

# 1st Battalion The Royal Welsh

Newsletter  
Autumn 2010



## Honours and Awards from H11

On the 24 September the Operational Honours and Awards were announced for Op HERRICK 11 in Afghanistan. The Battalion received a high number of gallantry awards including: Military Crosses for Corporals Sale and Williams 69, Mention in Dispatches for Lieutenant Healy, Colour Sergeant Dundon and Corporal George, and Joint Commander's Commendations for Lieutenant Libbey, Company Sergeant Major Leyshon, Sergeant Jones 65, Corporal Jones 49, Lance Corporal Vincent and Fusilier McQuillen. Finally, in recognition of the entire Battlegroup's outstanding contribution to the campaign, I have been hugely privileged to be awarded the OBE. My congratulations to all those who have been recognised for their extraordinary courage and leadership in the face of the enemy.

## From the Commanding Officer...

It is almost six months since the 1st Battalion returned from Afghanistan. In June and July we enjoyed a period of recuperation which allowed us to redress the work-life balance. The majority of the Battalion undertook adventure training in a wide variety of activities, including offshore sailing, multi-activity packages and free fall parachuting in Germany. A welcome extended summer leave was enjoyed by all members of the Battalion who returned to work in early September.

We have now entered the campaign training cycle which starts with the Hybrid Foundation Training (HFT) period. This refocuses the Battalion on getting right back to basics training from individual skills up to Company Group manoeuvre. This will culminate with Exercise Askari Thunder, a two month deployment to Kenya in April next year. Part of this process will see the whole Battalion converting to the latest upgrade of our Bowman communications system and command post exercises for Battlegroup Headquarters.

The Battalion is producing a photographic record of the tour in a 100 page book entitled *Afghan Dragon*. The book will be available from 1 November at a discount price £10 to members of the Regiment from the 1st Battalion PRI.



11 soldiers from the 1st Battalion The Royal Welsh received honours and awards for their actions on Op Herrick 11.

Presentations of a wide variety of material collected in Afghanistan have also been made to the Regimental Museums and everyone will be able to see updated exhibitions which will mark a new chapter in the Regiment's history.

The Battalion has been extremely fortunate to have materials donated for a memorial to be built by our Assault Pioneers outside the Dale Camp. The memorial is not just for those killed in Afghanistan but for all members of the Battalion killed on operations since 1945. A service of dedication will be held at 1100 hrs on the 11 November 2010 and all members of the Regiment are welcome to attend.

1 Royal Welsh has now joined 12 Mechanized Brigade which has its headquarters in Bulford, Wiltshire. The Battalion has made its mark in the new Brigade with Second Lieutenant Alex Clarke winning Best Shot at the Brigade Skill at Arms meeting. The Sniper Platoon achieved equal 1st, equal 3rd and 4th places in the Brigade Sniper concentration and the Mortar Platoon came top of the Brigade Mortar concentration. In early October two teams from the Battalion entered the Cambrian March Patrols exercise, the first time the Battalion has entered since 1977! Both teams achieved a silver medal in this highly demanding competition. My congratulations to all those who have distinguished themselves and the Battalion in a variety of military competitions.





**The 1st Battalion The Royal Welsh presents articles collected in Afghanistan to its Regimental Museums.**

In late September a group of officers and soldiers visited France on Exercise Normandy Dragon a Battlefield Study. The group visited Normandy, focusing on 158 (Royal Welch) Brigade's attack at Evrecy. The group then moved to Ypres to study 1 RWF's gallant defensive operations during 1st Ypres in 1914 and the 38th (Welsh) Divisions attack on Pilkhem Ridge. Finally, on our return home, we studied 1 RWF's desperate action at St Venant in defence of the Dunkirk perimeter in May 1940. Useful comparisons were drawn with contemporary operations and a good deal was learned about the actions of all our antecedent Regiments.

## Battlefield Study

**Between 26 and 30 September the Commanding Officer led a party from the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion on a Battlefield Study Tour to Normandy and Ypres.** Travelling by people carrier and Eurotunnel, the group of sixteen officers and Non Commissioned Officer's arrived in Bayeux on the night of Sunday 26. Monday 27 was spent at Omaha Beach and St-Mere-Eglise, studying the manoeuvre aspects of the Normandy Landings, and the German defence. Tuesday 28 was spent in the town of Evrecy, examining the actions of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers (RWF) during the Normandy campaign – where we were also hosted by the town's mayor. After travelling to Belgium the night before, the group spent Wednesday 29 being shown around the RWF positions in the First and Third battles of Ypres by Major (Retired) Huw Rodge and his wife Jill; it proved to be a day full of surprises, not least in seeing the hitherto unsuspected depth of feeling which the locals still have for those who fought there so long ago. The final morning of Thursday 30 was spent examining the actions of 1 RWF in St Venant as part of the Dunkirk evacuation, before returning to Chester that night.

The Battalion has received the Freedoms of Llandudno, Caerphilly and Blackwood on behalf of the Regiment. Llandudno saw the Battalion march down the promenade, retracing the steps on the 38th (Welsh) Division when they paraded for Prime Minister David Lloyd-George before deploying to France in 1915. Royal Welshmen received an outstanding welcome in all three towns demonstrating yet again the wonderful level of support the Regiment enjoys in the Principality. All members of the Battalion greatly appreciate this continuing support.

Lieutenant Colonel Nick Lock OBE  
Commanding Officer 1st Battalion The Royal Welsh  
(Royal Welch Fusiliers)

Throughout the week we were able to look at offensive, defensive and delay actions, successful and unsuccessful, as well as the actions of our antecedent regiment during the trench-bound stalemate of WW1.

Captain Andrew Fox  
Second-in-Command, B Company



**Officers and NCOs at the Royal Welsh Fusiliers memorial in St Venant, Normandy.**





## Picking up the pace after a well-earned break

Since the last newsletter in June, time has flashed by. Alpha Company has enjoyed a well earned period of rest with the Company enjoying in excess of 7 weeks leave, and members have taken part in a number of adventurous training activities at home in the UK and abroad. A busy programme of public events then marked the end of what has been a memorable and successful operational tour. The Royal Welsh have been awarded the Freedom of Caerphilly and Blackwood, and A Company took part in the parade to represent this occasion. Thousands of County Borough residents lined the streets of both town centres and cheered on the Regiment as the soldiers marched by. Councillor Lindsay Whittle said, "It was overwhelming to see so many of the County Borough's residents coming out in force to show their support to the brave men and women of The Royal Welsh. We were delighted to confer this special honour on the regiment, and our residents showing the troops how highly thought of they are in Caerphilly county borough really helped to make the day a truly unforgettable one for all concerned."



**A Company attend a ceremony in Caerphilly after the Regiment are awarded the Freedom of Caerphilly and Blackwood.**

The Battalion has now moved from 11 Light Brigade to 12 Mechanised Brigade which in turn has influenced the training the Company has been undertaking. The Company is currently focused on low-level platoon skills, confirmed through Exercises at Leek and Altcar Ranges, and a Bowman communications update which will culminate with an overseas exercise to Kenya in late April 2011. On return, the Battalion will move into Mission Specific Training for Afghanistan and are due to deploy with 12 Mechanised Brigade in April 2012.



**Lance Corporal Price puts A Company boxers through their paces prior to the Inter-Company Boxing night.**

The Company has also been focusing on sport, allocating time and resources that allowed them to put on a fine show at the Inter-Company Boxing night on 22 June 2010.



**A Company going back to low-level skills and drills, conducting MATT 3 training.**

Furthermore, since returning from leave the Company has said goodbye and thank you to some key personalities and extended a warm welcome to their replacements. Those who have left include the company commander Major Shon Hackney, who has moved on to Staff College as an instructor, Captain Ollie Tagg, who has moved on to command the Battalion's Mortar Platoon and Lieutenant James Dott, who has been posted up to the wilds of Catterick to poach the best recruits for A Company! Colour Sergeant Steve Cowap has also departed the Company and has gone to instruct at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst where we wish him every success.





The Company has welcomed Major Charlie Carver, who has come from HQ Land to take over as the new Officer Commanding, Captain Steve Healy from Bravo Company who has taken over as company second in command, Second Lieutenant Alex Clarke, who has taken command of 3 Platoon straight from Sandhurst, and who is joined by Sergeant Marsh, who has returned from a two year posting in recruiting. We have also welcomed a steady stream of new Fusiliers from Catterick.

Captain Stephen Healey  
Second in Command A Company



A Company enjoying another Battle PT session.

## A Company parade through Caerphilly and Blackwood



Photographs kindly provided by Brian Jarrett Photography.





## A visit to Salisbury Plain

Between 5 and 15 October 2010, 3 Platoon, together with some other members of A Company, and a few of our betters from B Company, were tasked to go to Salisbury Plain to perform a compound clearance demonstration. The demonstration was part of the Land Component Firepower Demonstrations, a series of demonstrations by Land Forces that are laid on annually for Staff College students, visiting dignitaries and a wide variety of people from around the MOD, Civil Service and Government.

Obviously, this could have been a daunting task, but everyone rose to it with a will. The Royal Engineers had constructed a mock Afghan compound on the plain and the first week was spent working out how we were going to clear it, and endlessly rehearsing it. Despite a never ending series of last minute changes to the plan, everyone was well drilled and ready to go by Monday 11 October for our first live audience, consisting of some VVIPs. Luckily everything went well, even the question and answer session at the end! For the rest of the week we provided a constant round of demonstrations and question and answer sessions to Staff College students and MOD Civil Servants.

## The Fallen Cup

Wednesday 20 October saw The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Royal Welsh travel down to the home of the The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion The Royal Welsh to play the first game of football in the new 'Fallen Cup'. The 'Fallen Cup' is a new annual game that will be played to honour those Royal Welsh men who have lost their lives on Operations.

With both sides desperately wanting victory, both battalions trained hard and 1 Royal Welsh travelled down the night before the game. This eagerly anticipated game did not disappoint, the weather was perfect and the facilities of Tidworth Oval ground are superb. The game was well contested and fiercely fought. The opening 10 minutes saw both sides keen to stamp their authority on the match; the game was fast paced with tackles to match. Both sides were playing very good football but 1 Royal Welsh broke the deadlock with a very well-worked goal by Craftsman Rowell. 2 Royal Welsh now upped the pressure to try and bring the game back on level terms, but with stern defending from Lance Corporal Thacker and a calm but dominating presence from Company Sergeant Major McCarthy in goal, 1 Royal Welsh kept their lead and should have gone on to score another two goals. Easy opportunities were squandered by Lance Corporal Dougan after some good work by Lance Corporal Wallace and Fusilier Parry. Half time came at a good time for 2 Royal Welsh because the First Battalion were now starting to dominate, with good possession leading to some decent chances.

Throughout the week of demonstrations, Captain Healey provided a running commentary to events on the tannoy, and even managed to slip a joke in! Luckily, it wasn't terribly funny and Corporal Warren deserves a special mention for being the butt of it on over thirty occasions.

Second Lieutenant Alex Clarke  
Platoon Commander, A Company



Members of A and B Company on Salisbury Plain where they were demonstrating compound clearances to personnel from MOD and Government.

The second half was 2 Royal Welsh's opportunity to get themselves back into the game. Soon after kick-off, however, Fusilier Parry from 1 Royal Welsh stunned the crowd with an extremely good goal, which completely knocked the Second Battalion's confidence. The First Battalion grew in confidence from this and went on to dominate the game, especially when 2 Royal Welsh's captain went off injured. Sergeant Evans 40 went on to score two further goals to make the final score line a convincing 4-0 victory for the First Battalion.

The final whistle blew to the jubilation of the management team of Captain Roberts and Lance Corporal Humphries. Presentation of the 'Fallen Cup' was made by the Senior Major of 2 Royal Welsh and was presented to a delighted 1 Royal Welsh skipper, Captain Healey. The atmosphere was electric with excellent support from 2 Royal Welsh, making this game a truly memorable experience.

Both teams then put their feelings aside and went back to the Lucknow Barracks where 2 Royal Welsh hosted a good night of food and games. It was an excellent day, with thanks going to both management teams for organising a superb event. We look forward to the return game in Chester next year where hopefully 1 Royal Welsh can retain the 'Fallen Cup'.

Captain Stephen Healey  
Second-in-Command, A Company





## Operational success and a return to “Green Soldiering”

**B Company were made especially proud with the announcement of the Operational Honours & Awards list.** Corporal David Williams 69 received the Military Cross, and Lieutenant (now Captain) Steve Healey was mentioned in dispatches. Furthermore, Lieutenant Adam Libbey, Sergeant Mike Jones 65 and Lance Corporal Dale Vincent were all awarded Joint Commander's Commendations. These awards drew a glorious line underneath B Company's exploits on Operation HERRICK 11, and the company can now move forward to the next stage in training. It will be, as always, a busy time, with the emphasis on training the basics, always with an eye on Kenya and Ex AS-KARI THUNDER next year.

Since returning from Summer leave, the soldiers of Bravo Company returned to a progressive and varied training programme. The battalion has entered the Hybrid Foundation Training period, with a focus on basic infantry soldiering, marksmanship, and fitness; a return to green basics on the back training area, which has made a refreshing change from Afghan-centric training and hotter, dustier climes. The fitness training has been gentle and progressive and the soldiers are reaping the rewards of this approach, with the company looking strong on PT. The company has hammered through their Military Annual Training Tests, and has spent a great deal of time in the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer, honing their shooting skills.

Numerous soldiers have been despatched on driving courses, with the aim of getting as many Category C drivers into the company as possible; and we have been tasked with providing support to the Divisional Junior Non-Commissioned Officer cadre, amongst numerous other short-notice manpower tasking. In the next few weeks, the company will deploy on exercise to Leek and Altcar, which will provide an excellent opportunity for the lads to put into practice all their green skills and marksmanship training.

To date, the latter half of 2010 has been a busy, but progressive time; and 2011 promises to ratchet up the pace! B Company look forward to a challenging and rewarding 2011.

Captain Andrew Fox  
Second-in-Command, B Company

**Corporal Williams 69 was awarded the Military Cross for charging into a barrage of enemy fire to protect his section during Op MOSHTARAK. He was second-in-command of a multiple that was pinned down in a Taliban ambush. Cpl Williams broke cover and ran towards the enemy, drawing their fire and enabling the rest of his multiple to extract from the killing zone.**





## Delta Company increase the tempo after returning from leave

The Company returned to work after post-tour leave at the beginning of June and immediately started preparing for a number of events and activities during the summer. The Battalion was presented with the Freedom of the County Borough of Conwy in a special ceremony at the war memorial on Llandudno's resort promenade. Soldiers from D Company marched along Mostyn Street to the promenade where hundreds of shoppers and visitors applauded, showing their support.



**Major John Ellis leads D Company as they march through Llandudno after the Battalion was awarded the Freedom of Conwy.**

Attention was then focused on one of the brighter aspects of Army life, sport and adventure training. Several members of the company took part in the battalion's Inter-Company Boxing competition. All showed the battalion's fighting spirit that epitomises the company. Sergeant Kevin Sharley coached the boxers and the company had six fighters on the big night. Fusiliers Jones 13, Stock, Griffiths and Jones 00 won, while Owen and Egan lost out in very close fights. The Company came away from the competition in second place, close runners up to the winners.

The men were given the opportunity to take part in activities such as, parachuting, rock climbing, coast-ering, sailing and scuba diving, to name a few. These took place at venues ranging from South Wales to Germany. The activities were well organised and offered the men the chance to readjust to normal life and wind down after their return from theatre. The schedule was busy and the efforts were rewarded with a long five week leave period at the end of July.



**Members from D Company took part in the Cambrian Patrol 2010. Both teams that entered received a silver medal.**

After leave the company underwent some changes in the command structure along with a few new additions. Major Euan Harris departed and in his place came Major John Ellis to guide the Company on our next path. Captain Cookson moved on to the Guns Platoon with Lieutenant Mark Lewis stepping into the breach as Company second in command. Lieutenant Harry Noble has come across from Battalion Headquarters to take over the reigns in 10 Platoon along with Sergeant Simon Smith. Sergeant Stewart Loxton is in as 12 Platoon Sergeant with Sergeant Douglas Wellington departing 11 Platoon for a role at the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick. His replacement, Sergeant Scott Robertson, will arrive early in November.

With these changes, the focus has now turned towards training and revision of basic skills and fieldcraft, in order to prepare for a trip to Kenya early next year. The Company had a strong representation in one of the teams put forward for the Cambrian Patrol which took place in mid October. Second Lieutenant John Murphy commanded the team with Corporal Thomas Morris as second in command. Lance Corporal Rogers along with Fusiliers Evans, Hayward, Sharp and Williams completed D Company's representation in the ten man team. They returned with their heads held high and a silver medal in their pockets. A fine start to what promises to be a challenging but rewarding training cycle for the Company.

Second Lieutenant John Murphy  
Platoon Commander, D Company





## Cambrian Patrol

The Battalion put forward two teams for this year's Cambrian Patrol Competition held in mid-October. One team came from Fire Support Company based around the Reconnaissance Platoon, with the other team consisting of representatives from the rifle companies.

Both teams started a demanding six week training programme on return from leave at the start of September. The training took place in barracks and in Clocaenog Forrest, North Wales. The men were taken back to basics, revising on basic field craft, and more conventional methods of operating, from patrolling to section attacks.

The patrol itself focuses on skills at basic MATT level. A big part of the event is fitness and this was addressed right from the start with the teams undergoing arduous PT sessions, including speed marches, long distance runs, battle PT, swimming and a hills session in Loggerheads Woods. The training programme was a shock to the system for all after five weeks leave but results started to show.



**The Cambrian Patrol 2010. Both teams were awarded a silver medal.**

The last four weeks were spent on the hills around Clocaenog Forrest with hill fitness improving rapidly as the men started to cope with the weight. Basic skills, such as contact drills, were also rehearsed daily and these started to become second nature to the team members.

One aspect of the patrol that will live with the men for life is the river crossing serial. We were fortunate to be able to rehearse our drills on two occasions on the area. However, the distance they had to swim was around four times wider than the crossing on the actual event. It must have been a surprise for the Directing Staff on the competition to see two teams who were relieved when they saw the crossing point!



**The river crossing; one of the most arduous of the serials.**

After a weekend of forced rest the two teams departed for South Wales and the Cambrian Patrol. Both started on the same day at around nine in the morning. From there on there was forty eight hours of solid tabbing across some of the most demanding terrain many had ever come across; especially the boggy moor land where the eight men of the rifle company team almost became seven!

After CTRs on the first night, the teams embarked on a second day of hills, hills, and more hills with a couple of stands thrown in. Both approached the river crossing around 1600 after which came the last leg of the epic event. Reconnaissance made it to the last RV unhindered while the rifle company team took a unique route, one that added two hours, eventually arriving at the RV just in time.

A section attack, ammunition run and a crawl through a three hundred metre tunnel system were all that remained before the finish. A long debrief concluded the event before a trip to Sennybridge camp for the award ceremony.

The two teams went up after each other and came away with silver medals. A just reward for their efforts! Initial thoughts were of the sentiment "Never again," however, by the time they returned to Chester most were of the opinion that "Gold is more than achievable next time," and there was a willingness to "Smash it next year." Whether after two or three days of sore feet and stiff legs their enthusiasm remains is yet to be seen!

A great effort by all and one that will remain with them for the foreseeable future.

Second Lieutenant John Murphy  
Platoon Commander, D Company





## Variety for Fire Support Company as they return after leave

Since returning from Afghanistan Fire Support Company has been involved in a variety of different activities. Most enjoyable to all members has been the large amount of leave that has been able to be taken by all ranks and this has boosted the morale of the company no end! Other activities have included the opportunities for the Fusiliers to go on adventure training with packages being held in both the UK and in Germany. This has resulted in many of the soldiers getting a selection of qualifications that can hopefully be used during the upcoming Exercise Askari Thunder in Kenya and beyond. The company has also taken to sport again with a large number of company members doing very well in representative sport, although the stand out team at the moment is the Company Boxing team as it recently won the Inter-Company Boxing Competition on 22 June 2010. Further to these activities, the Company has also played a key role in all of the homecoming and freedom parades the battalion has taken part in.



The Assault Pioneer platoon lead the march through Caerphilly where the Regiment was awarded the Freedom of the Borough.

The Battalion has now moved from 11 Light Brigade to 12 Mechanised Brigade which in turn has influenced the training the Company has been undergoing. There has also been a fundamental shift in the way that Anti-Tank Platoon and Machine Gun Platoon are to operate which will bring them more in line with the current operating environment. This has led to an extra training burden that the respective platoons are relishing the opportunity to tackle. Members from Recce Platoon recently entered the Cambrian Patrol, where they took the lead for the Battalion team, and earned themselves a more than respectable silver medal. At present the Mortar platoon has just returned from the 12 Brigade concentration where they successfully managed to beat all the other units in the brigade winning the concentration. At the same time the Sniper Platoon was taking part in their concentration and they too managed to successfully win it. This is a particularly impressive feat due to the number of other activities that both platoons have been taking part in detailed above. Both Mortars and Snipers are now going back basics and preparing the new members of the platoon for their respective cadres to ensure that the fusiliers get the best opportunity to perform as highly as possible.

The Assault Pioneers have been busy at work too. They have been helping the Cambrian Patrol teams with their waterman ship skills helping them achieve the highest standard that is possible. They have also been involved in constructing the new memorial outside the front of the Dale Barracks. The Company is now reconstituted and is currently focused on low level Platoon skills including Exercises in Leek and Altcar Ranges and a Bowman communications update which will culminate with an overseas exercise to Kenya in April 2011. On return the Battalion will move into Mission Specific Training for Afghanistan and are due to deploy with 12 Mechanised Brigade in April 2012.

Captain James Fraser  
Anti-Tank Platoon Commander  
Fire Support Company





## Return to barrack life

After five weeks of well earned post-operational tour leave, Headquarters Company is back into the busy routine of battalion life. Despite the many commitments of the daily barrack regime a large number of the Company have managed to take advantage of adventure training courses in Capel Curig and Caerwent, which have given them new skills and developed the qualities required of all our soldiers. Sport has also firmly returned to the programme, including a highly successful boxing night in July. The rugby and football seasons have also begun in earnest, with Headquarters Company contributing a number of key players to both teams.

The 28-30 September saw our chefs competing in the annual Combined Services Culinary Challenge competition at Sandown Park. This is the flagship event for all HM Armed Forces caterers and provides Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force chefs, caterers and stewards the opportunity to demonstrate their skills in a highly charged competitive environment. The Practical Theatre is the central focus where chefs compete live against their Service counterparts in full view of an enthusiastic audience. Lance Corporal Ben Moussa entered the Senior Chef of the Year event where he was awarded a very well-deserved Bronze.

## Welfare

Since the summer leave we have said a farewell to two stalwarts of welfare staff, Captain Kim Taylor and his right-hand man Colour Sergeant Mike Cornish. During their long tenure they have coped with nearly everything that makes the Welfare Officer job extremely difficult; a battalion based thousands of miles from the UK in Cyprus, unit operational tours to Iraq and Afghanistan and a unit move back to the UK. During all this time they have remained a driving force in the Welfare Office and we all wish them well in the future.

The new team have moved in consisting of Captain Karl Roberts and WO2 Andy Jones who have now both recovered from the initial transition from Warfare to Welfare and are now taking new ventures forwards.

We have built a strong relationship with the local community who want to be very much involved with the Battalion at all levels. The Unit Welfare Office held the 'Big Brew Day' on behalf of SSAFA which went extremely well and raised hundreds of pounds for the organisation; a big thank you goes to all the wives and local shops who provided the cakes, and to all the soldiers for eating them.



Corporal Paul George awarded Mention in Dispatches

The latest Operational Honours & Awards list has brought good news for the Company with Corporal George from the Medical Centre receiving a Mention in Dispatches for his courage and professionalism in Afghanistan. Congratulations go to him for his thoroughly deserved award, which is characteristic of the excellent support which Headquarters Company provided throughout Operation HERRICK 11.

Major Gareth Stone  
Officer Commanding, Headquarters Company



Members of the 1st Bn the Royal Welsh presenting a cheque to Mr Bill Giffin Divisional Secretary of Chester SSAFA

Finally, the Welfare Team has said goodbye to the staff who formed the unit uplift during the Op Herrick 11 tour. Their work for the injured soldiers and their families has been outstanding throughout. The Welfare Office has been closely working with single soldiers since the return from Op Herrick 11 which is excellent news. As more are coming forward with issues that may have gone unseen, hopefully the stigma of the Family's Office has gone and the Welfare Office has taken on a new dimension.

WO2 Andrew Jones  
Unit Welfare Warrant Officer, Headquarters Company





## Ex Royal Alpine

**The chance to get away for a week on adventurous training was not to be passed up.** Lieutenant Chris Brannigan, AGC (SPS), organised a multi-activity expedition in September that took members of the AGC detachment to Bavaria for a week where they would do some climbing, kayaking, hiking and white water rafting using instructors from within the Battalion.

The REME Lodge proved to be a comfortable and welcoming facility that was on the doorstep of the Allgäu Alps, providing easy access to a variety of activities in the area. Thankfully the weather was good throughout so the hikers were able to enjoy their treks some of which went up to 1800m before they reached the snow line. Although the ascents were invariably steep and made for difficult going in ever thinning air, the views were spectacular and made it well worth while.



**Lance Corporal Ngarandi learns to kayak in the alpine lakes of the Allgäu Alps.**

Under the watchful eye of Corporal Ian Philips the paddlers used some of the many alpine lakes to introduce the team to kayaking. Though we were all new to it everyone had a great time paddling around the lakes. The temperatures were not ideal for spending a long time in the water but morale was high throughout as we watched one another capsize at some point or another and coming up gasping for breath.



**The AGC detachment took part in white water rafting in Austria as part of their adventurous training.**

The white water rafting took place in Austria and again was a new experience for most. The rapids proved to be a white knuckle experience that left everyone asking to have another run at the river. Everyone also got the chance to get out of the boat and into the fast flowing water to be thrown around by the current which was pretty terrifying but exhilarating. We all made it ashore in one piece, happy to have been bounced around for an hour but more than a little cold.

The expedition was a great success and was a much deserved reward for the hard work of the members of the AGC detachment.

Lieutenant Chris Brannigan  
AGC (SPS) Detachment Commander  
Headquarters Company



**Private Conteh trekking through the Allgäu Alps in Bavaria.**





## Ex Royal Alpine



## Upcoming Events:

### Welfare Office:

- 5 November 1 Royal Welsh (RWF) Bonfire Night.
- 5 December Santa Stroll (in aid of Chester Hospital Welfare House which our injured soldiers' families have used on a number of occasions).

### Officers' Mess

- 11 December Christmas Party. All officers at E and their partners will be most welcome; please contact Captain Andrew Fox (Mess Secretary) for further details.

### Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess

- 10 December Christmas Party. All members of the Mess at E and their partners will be most welcome; please contact Company Sergeant Major McCarthy (President of the Christmas Function) for further details.

