

NEWSLETTER



**THE
ROYAL
YORKSHIRE
REGIMENT.**

SUMMER 2023

FOREWORD.

By Maj Gen Z Stenning OBE

As your very proud Colonel, what an eventful period we have just witnessed for our regiment. From Operation Golden Orb to our new-found Royal status, there are so many achievements and aspects for me to applaud in this introductory section. I would note that the reputation of the regiment continues undiminished and your success in experimentation and in embracing changes in your operational roles and readiness, are a credit to you all. During my recent visit to the Great Yorkshire Show it was clear from the feedback I received that the Royal status granted on 5th April has really hit home in our home county.

We now need to build on this, using the Branding and Marketing work delivered by WPA Pinfold with a concerted programme of targeted communications and Community Engagement. Although we have a

centralised system of regimental communications, it is the responsibility of every one of us to champion our name loudly and clearly at every available opportunity. The Regimental Board has endorsed changes in uniform that enable us to be readily identified as Royal; as the only County-named Regiment remaining in the British Army – it's a strong message!



I have been truly impressed and humbled by the amount of positivity over the last 6 months, but I'm also conscious that an element of uncertainty remains over the future of 2 R YORKS. Please be assured that the Regimental Board will do all that it can to make the transition to the new

structure and the subsequent move to Warminster next year as smooth and efficient as we are able.

To close, I send my best wishes to you all and particularly to those in 1 R YORKS who are deployed overseas on operations; to 4 R YORKS, I say enjoy Ex Northern Strike in the USA and to 2 R YORKS, enjoy the boxing finals and the August Experimentation in USA. I will look forward to reading your stories in the Autumn edition of the *Journal*.

'Fortune Favours The Brave'

CONGRATULATIONS.

From the Regimental family to Brigadier Sam Humphris, promoted to Major General and moving from Head of Strategy, Chief of Defence People in MoD Main Building to be the Director of personnel in HQ Army.



1ST BATTALION.

By Lt Col Tim Exton

As the summer holidays loom into view, the 1st Battalion can look forward to a fantastic programme for the remainder of 2023 that holds some tremendously exciting prospects. The soldiers of 1 R YORKS are committed to operational outputs on a broad front for the rest of this year. Burma Company are deployed on Op SHADER in Iraq currently, and are doing a superb job as part of the coalition forces in Erbil. Corunna Company will take over from them in September, and Foxhound crews from Alma Company are held at readiness and prepared to join NATO's strategic reserve in Kosovo. Meanwhile, the Battalion Headquarters, Alma Company and Quebec Company will be held at extremely high readiness as one of the United Kingdom Standby Battalions. Quebec Company soldiers will also get the opportunity to join our 4th Battalion on exercise in the United States, and 4 SCOTS in Morocco later this Autumn. Looking ahead, 2024 holds just as much in store, and crucially will bring the entire Battalion together with a singular purpose: first, for an extended deployment to Oman on Ex DESERT KHANJAR starting in January; and then onto the Battalion's first Battlegroup validation in over six years on Ex WESSEX STORM in June.

The battalion can also reflect upon a very successful first half of 2023, that has seen the Rifle Companies successfully complete their conversion to Light Mechanised infantry, and the support weapons platoons get to grips with their new Jackal vehicles and heavy weapons. We have also continued to enjoy the opportunities to engage with our community across the county, supporting the Armed Forces Day events in Wakefield and Halifax



■ Handover Lt Col Ed Lyons and Lt Col Tim Exton

and at the Great Yorkshire Show. On the sporting front, the battalion has continued to enjoy a remarkable array of success, winning the Army Rugby Union Premiership Shield and becoming the Champion Unit at the Army Boxing Championships. The cricket team continues to enjoy dazzling success this season and is looking set to win the Northern League and secure a place in the Army finals once again.

As ever, the summer season brings a flurry of changes in the personalities across the Battalion. I say farewell as CO, and welcome in Lt Col Ed Lyons and WO1 (RSM) Senior who

take over the helm of the Battalion. Also departing are Maj Burgess (OC Alma Coy), Maj Maunders (OC HQ Coy), Capt Grundy, Capt Tankard, WO2 (AQMS) Emery and WO2 (RQMS) Chappell, who promotes to WO1 (RSM). CSgts Webb and Blondin head off to instruct at IBS and

CAMS respectively, and Sgts Norris and Greathead move to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on promotion as CSgt instructors. The 1st Battalion wishes them all every success. We welcome in Maj Berry (OC Alma Coy), Maj Leyshon (OC HQ Coy), Maj Sweeney (our RMO), Capt Morris as Ops Officer, 2Lt Wigley, WO2 (RQMS) Willis, WO2 (RQMS) Dyson and WO2 (AQMS) Bibby. We also continue to welcome a steady flow of recruits into the battalion from the Infantry Training Centre, who join an incredibly strong team and have much to look forward to from the very beginning of their careers in the Regiment.



2ND BATTALION.

By Lt Col Mike Wade-Smith

Relecting on the last six months I observe how the Battalion has reinforced the qualities of the Regiment; brave, decisive, relentless, and compassionate. It has been another busy period deployed across the UK in and enjoying successes on the sports field, supporting the King's Coronation and on major exercises. 2 R YORKS remains at the forefront of Army change and supporting the pursuit of advantage across a plethora of future capabilities and tactics. Out Think – Out Fight.

Corunna Company Group performed outstandingly well on Ex WESSEX STORM with our Union Division partner 1 R IRISH. Displaying true Yorkshire grit and determination, the team succeeded in demonstrating the future lethality of the PHALANX Combat Team. Shortening the Kill Chain – sensing, deciding, and effecting quicker, they were more lethal, more manoeuvrable, and more survivable.

Fighters from across the Battalion have been training hard over the past term to prepare for the inter-company boxing night. The boxing night is a headline event for the Battalion to build cohesion and esprit de corps whilst supporting their brothers and sisters giving their all in the ring. The importance of competitive sport in the military must not be underestimated. It forms a significant part of how this Battalion builds and maintains its ethos and values. The courage to commit oneself to the point of no return, the highest levels of self-discipline, teamwork, humour in the face of adversity and the willingness to bring on all team members to achieve the same 'match fit' standards. Finally, the loyalty to one's own team while retaining respect for one's adversary. All of these qualities underpin the fighters

and what it means to serve in the Royal Yorkshire Regiment.

PROJECT VERTUO

July 2023 saw Combat Team 2 (CT2) from Burma Coy, support the Minister for Armed Forces in launching the Defence Command Paper Refresh (DCPR) 2023 on Lulworth Ranges in Dorset. The Exercise was designed to show how Britain intends to fight and win in an increasingly contested and volatile world.

Combat Team 2 were charged with delivering the final assault to demonstrate combined arms integration whilst utilising the latest technology from the 'Human Machine Teaming Project'. This enhanced force package included using Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS – drones) to support locating the enemy, Uncrewed Ground Vehicles (UGV) with ISR, CASEVAC and armed capabilities (including a 50-Calibre machine gun) to support the close fight, electric bikes and MRAZR to increase reach and Enhanced Dismounted Situational Awareness (EDSA) systems to assist commanders' decision making at all levels. The new equipment which 2 R YORKS are charged with developing is genuinely game changing, allowing the Next



Generation Combat Team of the Army to improve lethality for the Army.

Supporting CT2 were AJAX ground reconnaissance vehicles, Challenger 2 Main Battle Tanks, Wolfram, Boxer, Apache helicopters and a F35 fighter jet. This presented the soldiers of Burma with the opportunity to better understand the systems which will support them in the future as the Army continues mobilise and modernise – led by the team at 2 R YORKS!

The Battalion has worked hard, against uncertainty, but supported strengthening the outstanding reputation that The Royal Yorkshire Regiment already holds. We have optimised the opportunities to gain advantage and gain alliances – with allies and industry. This has delivered and bought recognition from our US and European Allies, through CGS's RUSI speech, and through the DCPR.

But change is essential and uncertainty must be managed. 2 R YORKS remain committed to our task and delivering the capabilities we deserve for the future.

'Fortune Favours the Brave'



4TH BATTALION.

By Lt Col Richard Hill

It has been a great start to the Summer for the 4th Battalion and we have taken advantage of the good weather to really get stuck in. The main effort for the Battalion is recruiting: there is a great opportunity to grow our numbers, especially in light of the greater emphasis being placed on the Army Reserve. The Battalion's message to all our soldiers is to get out there and persuade friends, family, colleagues and acquaintances to sign up. And if anyone reading this is interested in the Army Reserve or knows someone who might, then please spread the word.

We conducted our Patrol Competition in April, which saw the teams rotate through a series of stands including CBRN, battlefield casualty drills, comms, bayonet fighting, a section attack and finished with the assault course. It was a great weekend and check your social media feed for footage of the bayonet range if you haven't seen it already. Quebec Coy came out on top, but a great effort by all. Our other training events have been a live-fire weekend in May and lots of work in preparation for our forthcoming deployment to the USA on Ex NORTHERN STRIKE. This has included a lot of Fighting in Woods and Forests as the entire training area in Camp Grayling, Michigan is forest. This deployment is the highlight of the year and the team are well prepared and really looking forward to it.

Our relationship with the New York National Guard was boosted by a visit from their command team in April. Not only did they get to observe the Patrol Competition (they declined the opportunity to do the assault course!), but they received a series of briefs on the Bn and 19 Brigade. They also had fun, visiting RHQ, York Minster, climbing



■ With the New York National Guard on the Patrol Competition

Whernside and taking part in a Ryder Cup Golf competition. A really good visit that sets us up for Ex NORTHERN STRIKE.

On the sporting side we have had some mixed success so far this summer, losing our annual cricket match with 4 LANCS by a respectably narrow margin, but putting in a really good performance in the Race The Sun in York, coming fifth out of 20 teams (most of whom were Regular Major units). The Bn's athletic prowess was best demonstrated by winning the blue-ribbon event at the Bradford Dragon Boat Races in June, with a team led by Corunna Coy (and having had no specific training) besting all-comers in the Lord Mayor's race.

The engagements have been thick and fast with all companies heavily committed throughout the summer and in particular over the Armed Forces Day period. As ever the Band are a major draw and they have been able to mix events in Yorkshire with a bit of travel having recently been supporting British Forces Cyprus and more recently in the Netherlands at the Nijmegen Marches.

Altogether a great summer so far, now bring on Ex NORTHERN STRIKE!



■ Bradford Dragon Boat Champions



A VIEW FROM RHQ.

By Lt Col David O'Kelly



The Regimental Medal 2023 – at the Regimental Cross Brief on 24th May, the Deputy Colonel of the Regiment Brigadier Colthup presented the Regimental Medal to WO2 Willis from the 1st Battalion.

As an instructor at IBS, WO2 Willis was a regimental ambassador singled out for his impact on a generation of officers by winning the top instructor award. His energy was vital on Op PITTING, representing the Regiment on an international level. And at Company level he knows his people intimately; he is a role model for all.

There is no doubting WO2 Willis' selflessness. He sacrifices much, and in doing so enhances the reputation of the Company, Battalion and Regiment to all he meets.

York Races The early summer was marked by a highly successful day at the races in York. We hosted the largest attendance since before COVID and were treated to an excellent day's racing. Those who were lucky or clever enough to back Quantum Impact had a particularly good day! The event continues to grow in popularity with guests coming from right across the regimental family.

AFD Armed Forces Day (or is it Armed Forces Month these days?) was a quieter affair compared to last year. The Regiment was formally represented in Scarborough, Wakefield, Halifax and



Beverley, though there was a presence at many towns and cities across the region.

GYS The Great Yorkshire Show ran from 11–14 Jul. The 1st Battalion were present throughout displaying a Foxhound and a number of current different weapon systems. Judging by the queues, this was a popular attraction for young and old. The Association also had a stand in the Military Village. The Yorkshire Agricultural Society once again made a presentation to the 'Best Soldier in the 1st Battalion'. This year that was Pte Damien McDonald from Corunna Company. He and his wife were guests of YAS at the Show and he was presented the trophy and a personal gift by the President, Mr Simon Theakston DL.

On the Wednesday evening, in association with the RFCA for Yorkshire & The Humber, the Regiment hosted

a Cocktail Party and Beating Retreat in the Pavilions. The 175 guests from across the County were welcomed by the Colonel of the Regiment Maj Gen Stenning and the Chairman of the RFCA, Lt Col Rhodes. The Regimental Band entertained the audience with a musical programme before being joined by the Corps of Drums of the 1st Battalion for a short 'Beating' followed by Sunset.

Remembrance The Autumn programme will be busy again with the Regimental Remembrance weekend 03–04 Nov. This will include as usual the Officers' Dinner in York on the Friday night and the annual Service of Remembrance in the Regimental Chapel on Saturday morning. The following weekend will see a contingent of the Association attend the Cenotaph in London.

2024 Planning is already underway for two major regimental events in 2024 – a Regimental Gala Dinner in the Guildhall in York on 14 Mar and the 80th Anniversary Commemorations of D Day 07–09 Jun in France. Warning Orders and Instructions will be sent out on both these events in the near future and details will also appear on the website and in the Autumn edition of the *Journal*.

BEST SOLDIER.

At this year's Great Yorkshire Show, Pte Damien McDonald, a soldier from 1st Battalion described as "a beacon of excellence", was named as 'Best Soldier'.

The Yorkshire Agricultural Society Award is made annually to member of the Royal Yorkshire Regiment, with a presentation in the Main Ring. Pte Damien McDonald from Rotherham was rewarded for his excellence during Corunna Company's conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry and preparation for Op SHADER.



AREA HQ & RYRA.

By Maj Mick Lynch

The Association continues to support our veterans both while in custody and following release, in



■ Maj Mick Lynch

collaboration with Care After Combat. The RYRA recently supported the Care After Combat fund raiser bike night at the Castle Café, Withernsea; the night consisted of a charity auction, sale of Care After Combat merchandise and several very generous donations which resulted in a total of almost £2,500 raised for this great charity. The RYRA has also answered the call to directly support the charity by signing up as volunteer mentors. Five members of the Regimental Family are awaiting training and DBS checks and will then be directly involved in prison forums, prison visits and supporting veterans after release from custody.

Benevolence requests continue to be received, and in the most part funded, for the entire Regimental Family – the majority of cases relate to our veterans but not exclusively and we have

recently funded a number of flights to Fiji to enable members of both the 1st and 2nd Battalions to attend family funerals. The funding of benevolence cases would not be possible without the contribution from serving soldiers through the One Days Pay Scheme and I urge anyone not already signed up to the scheme to make this a priority – you never know when you may need support yourself.

Our activity based branches continue to thrive; the Millennium Branch, the Fishing Branch and the Riders Branch – forthcoming events include the Mission Motorsport day at Croft Circuit on 22 Aug (which is a free event open to all serving soldiers and veterans, whether you are a member of the Association Branches or not), a fishing match at the Land of Nod on 13 Aug and Ride to the Wall at the National Memorial Arboretum on 7 Oct. The geographical branches have also been busy supporting our home towns during the Armed Forces Day celebrations and Middlesbrough Branch also managed to run a black tie Coronation Dinner on the 6 May 23. We will also have a marching

contingent taking part in the London Cenotaph Parade on 12 Nov 23.

If you want to get involved with the RYRA but have not yet registered your details, either follow this [link](#) or scan the QR Code below – we will then keep you updated with news and upcoming events, you can also follow us on [Facebook](#). We will hold the Annual General Meeting in March 2024 and all are welcome to join us in York for the meeting and lunch, details will follow towards the end of this year. You can contact the Chair of the Association direct via YRACHair@yorkshireregiment.com (note that e-mail addresses have not yet changed to reflect our Royal status).

Royal Yorkshire Regiment Association
Contact Details Registration Form

