

From Lieutenant Colonel J P Cresswell Royal Artillery

Commanding Officer

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**Commando Gunners at ERE
The Regimental Family**

29RA/01/06/02

Copy to:
11 RAMa B Coy Devon ACF
HMS Montrose Mount Kelly CCF
C Troop EUOTC
289 Troop 266 Bty RA

10 September 2015

Dear Commando Gunners, Friends and Families,

School is back and life's fireplan is back on! It has been a mixed summer in terms of UK weather and equally mixed in terms of the variety of activity that the Regiment has been engaged in. 148 Battery were stateside on Exercise BURMESE CHASE with the USMC and then it was the turn of 23 Battery to deploy to the Mojave Desert on the originally titled 'Large Scale Exercise 2015' which was a staff training opportunity in a 'big fight' scenario alongside the USMC and Canadians against a conventional enemy. The exercise was a much needed reminder about the 'Deep Battle' and the 29 Cdo/30 Cdo FIND and STRIKE team worked well. The highlight of the trip was the 'run ashore' in Las Vegas which included a full mess dinner complete with Elvis tribute act!



Large Scale Exercise 2015
Twentynine Palms and Las Vegas: 8 – 24 August 2015

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**ADRENALIN QUARRY – COASTEERING
AGC (SPS) DETACHMENT**

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United we conquer

Before we went on summer leave the Plymouth based Regiment completed the thirty miler over Dartmoor and a small team from Air Troop and Kirkee supported the Devon Scout Jamboree 'Run to the Fun' on Mount Edgcombe where they taught survival skills alongside former SSgt Karl Hammond. The scouts said this was the highlight of their camp!



C Troop Visit to the Commando Gunners
5/6 September 2015

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United we conquer

No sooner had the Brigade HQ element returned from California than the baton was handed to the Black Eight who as I write are enjoying the sand, heat and doorless 'Full Metal Jacket' style toilets of the desert. Alma Day will be celebrated

in the USA and we send them our best wishes. Even the SPS Detachment has been out and about with a Challenge Pursuit day at 'Adrenalin Quarry' which sounded superb.

The RSM and I said farewell to the outgoing Brigade Commander, Brigadier Charlie Stickland, last week. The day involved a boat move to Jupiter Point and paintballing with SA80s in Scraesdon Fort (a painful experience for some....) polished off by a mess dinner in Stonehouse. Brigadier Jim Morris has assumed command of 3rd Commando Brigade and we will welcome him to The Royal Citadel next month. This week we have welcomed C Troop to Plymouth. 30 commando volunteers from 24 (Irish) Battery spent a weekend undertaking survival training, Citadel PT, a run ashore and the Endurance Course on Woodbury Common. They were swiftly followed by 20 university cadets on Exercise GREEN STUDENT.

The big visit of the week was Lieutenant General James Everard, Commander Land Forces. CLF toured The Royal Citadel and met a fellow Royal Lancer, Staff Sergeant Webb, who we have kidnapped and are currently holding hostage in the QM's Department. General James then headed across to Bovisand Beach courtesy of 148 Battery's boats under CPO Derri who made the ultimate sacrifice for the day in shaving his sideburns from Navy to Army length. Thanks Chief! Once up at Staddon Heights BC 79 escorted CLF to visit Sgt Marlow's light gun detachment engaged in Direct Fire before seeing the Regimental Aid Post under our new doctor, Lt Col Dougie Reid and then on to Air Troop under WO2 (TSM) Tiller where a strike was on-going with two Royal Navy jets and a Lynx Wildcat Helicopter. Against this team the 'Dakotians' did not stand a chance..... Staff Sergeant Tait and his team of chefs had deployed the Field Galley and transformed a 10 man ration pack into a lunch that Jamie Olivier would have been proud of.



A few dates for the diary:

- 7 Oct. Coffee morning (Sgts' Mess) – including a presentation by Forces' Financial.
- 28 Oct. Children's Woodlands trip.
- 1 Nov. Children's Halloween Party (Offrs' Mess).
- 11 Dec. Spouse/Partners' Christmas party (Sgts' Mess).
- 13 Dec. Children's Christmas Party (Sgts' Mess).

We will also be taking a slight different approach to Remembrance this year. Once again the Plymouth based ranks will 'raid' into the city and raise money for the Poppy Appeal. We will fire our Colours to mark the two minute silence on Remembrance Sunday and there will be a service around the Commando Gunner memorial for those that wish to attend. 6 RIFLES will provide the marching guard for the Army and 165 Port and Maritime Regiment will represent the Army at the Plymouth Pavilions Festival this year. 7 (Sphinx) Commando Battery will parade at Spean Bridge and Fort William for the last time and the remainder of the Regiment is invited to go home and attend their local cenotaph in uniform with their families. By doing this the Commando Gunners will be represented at hundreds of services rather than just five. The following weekend Black Eight and 289 Troop will fire a 21 gun salute for the birthday of HRH The Prince of Wales.

Another busy start to the Autumn but a lot of fun and the training programme between now and Christmas is superb. There are a number of new faces and we have sadly bade farewell to a number of Commando Gunners. One arrival who I will highlight (because he has travelled the furthest and has the biggest hat) is Captain Jackson Stanhope of 4th Regiment Royal Australian Artillery who has joined us until December. Cancel Cease Loading!

United we conquer!
Jon Cresswell

