAT Team**

## TFH– Task Force Helmand HQ

WO1 (RSM) Dave ‘Sting’ Rae

All of you have done this. You have called your bank for whatever reason, be that to order a new bankcard, to stop a standing order or if you are an absolute wig, to arrange an impromptu overdraft as there is a cheque which is about to bounce straight back to RHQ as you had insufficient funds to cash it during M CCP (take the hint!). Undoubtedly you will have been greeted by a very polite man from India going by the name of Geoffrey, Brian or maybe even Farquhar. This evidently is not his real name, but what you will picture is a sprawling room, jam packed with people, all busying away at a computer screen and trying to make your life that much better. Working in Task Force Helmand HQ for the last couple of weeks has brought that vision into reality. There are more computer screens in this place than on the Starship Enterprise, there are also more Klingons too, but it is full of people trying to make life as easy as possible for those at the pointy end in such a harsh and demanding part of the world.

Seriously, this is a very busy environment and no-one, regardless of the level of comfort they experience compared to the PB's and FOB's, can be accused of not working hours that would make a civilian resign. Everyone from the Big Boss all the way down to the Privates and JNCO's work ridiculous hours all in the aim of making operations work, and work well.

Having been at the sharp end my whole career, it has been an eye opener to work in an environment which, while I admit is not my cup of warm water, is so dedicated to everything that we do on the ground. There are no egos here, teamwork is the only approach that will work. There is no 'me time', only selfless commitment in the shape of long hours devising, planning, tweaking, shaping (power point crafting) and decision making to allow those of us at the other end to complete our business as safely and as successfully as is possible. It isn't easy work and it carries it's own level of stress, albeit a different type to being shot at or trying to find IED's. There is more grey hair per square metre in here than in a retirement home. Obviously my arrival lowered that statistic (liberal use of Grecian 2000 required for all in TFH).

Within a HQ like this there are many moving parts. Not only do we have our own ISTAR HQ elements lead by the CO, but almost every arm is represented within a Tri-Service environment. Surprisingly it works very well. The people gathered within this sprawling 'call centre' have probably only met for the first time whilst deployed, but the common goal is evident and therefore relationships need building fast, and they need to work. They seem to be working well as seen from my very small snap-shot.

Light Dragoons within TFH are very much integral to the Main Effort. The information gathering, targeting, reconnaissance and relentless staff work that accompanies any operation is all part of daily (and nightly) routine and ensures that the targets that need specific attention from the likes of the BRF, A Sqn, Warthog Group, Armoured Infantry Company and other force elements are relevant and all within the scope of our mission. To date, this ISTAR HQ has deployed all those force elements onto extremely successful and game changing operations; this doesn't come for free, it requires intelligent analysis and hard work.

As a smelly outsider and now at the back end of my stay (and yes I was kicking and screaming!) I can now understand what it is to work in a HQ environment, a big HQ environment. Have I learnt anything? Apart from what I have already eluded to, I can say that I feel completely comfortable that everyone points in the same direction and fights for the common goal, most of the time. I can say that I now know that if there is 'Trouble at Mill' for those of us on the ground, then there is an extremely well swept up team here that will try their damndest to take that pain away from us, and quickly. Finally, I have learnt that I never want to come back and also that being rude to and flippant about Geoffrey, Brian and Farquhar is unnecessary and uncalled for and that had I been more polite in the past then the overdraft would have gone through and my cheque wouldn't have bounced!



## TACP - Tactical Air Control Party Captain Guy Disney

It has been a difficult month at FOB Ouellette – an INS IDF incident resulted in two UK KIA and numerous casualties. LCpl Morrison and Doble proved to be key to the successful CASEVAC of the casualties. Sgt Robertson ended up having a plethora of air assets to manage for the ongoing casualty extraction which was needed to help bring an end to the prolonged contact on three of CF Burma's Check Points. The rest of the first half of this month has been spent in hardened accommodation or body armour and helmet and both have proved good for weight loss but not morale!

We have been fortunate to have a detachment of ANGLICOs to work alongside in CF Burma - Captain Ryan Hill and Captain 'Tonka' Earhart. LCpl Morrison has been helping Tonka in the gym by acting as a weight for him to bench press. To help Anglo American relations we've tried to educate them both on the complexities of cricket but they claim to know only about soccer!

We had a VIP visitor in the guise of RSM Rae on the 6<sup>th</sup> May; he brought morale and cigarettes aplenty and was a welcome guest. He has also donated his fridge and sent it our way!

The other LD Forward Air Controllers (FACs) have settled in well into life around the rest of TFH. Cpl Mallinson has managed to add to his tan with five new freckles. Cpl Smith has sun burnt his tongue through the gap in his teeth and Sgt Dine has been beasted in the gym by an individual he refers to as 'Jimmy the Noodle'.

Sgt Dine arrived at his final destination on what he described as "a helicopter ride from hell... I thought Mally was gonna spew". He has now taken up Ultimate Fighting and looks set to enter Kabul Cup next month. His diet has changed to ravioli for breakfast, lunch and dinner – the results are good and he was quoted as saying: "think I may have lost a couple of Kgs off my left jowl!"

Sgt Foley has been involved in planning for Ops with the Grenadier Guards BG and is now in charge (according to him) of nine FACs, the Fire Support Team (FST) from A Sqn and there are now two American Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs) that come under his tutor ledge. He is expecting to pick up acting Major in the next few days.

Cpl Mallinson has not only been heavily involved in planning and advising on HAFs but also picking the JTAC of the month – chosen from a strong bunch the candidate must fulfil certain criteria – the last was a dwarf from Nimruz province.



Above: **FOB OUELLETTE** washing machine. Not too dissimilar to a Middlesbrough laundrette



Above: **Welcome to the Gun Show..ok water pistol show. P90X not quite reaping the desired results yet. Watch this space!**

### Spurious slice of Jackanory from OUELLETTE

*The phone line has been ever busy, Captain Dunn has mistakenly saved the TACP number as his direct phone line to KFC in Bastion – we hear from him daily with the opening line of "I'd like five 'mega' buckets with extra deep fried chicken skin sent to the usual please Dave". The response of "LD TACP, no burgers here big lad" brings such a sigh of sadness one cannot represent it in words alone.*

## A Dusty Ol' Padre

Padre Neil Allison

### "From a Dusty Desk" Padre Neil E. Allison

Phillip Pullman's book "His Dark Materials," on which the film the "Golden Compass" was based, introduces us to a world where the humans have souls that exist outside of their bodies and take the form of animals. These animals are called 'Daemons.' To be parted from their daemon is a living death and so they keep close never moving more than a few metres distance away from each other.

Well, I thought this world was entirely fictional until I met Pte Marshall and Pte Hewitson based at Echelon. I've now come to believe that they are from the world described by Pullman as they seem to never be apart. They also tend to talk in unison which confirms my suspicions. However, the one thing I can't figure out is which one is the Daemon? (Both!)

Well, to change the subject, I've just returned from flying around Helmand. There are significant differences in the living conditions of our Lads and Lassies. At one FOB it was exhaustingly hot with no breeze and no air-con to help. Tents were closely placed together which didn't help with the heat or fly issue. At another location there was a lovely garden at the centre of the FOB and a lovely breeze made its relieving presence felt. The difference between the two could not have been greater but in both a home from home was made by those based there. They have really made the best of it and I am impressed with their ingenuity.

The phrase from Psalm 23 "You laid a table in the presence of my enemies" makes much more sense out here than back in the UK when regardless of the circumstances homes, along with pictures from home, are made.



**Thanks Padre but stick to weddings**



**The Daemons AKA Zig & Zag AKA Marshall & Hewitson**

## LTC - Lashkar Gah Training Centre Sergeant Paul Morse

The Boys at Lash Training Centre have seen a busy few weeks since our last write up. With the Afghan students progressing from literacy to practical police training the work load has increased considerably. Now teaching and mentoring have become paramount in the interest of transitioning security control from UK military to Afghan security forces. As more Afghan Instructors, of all ranks, are now more focused on developing the Afghan's coaching and instructor capabilities with the aim of handing over the Police training syllabus in the near future.

Additionally a new language course has been introduced to ease the communication process between UK instructors and the students. The 4 week "Canny Geordie" course starts next week with the aim of breaking down the language barriers between Sgt Fyfe, Cpl Lillico and the rest of Lash Training Centre. Communicating has been difficult thus far due to lack of "Howay" interpreters.

The increase in work load has played a heavy toll on the boys tanning periods the last 3 weeks. The sun tan training has now been reduced to two hours a day, we fear that at this rate we may end up translucent, however we will struggle on.

Students have requested that Cpl Chards lifting crack be kept to a minimum as they were struggling to find the motivation to learn whilst being in the same room. Luckily he rarely attends training and the issue appears to be naturally subsiding.

The young Tprs have been involving themselves heavily within the training with the likes of Tpr Torbitt and Williams working hard to coach students on Lessons such as ranges and patrol skills

Morale, like the temperature, remains high amongst the men of The Light Dragoons at the Lash training centre. We wish all the guys and girls back home the very best and we would also like to wish all other Light Dragoons out here a safe tour and we will see you all collectively for a drink in the bar in October.



Above: Afghan Stealthing....Dangerous!  
Below: Sgt Buchan undercover meets Cpl Chard



Above: Afghan Police recruits under training

## BEEK Dogs

Trooper Glen Hamilton

Since first hearing about the opportunity to work with military dogs back at Swanton Morley in the summer of 2011 I was more than keen to get involved. I saw it as a chance to go on OP HERRICK 16 as a dog handler so I made it my business to find the right people in camp to allow me to attend the selection with the Veterinary Corps in Aldershot. A month or two later I embarked for Aldershot where I found myself with many different cap badges brought together within 12 Mech Brigade, ranging from REME to Infantry.

I gave it my best shot and came in the top few candidates once the screening process was complete. A few weeks later I received the good news that I had been successful and subsequently selected for further training in the US. In October I travelled to South Carolina to continue the course with AK9, the company that was ran by ex US Marines. I was teamed up with a dog called 'Goodwin'.

Goodwin was an ex US Marine himself. Over the 4 weeks I was there he and the instructors, also ex US Marines, taught me a lot about general animal husbandry and the skills I need to progress as a dog handler. I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the USA and even though free time was limited to one day a week, I cherished the work and the play of it all.

In January 2012 I received the go-ahead from Aldershot that I was about to deploy on OP HERRICK 16. So in early February I set off back to Aldershot to conduct 10 days beat-up training then deployed straight to theatre. On the way to Afghanistan we had to stop off in Germany to collect our dogs. They had already made their way from the US and were awaiting collection by their new handlers. *(was Keith Lard there?)*

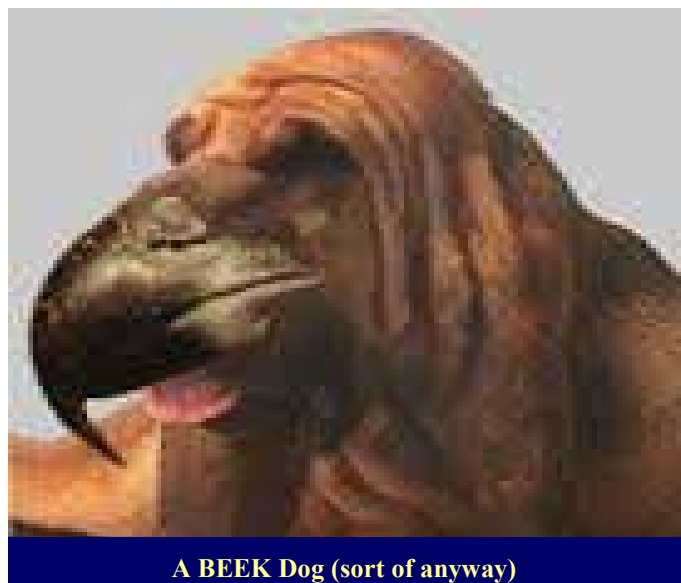
Once in Afghanistan we continued where we left off in the US. We had to go through a licensing process to ensure we were deemed proficient enough to go out on the ground with the dogs. Not all the dogs that came with us have made it, some have been sent back to the UK or Germany for varying reasons. I was unlucky as my first dog was taken 'off line' for not meeting the requirements of a BEEK dog. My second dog was also returned but I'm content, as having a dog with problems teaches you a lot more than just having a dog that can do everything straightaway.

It's a very frustrating job. You constantly have to maintain your dog as it's not just like a piece of equipment where you take it off the shelf, put batteries in, flick the switch and away you go, they have their off days just as much as we do. No matter how much persuading and forcing you do, if that dog doesn't want to play the game then no amount of persuasion will make it play the game! *(Tried a bone?)*

I'm now partners (Keith Lard?) with a 4 year old Labrador named 'Zoe'. She has been here since OP HERRICK 14 and I could not ask any more from her. I continue learning from her every day even though I am now certified to handle on the ground, it is always a constant learning process and she is moulding to my handling style very well. I look forward to the tour now I have Zoe with me and I know for a fact that we are going to serve each other very well. *(I'm sure you will Keith!)*



Keith Lard and a dog friend



A BEEK Dog (sort of anyway)

## UNDERSTAND Officer The Kings Royal Hussars

Major Simon Ward

This month's HELMANDI DRAGON focus is on The Light Dragoons attached to B Squadron, The King's Royal Hussars (KRH) serving in Patrol Base Attal. Three of the four troopers are attached to the Recce troop which plays a very active role in operations around the local area.

Trooper Barnett who is attached to the Recce troop said: "I am really enjoying my time here so far. It has been great to be attached to Recce as we have managed to get out on patrol a lot as well as some of the operations."

Trooper Hoe added: "The guys have been really friendly and we have begun to make some really good friends in the troop. There's quite a lot of time to really get to know each other and everybody here makes a big effort to involve us in everything."

"It has been really interesting to be attached to the Recce troop as we seem to get chosen to do important operations so we really get to experience what it is like to be on the ground here. A lot of the time we go on partnered operations with the Afghan police and they seem very professional."

Trooper Thorley who is also based in Attal is not attached to the Recce troop but is based with one of B squadrons multiples. He said: "I am really enjoying it here. I am driving one of the Jackals so if I am not out on patrol I have to maintain my vehicle. It's pretty good fun and means I am quite busy and so time passes very quickly."

Tprs Brown, Chapman and Ord are attached to B Sqn, KRH but they are based in Patrol Base SPARTA with the Brigade Advisory Group training the Afghan Army by mentoring them on patrols and operations. They are all heavy weapon trained and so are glad to get out on patrol in the Jackals to act as top cover gunner. All are enjoying themselves, and Tpr Brown is looking forward to getting back home so he can start preparations for his wedding next year.

All LDs attached to the KRH wish to convey that their thoughts are with Tpr Royce and wish him well in his recovery.



Above: Tpr 'Keith Lard' Hoe. He's a dog lover



Below Left: Patrol Base CLIFTON. Tpr Barnett (second left) happy with a visit by Capt Bartholomew (centre) and Sgt Buchan (far right)

Below right: Maj Ward, Tprs Brown, Chapman and Ord





# 1st Battalion, The Grenadier Guards

## Afghan Local Police Mentor

Lieutenant 'Frankie' Vaughan

I suppose that you are all gagging to hear about how my training has gone with the ALP and expecting funny stories of the first time I handed them an AK47 whilst taking cover while they fired them, for probably not the first time. This though, I can not do. I can not unfortunately, and to my despair, give any stories at all. This is not due to secrecy but purely down to the fact that training has not started. After being postponed due to the poppy harvest we set a date to begin again. Needless to say we encountered more problems due to accommodation issues. This will all hopefully be ironed out soon, so I promise the next time my fingers are tapping away at the key board you will get the funny stories that you have all been longing for.

So you are probably wondering what I have been up to in the mean time, other then trying to build up an elite force of Local Police with a touch of Light Dragoon panache thrown in for free. After I finally got myself a flight back to PB Clifton, I thought I needed a bit of an afternoon off. I took myself down to the back of my accommodation, got the sun cream out put it on my chest arms, lay on my front fell asleep and guess what, that's right! the backs of my legs and my back got burned, it hurt, I complained, got told to man up, so I tried to...and failed. Not a great first day back and a lesson learnt.

All had been quiet for a few days so we resourceful and imaginative officers decided it was time to build a garden to allow ourselves some privacy. We sourced the HESCO ourselves (I know, can you believe it), we found pickets and wire, with our shirts off again and sun cream on, all over this time, we got to work. After an hour or so we had ourselves a lovely wall sectioning off an area, that had to be approved through the Company Sergeant Major of course, in which we now have a table, and plants growing.

Below: The view from the Sangar that 'Frankie' stags on from...for someone else



Above: The garden that 'Frankie' waters for someone else  
Below: The house that 'Frankie' built for someone else



Capt Hendrickson has made a lovely vegetable patch, with fresh Basil and Tomatoes sprouting nicely and two more little green houses of seeds ( I am not sure what they are) about to germinate. After my last article I was told I had upset the RSM (you did!), due to my AirCon comment. For this I want to apologise as I know he edits this. So, RSM I am sorry, this will only stand though if Frankie Vaughan goes forever! (Ed: I promise to probably never mention 'Frankie' again)

My 2 months have been a joy so far and I have learnt a lot about how the Afghans work. It is always great to catch up with the A Sqn boys when I am in Price, and to see friendly faces, and a thank you to 'Always Happy' Lt Ed Whitten for so kindly lending me his bed space whilst he was away on operations. I'm sorry I involuntary urinated in it as I have wet the bed since childhood (Ed: that's called *payback Frankie!*). Hopefully I will shortly be heading back to the 'Salad' (Green Zone) to catch more sun and go on some fun patrols east of the PB Line.



## 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment

Company Plans Officer

Lieutenant Henry Freeman

A third of the tour done here with B Coy, 1 Royal Anglians, and it has gone so quickly so far, as we continue the busy pace of life as we set the conditions to hand over responsibility for security to the ANSF. Although they like to work at a slightly slower pace, though this doesn't mean they do not have the competency or resolve to continue to keep the Insurgents at bay, more, rather wisely, that they don't like to over-exert themselves in the ever-increasing heat. Very sensible as it is getting bloody hot!

I must confess - that having put in the last Helmandi Dragoon that I had yet to be struck down by the dreaded D&V, it took a matter of days before I too went down. Not just to a small bug either, but a rather nasty gut infection – served me right for being smug.

Fortunately I was laid down whilst on a visit to Camp BASTION, which meant I was able to recover from my awful illness in the relative bliss and luxury that is enjoyed everyday by the likes of the Adjutant and the RSM, who I am sure I noticed on more than one occasion in the KFC queue as I struggled to hold my bowels together en route to the med centre to drop off the latest stool sample. (God will strike you down again Mr Freeman

On return to the Company there was an unsurprising lack of sympathy together with healthy banter (ish) but I was very fortunate to be relieved of as the butt of all jokes by a less fortunate Platoon Commander. His illness was so bad he needed to be airlifted by a United States Marine Corps 'Pedro' heli having been stretchered on attached to a drip just in his, probably rather dis-coloured & stinking, pants. Now normally when anyone is medevacced by a Pedro team they receive a medal - this time I believe it was denied. Purple Hearts not Brown hearts

The great news here is that there has been a rare sighting of a fellow Light Dragoon down this neck of the woods, and not just the one. Firstly a fellow Legionnaire by the name of Capt Carver arrived, looking especially pale having spent all his time to date in the air-conditioned luxury inside Lash. But he was ok 'roughing it' at the Patrol Base. Apparently he was here to assess the development of the Afghan Local Police, however it appeared that was just a pretence as really he just wanted his 'war photos' and from what I saw spent most of his time asking the Anglian boys to take photos of him in various poses with as many weapon systems he could get his hands on, looking really cool as he stared meaningfully into the distance. None-the-less it was fantastic to see a familiar face, and it wasn't long after Capt Carver had returned to his hotel that some more fellow Legionnaires arrived in the shape of Lt Clacy and Sgt Rix's Troop. What's more they have been staying here since and will be for the foreseeable.



**Teaching Arrest and Restraint techniques.  
Easy...Easy...Easy!!**

Tomorrow is Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May, or to those who will be in Hyde Park, London, - Cavalry Memorial Sunday. As we have a Troops worth here we will be conducting our own mini parade and of course taking the time to remember those Cavalrymen who have unfortunately lost their lives in the last year, as well as those Light Dragoons we will never forget, and our friends that have been recently injured. With the lack of Hyde Park – the HLS will do, with the lack of band we will have to humm Balaklava, but with the lack of suitable liquid with which to celebrate post-parade there, despairingly, is no substitute and we will have to wait until the upcoming R&R, which going on what the boys have been planning I worry for whichever town they choose to visit!



**Capt Carver and Lt Freeman playing soldiers**

# Key Dates for 2012

Date	Event	Location	Remarks
6 JUNE	D-DAY ANNIVERSARY		BATTLE HONOUR NW EUROPE '44
18 JUNE	WATERLOO ANNIVERSARY		BATTLE HONOUR
16 JULY	EMSDORF ANNIVERSARY		BATTLE HONOUR
23 SEPTEMBER	ASSAYE ANNIVERSARY		BATTLE HONOUR
10 OCT	H17 TOA	TFH	
25 OCTOBER	BALAKLAVA ANNIVERSARY	RBSM	BATTLE HONOUR
1 NOVEMBER	OFFICERS' DINNER	CAV & GUARDS	
8 NOVEMBER	FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE	WESTMINSTER ABBEY	
11 NOVEMBER	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY	RBSM & RECRUITING AREAS	ALL REMAIN IN RBSM
13-14 NOVEMBER	BARNSLEY PARADE	BARNSLEY	250 LD's MARCH OVERNIGHT 13th
15-16 NOVEMBER	NEWCASTLE PARADE	NEWCASTLE	250 LD's MARCH OVERNIGHT 15th
3-7 DECEMBER	HODSON'S HORSE	BOVINGTON	



## The following will celebrate their Birthday in June

### Gemini

### Cancer



TPR FOX	LCPL WILSON	SGT WOODS	WO2 STONE
SGT IDDON	LCPL MOLONEY	CAPT BASSETT	WO2 DOVE
TPR JULIEN	TPR BURT	SSGT FORD	CPL RYAN
TPR MIDDLETON	LCPL DOBLE	LCPL COLLINS	LCPL LITTLEWOOD
LCPL McMEIKEN	SSGT JOHNSON	LCPL CHEETHAM	SGT ALLEN
TPRM ROOS	TPR JORDAN		

## REGIMENTAL STEREOTYPES



After having a cracking dream about his pre-tour exploits sliding down the Kinger, which involved a reassuringly expensive magnum of champagne, his slag cousin Tara Bulmer-Corpington (TBC), and one last back rub at a soho massage parlour. Lt Jeremy Gooch (Gucci) is rudely awoken by Tpr Sproat - *'Boss.....Boss.....BOSS, you're on stag!'*. Gucci is brought back down from his over-privileged dream-state to, in his opinion, the morose reality, a SCREEN operation in the desert. So, with the image of TBC's delightful derriere evaporating in the midday heat he prepares to emerge from his litter ridden doss-bag.

Somewhat invigorated by the possibility of topping up the tan and more 'air time' on the Radio, Gucci struggles with and eventually opens the door of his Spartan. A wall of stink and clutter precedes him as he flops onto the desert floor in true spineless public schoolboy style. In homage to the Tp Ldr 'greats' of previous HERRICK tours Gucci has done away with the formalities of everyday dress and decided on the more practical baseball cap, gold rimmed aviators, Sqn vest (to maximize tannage) and trusty boat shoes. After a cursory check for his pistol in the foot of his doss bag Gucci sets out to find the stag wagon.

Not being entirely sure which vehicle the stag wagon is, or indeed the direction of enemy threat, Gucci stumbles like a pissed seaside donkey around the desert box under the pretense of checking the lads are doing their jobs correctly. Eventually he finds a rather irate Cpl Phillpots in the turret of M21.

Gucci tries really really hard to listen to the Hand Over Take Over. *'Did you get all that, Sir.....?'* asks Cpl Phillpots. *'Of course i did Philidoodle, don't you worry, the boss has got the helm!'*. And Cpl Phillpots leaves somewhat undaunted by the fact that he has left his and the Troop's safety in the hands of a certified inbred halfwit. Gucci settles in to his stag, blissfully unaware of when he will be relieved. He passes the time by rearranging himself into a comfier position. He eventually settles for a collapsible chair on the front decks- *'better field of view out here'* he retorts to the look of horror on his Tp Sgt's face.

And so he passes the next four hours wittering inanely on the radio, describing the non-changing battle picture in front of him, just varying the dialogue with a plethora of long words that he totes doesn't understand but knows the Sqn Ldr likes to hear. As Gucci applies the next layer of coconut butter, he reflects a little on life and decides it doesn't seem too tough. In six months he'll return home with a rocking tan and some bloody good photos to wow the knickers off TBC.

**Next month, 'Sgt Clansman BRF'**

# Picture Board



Anyone feeling frustrated yet?

I'm still laughing...this bloke doesn't have a clue what the sign says! But the impact is epic. Classic!



Cpl Lilico (?) and Abdul.. He bores us too Abdul!! And your hat is shaped better...and your cracks better, and you don't look like a Pterodactyl

Cpl Purvis keeps an eye out for IED ground sign..seen any Perv? ....'Er ..Nope!



# Picture Board *Continued ...*

If the windscreen washer doesn't work.....improvise with a size 11!



All in a days work for Cpl Dimbleby...where does he get the strength?



The Adjt finally gets his wish! Escape from Bastion

# Picture Board *Continued ...*



RSM taking the Adjutant to work again...and the Adjt reliving his youth!!

Sgt Rix asks the ANP to locate where all his mail and parcels are. They can't read Rixy because you teach them!



# Picture Board *Continued ...*



**Multi Tasking A Sqn style -  
Combined Overwatch and Wag-Bagging...Classic Recce**



**MUSTANG 20 Commanders**



**The plague returns after a 400 year remission. Thanks Mac!**



# Picture Board *Continued ...*



SSM Stone tries out his new arm-rest.  
Arm rest was later 9 Lined for BO inhalation



We made some lovely tea from this mint plant in the garden at DPHQ, although it did make us all a little giddy.....Peace Brother!



Cpl Cheetham swaps clothes with the AUP. It was Thursday ...and phone numbers were also swapped



Maj Colbeck and a Police Commander—The Lions of Gereshk....Meeoooooww (Cough, Cough) Rooooarrrr

# Picture Board *Continued ...*



**SQMS Grahame and SSM Stone take an easy ride to sniff the toilet tubes... uuugggh !!!! Check out the rear tyre!!!! Op MASSIVE is alive and well**



**They don't build Heli-chopters like they used to...they're miles better now!!**



**Pickfords of Afghanistan**



# Picture Board *Continued ...*



The future meeting the present. Helmandi children happily chat to a Light Dragoon soldier

All that 'Snooting' and 'Grinding On' makes Tpr Blacklock a very tired boy....I think someone will be joining the 'Turtle Club' on his return to Robertson Barracks. You have 4 months to comply.



## Picture Board *Continued ...*



### Room Clearance Drills - DRILL No 1 THE CRAB

Whilst conducting room clearance drills and when a room is in darkness, it is best practice to outstretch ones arms holding torch and pistol far apart ensuring there is an extreme 'claw like spreadage'. Once outstretched, turn on torch for diversionary dazzle effect whilst pulling the trigger using the other outstretched arm. In effect, this will dazzle and confuse any would be assailant with a combination of exploding munitions and bright white light.

Should any assailant be in a position to return fire then he will aim for the muzzle flash or light and not you...who is placed safely in the middle. **DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME AS IT WILL KILL YOU** or at least blow your hands clean off!

This drill was executed by SEAL Team 6 on bin Laden (apparently) and relayed by A SSM (definitely)



Above: BRF insertion  
Right: Major Dalby-Welsh leads the BRF on operations

# Picture Board *Continued ...*



Tpr Oldham the hippy happy tree hugger....Now you see me!



IED's and other components go sky high



SSgt 'Goldie Locks' Simpson takes a back...on someone else's pit!

LCpl Dunleavy relaxing with local Afghan kiddies. They now think we deploy ISAF combat kids



# Picture Board *Continued ...*



**Another IED Cache denied**



**Tpr Hodson and LCpl Reddin having a pose off**



**SSgt Young guards her Heli-chopter**

# Adjts Weapon handling page



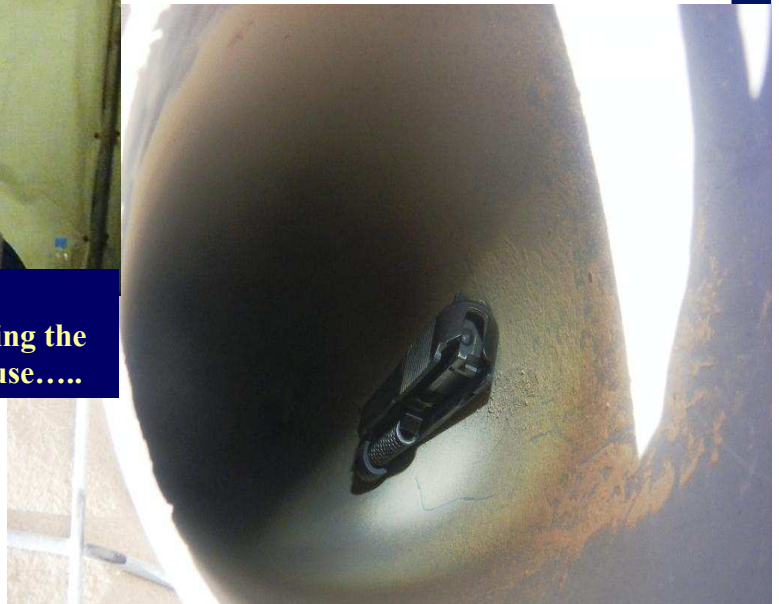
**Ensure weapon is holstered correctly**



**LOAD!**



**'READY!... Watch and Shoot'.....'STOPPAGE!'...and on checking the weapon you find it has failed to fire because.....**



**You inadvertently launched the Top Slide of your pistol down the Desert Rose of the Loading Bay because???? All info supplied by Sgt Buchan**

## CAV MEM IN THE SANDS

KRH BG hosted a Cavalry Memorial church service followed by an alternative lunch under cam nets in MOB Lashkar Gah on 20 May to coincide with Cav Mem in Hyde Park. The LDs of the ISTAR Group were invited to make it a truly 'combined cavalry' event. KRH had organised the event with suitably understated style and the lunch was resplendent with oil paintings from the mess in Tidworth carefully reproduced by Geo, complete with coffee stained frames and a plasticine centrepiece of 'George & the Dragon' replicating the statue in Hyde Park (complete with LD capbadge):



George and Dragon with LD Sabretache!

The LDs at B Sqn in ATTAL also had an alternative CavMem, and they tucked into beef wellington over lunch. It is a far cry from the usual venue of the Paxton's Head – but that can wait until next year. In forthcoming events at MOB LKG the KRH will again host the LDs to a Diamond Jubilee celebration. The plan at the moment is to have a BBQ complete with home made bunting, and some musical accompaniment provided by the KRH BSM playing the ukulele and a rock / blues band provided by the KRH HQ Sqn SQMS and an attached Yeoman Sgt 'Tex' Houston. Who needs a CSE show when you're attached to the KRH.

And finally, Major Milson and his BTE conducted a Cavalry Memorial Pde in Camp BASTION to coincide with the Hyde Park event. It was a fitting day to pay respects to our fallen forbearers which included a parade at the current Vigil Site followed by a BBQ, horse-racing, volleyball and finally a 'DAY OFF!'...something unheard of



Maj Ward, Capt Carver, CO

for the last 2 months!!



'Thunderbirds are go!! F-A-B'  
CO LD, CO KRH



BTE BBQ - Cavalry Memorial Day

