

The YORKSHIRE Regiment



FORTUNE FAVOURS THE BRAVE

WINTER 2020

A busy year for the Regiment

At the recent regimental Board and Trustee meetings, the overall view was that the Regiment has had another busy, challenging, and successful year in what has been the most extraordinary of times. We have reinforced our reputation for professional excellence in many areas, most notably on UK Ops and MACA tasks (helping local authorities with flooding in Yorkshire, and running COVID testing sites across the region and in Liverpool). The Regiment's standing in the Army as a top-tier infantry regiment is assured. Looking ahead, the Regular battalions are well positioned, and indeed leading the way, in both mechanised and light Infantry roles. 4YORKS emphatically continues to demonstrate the flexibility and utility of the Reserve.

In recruiting, the King's Division is on track to load 100% to training this year; this will mean about 70 new soldiers to both Regular battalions by the spring of next year; 4YORKS are also recruiting very successfully, with a similar number waiting to join the ranks. The Regiment is fully recruited for officers, both Regular and Reserve.

RHQ continues to pull its weight in other areas, with significantly increased digital engagement (in lieu of physical options), and the growth of our regimental Association and success in employment opportunities for our people. The latter led directly to the YRA being recognised nationally for their collaborative work with SSGC which won Security Partnering



Initiative of the Year. With RHQ nominated for 'The Public Service Award' at the Civil Service Awards, we are ending the year

on a high, and a full programme of events is planned for 2021 – let's hope they can all take place!



■ Exchange of Honorary Colours

1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment



■ 1 YORKKS arrival at Alma Barracks, Catterick

The final 6 months of 2020, due to the continued hurdle of COVID-19 has been fraught with uncertainty, pressure and certainly a fair degree of frustration. 1 YORKKS has responded to this with all the humour, determination and professionalism expected of Yorkshire Regiment soldiers. 1 YORKKS emerged from the first national lockdown with a better understanding of the 'new normal' and with a new licence to operate. It was stirring to see the Junior Commanders and soldiers understanding the problem and adapting their behaviour and routine to overcome it.

The Unit move to Catterick has been the big item on the agenda, executing a plan that had been 12 months in the making, having been delayed from the summer. Leaving Warminster after 17 years, a place that is near and dear to our hearts, was a daunting but not insurmountable challenge. At the time of writing we have been set in Catterick for just over a week and rediscovering the roots that the Regiment grew from. A welcome return to God's own County.

To add some complexity to the Unit move and at extreme short notice, 1 YORKKS were mobilised and deployed to assist with the Community Testing pilot in Liverpool. Given 3 days' notice from force generation to activation, the Bn rose to the challenge readily. With elements from 4 Regt RA in support, 1 YORKKS were tasked with providing the capability to test

the residents of Liverpool with the Lateral Flow Device (LFD). Very quickly and after some training on the testing process, the troops deployed into the city. Quickly establishing and building the relationships with the local authority is something that the team has excelled at, using their 'Yorkshire charm' to great effect. The task has been a success and seen Liverpool move from lockdown into a Tier 2 region. The practices and professionalism displayed by 1 YORKKS as the first Unit to deploy into Liverpool, has created the foundations for the operating procedures of all future Community Testing activity across the country.

Looking ahead, Alma Coy are preparing to battle against the MERCIANS, by providing the role of opposing forces as they complete their preparations to deploy to Estonia on Op CABRIT. The rest of the Bn will continue to prepare for Task Force HANNIBAL, providing the opposition for the validation exercise for the 5 Rifles and KRH Battlegroup in lieu of BATUS this year. We close down for Christmas with a change of Commanding Officers and wish all a good festive season and a Happy New Year.



2nd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment – Arrival in Cyprus

It sounds like an exaggeration, but 2 YORKS has delivered a Defence-first. A complete overseas unit move during the current global pandemic. With the anticipated summer move from Catterick to Cyprus delayed until November, the Battalion and its families are now established in Episkopi as one of two Resident Infantry Battalions.

The resilience of soldier and family alike has been extraordinary, dealing with multiple COVID tests, extended periods of isolation and quarantine, and all without their belongings. While the Army concerns itself with the increasing 'domestication' of its formations in the UK, 2 YORKS has underscored its expeditionary mindset.

Within days of arriving in Cyprus, Quebec Company were on operations in the Sovereign Base Area providing security to RAF Akrotiri and surrounding strategic sites. For many, this has provided a welcome change of scenery with patrols along the coastline in temperatures in excess of 24°C. Operating in a Joint, multi-agency and multinational environment, Quebec have impressed from the outset. Their quietly professional and understated manner has been exemplary.

The other key Cyprus commitment is the Regional Standby Battalion. Providing Defence with an acclimatised and



versatile light-role capability held at very high readiness, optimised for regional crisis response, Burma Company are now on point and ready to respond as necessary. To achieve that, Burma's acclimatisation programme has seen long and frequent familiarisation with the steep and unforgiving terrain that surrounds Episkopi. That hardened edge that light-role battalions pride themselves on – blunted for many during COVID lockdown – is rapidly returning.

The other distinct advantage of serving in Cyprus is the unity it brings to the Battalion and its families, even during COVID. Split during its recent tour to Afghanistan and then on return due to COVID, the Battalion held its first parade in

nearly 18 months in Happy Valley to present awards and promotions. Celebrating with a BBQ in the winter sun under palm trees made for a memorable occasion.

Looking ahead, 2 YORKS has an exciting forecast. In March, Corunna Company deploy on a major exercise to Morocco. In April, the Battalion will start a 3-year capability development programme as the Army's first and only Enhanced Light Force Battalion. As one of the Army's four 'sunrise' capabilities underpinning its Integrated Review proposition, 2 YORKS will receive a complete overhaul of weapons, sighting systems, robotics, unmanned aerial systems and communications.



4th Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment – Agile and Ready for Anything

After a remarkable start to the year, how we have carried that on for the remainder of the year is the measure of our people. From the wilderness and trails of Kenya to adventure training weekends at Leconfield, there have been many successes for the battalion. The emphasis has been and will continue to be, on back to basics and, enhancing our collective capability.

With that in mind and to broaden communication skills, CIS platoon kicked off a series of Basic Radio User (BRU) Cadres to enable personnel to be eligible and appropriately qualified to attend the PJNCO cadre, which is one element of Ex YORKSHIRE STRIKE, investing in our future leaders and striving for success – surely a teaser for 2021. Other training elements being a Range Management course and Infantry Platoon Radio Operators (IPRO) and driving conversions.

October's field training weekend – Ex YORKSHIRE ATTACK, incorporated a number of low-level battle lessons with the principles of attack, and developing a



■ Wreath laying in Richmond by Quebec Coy, one of 28 locations visited prior to Remembrance Sunday.



■ Ex Yorkshire Strike – CIS Platoon, discovering rain makes wearing these a lot worse!

greater understanding of tactics in offensive operations. All wrapped in challenging conditions which presented the perfect setting to increase war fighting capability and ably demonstrating the motivated fighting spirit and willingness across the Battalion.

We believe success breeds success, and this has been evident with recruitment as we continue to see new faces. This autumn has seen over 30 new personnel at the ARCs being attested, which is outstanding. The Battalion's junior instructors also supported Basic Training Alpha and Bravo courses hosted by ATU(N) at Strensall and Altcar, contributing 225 new soldiers into the Army Reserve. Our new recruits have done well and thanks to the foresight of our recruiters, our future infantry soldiers will be at the head of the line when their trade training courses start at ITC Catterick in 2021.

The Regimental Band may not have seen as many physical stages as normal, but they have certainly elevated their virtual stages somewhat; with regular appearances on the BBC and Good Morning Britain. With creativity being their middle name, they have led the way on

several items, notably the Regimental Remembrance and Armistice commemorations. They also provided the musical backdrop to the Battalion's effort to get out and commemorate our fallen across Yorkshire at 28 locations. The mammoth effort to coordinate, capture and produce videos to mark both days was due to the RSM, and that planning effort has set the mould for our Christmas weekend as we prepare to celebrate with a hybrid virtual and physical approach to ensure we can accommodate for all and adhere to the current restrictions.

Looking ahead, plans continue to be made, events timetabled, and a big push made to encourage a safe return to training. Protecting our people and their families has been at the forefront of everything we have done this autumn/winter period. All the training we have completed during the past few months has been to hone those fundamental skills of soldiering and finesse our infantry fighting ability. As we turn the page on 2020, we will undoubtedly grow and learn on the lessons and successes we have had. So what? 2021 will bring even bigger and better challenges....

A Christmas message from the Chairman of the YRA



■ Remembrance at a COVID Test Site operated by our veterans.

It has been without doubt one of the most turbulent years in our lifetime, but we can now see light at the end of the tunnel and hopefully 2021 will see a return to some form of normality. We would like to say a heartfelt thank you for all the kind deeds that you have

done for each other, and for the voluntary work you have taken part in, whether it has been for the good and benefit of each other, the NHS, or the country as a whole.

During the year we have encountered every compassionate or welfare request

imaginable and between us, we have stepped forward and found solutions in very quick time. As an association, you should all be very proud of what you have achieved, and I know the recipients of your kindness are all extremely grateful.

Hundreds of our veterans are still working in the NHS COVID Test Centres throughout Yorkshire and the North-East. They work long days, but with a great sense of pride and satisfaction. Yes, we all know the public like to complain now and then, but our veteran's resilience is exceptional. We thank them all for coming forward from day one, often offering to work without pay.

Many of you have helped homeless veterans, donated money, given up your time, and even got your families to assist. It has been truly amazing and yet not surprising. As your Chairman and Secretary, me and Charlie Helmn could not wish to be involved with a more caring group of people. Thank you so much and we are sure that our veteran community and their families are as appreciative of all your efforts as we are. We wish you all a great Christmas and look forward to meeting in 2021.

Regimental fundraising

It's been a while since we pushed the idea of fundraising, but not unsurprisingly, we have been receiving a steadily increasing number of cries for help from all corners of the regimental family. Our reaction has

been agile and swift, from general needs cash, to full support cases, partnered by ABF, RBL and SSAFA. The Regimental Benevolence Committee pays out over £100,000 annually, but needs more funds to help those in

need and to allow the YRA to provide an immediate response. If you have a fundraising idea, or have the opportunity to promote our own regimental charity, then please get in contact with RHQ.

Help us to raise £1000 by Christmas – <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stuart-kendell>



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