



# The Bulletin



The community magazine for the ARRC and Innsworth Station

April 2012



## Welcome Home

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## Foreword



Welcome to the latest edition of the Bulletin and my first as Commander of the ARRC. Although I formally took over as COMARRC last year it is only now that I have arrived in Innsworth following 14 months in Afghanistan. Having served with the ARRC in Germany it is an honour and privilege to return as its Commander and I look forward to building on the fine work of my predecessor who has so successfully laid the foundations for the ARRC in its new location.

This edition of the Bulletin coincides with the end of HQ ARRC's challenging but rewarding year long commitment to ISAF. The NATO mission in Afghanistan is entering a crucial period as the handover of responsibility for security to the Afghans by the end of 2014 gathers pace. Staff from HQ ARRC; have been heavily involved in producing these plans and they can be very proud of their work. Transition is well underway with over 50% of the population of Afghanistan now in the process. There remain challenges ahead but I remain positive that the 2014 deadline will be met.

It is essential that we, as a Headquarters, learn from the tour. Working inside two NATO headquarters as part of a 49 country coalition has allowed us both individually and collectively to experience different concepts, ideas and working procedures. We will identify the ones that work and investigate how HQ ARRC can adapt them to help improve how we do business.

Once this is complete our focus will turn to the preparation for the NATO Response Force (NRF) commitment that the ARRC assumes in January of next year. Over the next eight months HQ ARRC will undergo a training programme that will result in it being ready to deploy at short notice anywhere in the world. It is a mark of NATO's belief in the ARRC that we have been chosen for this high profile task so soon after returning from Afghanistan. However, what is equally important during this time is that the staff and their families have an opportunity to enjoy living in the UK, and in particular Gloucestershire.

Although HQ ARRC has completed its tour, soldiers from the ARRC Support Battalion continue to serve in Helmand with 3 SCOTS. They are doing a magnificent job in a really challenging environment and I wish everyone there a safe and speedy return.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the Welfare Office, and in particular the Operational Welfare Support Cell, for the work they have done over the last 12 months. Support to the families of those deployed is an essential task during any operational tour and I have been hugely impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication by which the team has operated.

2012 promises to be a challenging and fulfilling year for the ARRC Group and its families. There is the return of the Support Battalion from Afghanistan, the Queen's Birthday and Diamond Jubilee celebrations, the 20th anniversary of the ARRC, the Olympics and this month's Cathedral Service which will formally mark our homecoming. The ARRC is a broad community of Servicemen and Women, Civilians and their families. The strength of the ARRC is in the strength of the community as a whole. I thank you all for your support over the last year and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during the course of this year.

Lieutenant General James Bucknall, Commander ARRC

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## Editor



Corporal Chris Earle  
Editor

### Editors Details

Welcome to the latest edition of the Bulletin. I hope that you find the publication packed full of useful and interesting information. I would like to thank those who have provided articles for this edition and also to encourage those with a story to tell to get in touch for our next edition due out in July 2012. Contributions and suggestions for the next edition, should reach myself by 01 June 2012. The Bulletin could not work without your continued support.

### Feedback

We would value your feed back on the bulletin. Do you find it useful? What is good? What is bad? What would you like to see?

We would really appreciate any feedback you could give. The bulletin is your magazine, lets make it work for you. Please send any comments or feedback to [pao.webmaster@arrc.nato.int](mailto:pao.webmaster@arrc.nato.int)

### Notes

The publication of an advert, article or photo in The Bulletin does not necessarily reflect the views of the ARRC, Partner Nations or the (UK) MOD. The editor reserves the right to omit, amend or edit any advert, article or photo at the discretion of the HQ without liability. Should you wish to include an article, advert, or photo in future editions of The Bulletin please contact the public affairs office on 01452 718 110 or [pao.webmaster@arrc.nato.int](mailto:pao.webmaster@arrc.nato.int)

Front Cover Photo: Taken by WO2 Stu McKenzie

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# A year in pictures

A review of the HQ ARRC's deployment to IJC, Kabul

In January 2011 the first members of HQ ARRC deployed to Kabul in support of the ISAF mission. Over the course of the year over 300 ARRC staff deployed to HQ IJC and HQ ISAF. Here is a selection of photographs marking key moments in the tour.



■ The ARRC's deployment to Afghanistan began in January 2011 with the arrival of the first troops. Over the course of the next year almost 300 members of HQ ARRC served in either HQ ISAF or HQ IJC



■ The Command Sergeant Major, WO1 Dave Travis, heads the parade to mark the formal Change of Command at HQ IJC in July 2011. Lt Gen David Rodriguez handed over to Lt Gen Scaparrotti after serving 18 months as Commander of the IJC



■ HQ IJC in February. During the winter, the weather in Kabul is extremely variable with snow showers often followed by high temperatures



■ Lt Col Gavin O'Keffee is pictured at his desk in the Combined Joint Operations Centre. His job as Chief of Operations (CHOPS) involved him overseeing the response of the IJC to daily events across the whole of Afghanistan



■ The Combined Joint Operations Centre (CJOC) at HQ IJC. The old converted gym housed over 100 staff who monitored events throughout the whole of Afghanistan. The job of the CJOC was to coordinate the response of ISAF troops across the six Regional Commands



■ Remembrance Day, Afghanistan, 2011. Lt Gen James Bucknall, Deputy Commander of ISAF and Commander ARRC, pays tribute to fallen comrades at the British Cemetery in Kabul



■ Lt. Gen. David Rodriguez, commander of ISAF Joint Command, takes a moment to relax with some of the senior officers of Regional Command



■ US Staff Sergeant Brandon Pomrenke captures the moment at the IJC change of command



■ Christmas in Kabul. Members of the ARRC take time out from their busy jobs to celebrate Christmas Day. Staff ate a traditional turkey dinner and opened presents sent from family, friends and well-wishers from around the world



■ Lt Gen James Bucknall, Commander of the ARRC, meets President Hamid Karzai, the Afghan President at Kabul International Airport



■ The last HQ ARRC troops return to Brize Norton following a C-17 flight from Kabul in January 2012. The tour was highly successful with HQ ARRC members playing key roles in designing the plan for the future of Afghanistan

# Support Battalion ARRC News

By Captain Debbie Waterman, Det Comd

The last few months have been a busy but very rewarding time for the Battalion. Following a very successful Operational tour as the Regulating Headquarters in Camp Bastion, the Battalion returned in time for Christmas celebrations and the Commanding Officer's Challenge up Pen-y-Fan.

The last few months have been a busy but very rewarding time for the Battalion. Following a very successful Operational tour as the Regulating Headquarters in Camp Bastion, the Battalion returned in time for Christmas celebrations and the Commanding Officer's Challenge up Pen-y-Fan.

Both the Rear Party and deployed personnel had been in training for a number of weeks to complete the arduous 'fan dance' over the peaks of the Brecon Beacons in South Wales. Teams of 8 set out on a very cold, windy and rainy morning to face, what really was, a challenge. In less than perfect conditions the teams successfully managed to reach the top of the Pen-y-Fan and get down in time for hot drinks and the all important bacon butties. Success all round.

After completing several months of training the vast majority of 170 (Pnr) Squadron deployed on HERRICK 15 with 3 SCOTS (The Black Watch) and 2 MERCIAN within the infantry role. Currently still on tour they are fully integrated into the units and conducting operations in Helmand Province with 3 SCOTS heading the Combined Force Nad E-Ali. They are doing an absolutely sterling job.

In sports, the Battalion competed in the Support Command Divisional Ski Championships with the Female team winning the Military Patrol race. Battalion personnel also took part in the Tough Guy event described as 'the safest most dangerous event in the world'. The Battalion continues to routinely compete in cross-country, football, basketball and many other sports throughout the year.

More recently elements of the Battalion have deployed to Cyprus where they are facilitating the Op HERRICK decompression for 20 Armoured Brigade. In the near future with the Olympics around the corner the Battalion will be providing a number of soldiers in support, and hopefully get a glimpse of the Games.

The Battalion will restructure towards the end of 2012, where 170 (Pnr) Squadron and 14 Squadron will amalgamate. In the busy times ahead we remain fully committed to continuing our support to Headquarters ARRC.



# In memory of Italian Army Sergeant Major Gabriele Ranocchiarì



1<sup>st</sup> Maresciallo Gabriele Ranocchiarì was born in a small town in the North East of Italy on October 8th 1967. He married Deborah in 1993 and they had a daughter, Elena, in 1994.

Gabriele, a Senior Non Commissioned Officer in the Italian Army Cavalry, joined the Italian Army in 1987.

During his career he has served in some of the most prestigious Italian Cavalry Regiments (2 "Piemonte", "Cavallegeri Guide") and also in some of most valuable Armed Forces Training Centres (Scuola Allievi Sottufficiali and Scuola Interforze N.B.C.).

In 1999, as part of the Extraction Force, he served in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Op. Guarantor) and later the same year, as Platoon Commander in Kosovo (KFOR).

After being re-assigned to KFOR in 2001, he took part of the NTM-I Team in Baghdad (IRAQ) in 2005. In 2009, he joined the Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo HQ), as Command Sergeant Major.

He was assigned to ARRC HQ as "G3 Ops Sergeant" on August 16th 2010, and due to his vast operational and professional experience and his rank, he was directly nominated "Italian Contingent RSM".

Gabriele was only 44 when, during his assignment to IJC HQ as part of HQ ARRC ROTO 2 ISAF contribution, a serious disease took his life.

1<sup>st</sup> Maresciallo Gabriele Ranocchiarì's funeral was celebrated on December 7th 2011 in Rieti (Italy) where his family and relatives live.

On 15 December, ARRC personnel organized a Memorial Service to remember Gabriele in Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church, Churchdown (UK).

He is remembered as a devoted father and cherished husband as much as a proud Italian Sergeant Major. He took all of these roles to heart and he strove to honour, support and guide but most importantly, love his family.

He was always helpful, ready to give a hand, smiling and universally liked.

Among the ARRC personnel, Gabriele is also remembered as an amazing athlete. He had been part of the Italian Army Athletic Team and he was still more than capable of outrunning his younger colleagues.

But there was another side to Gabriele that his family and friends knew about. He was fun loving and a born entertainer. He played guitar and piano and had the talent for doing impressions of other people.

His most successful one was that of Sylvester Stallone playing Rambo. Gabriele's favourite punch line is also an epitaph he might have liked: When Rambo's former Commander asks him to surrender and tells him "It's over Johnny, it's over" Rambo replies "Nothing is over, nothing! You just don't turn it off".

That was Gabriele. He always greeted you with a big smile or a small gesture, without asking for anything in return.

Our sympathy and our thoughts go out to his family at this very difficult time.

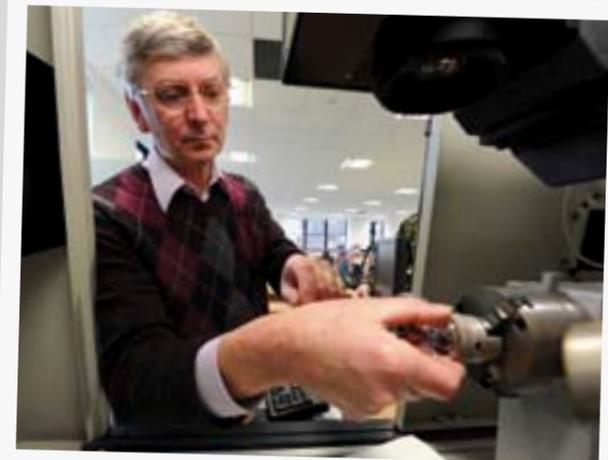
He will be sadly missed.



# Back in time for medals and maybe some tea

Words and Photography by WO2 RS McKenzie RLC

From the George Cross to the Burma Star, no less than 55,000 medals a year, or 150 a day, are issued to members of the British Forces and it's all the work of an office here at Imjin Barracks.



Since the Second World War the British Army has been engaged on operations every year bar one – 1968 – and for most of those, medals have been authorised, struck and issued. To date 124,287 Operational Service Medals have been awarded for Afghanistan and 128,348 for Iraq alone.



It's the role of the 28 staff of the MOD Medal Office to ensure those applying for medals are eligible. The medals are then prepared on site here, engraved, polished, boxed and presented.

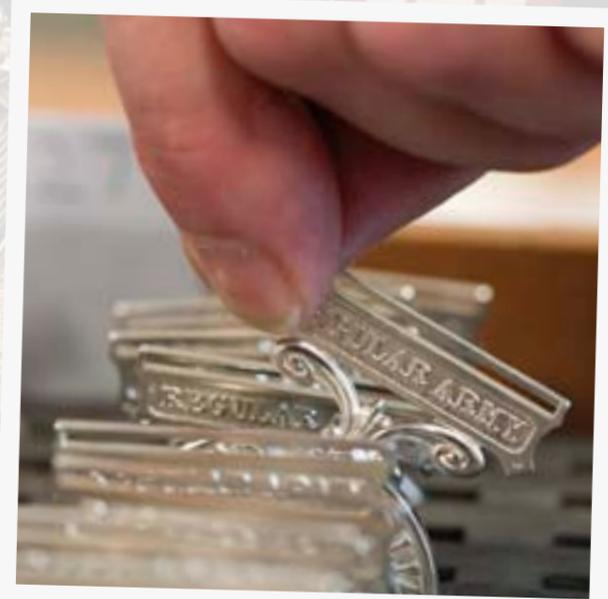
Roger MacKenzie BSc, a retired RAF Squadron Leader who now works in the medal office, said: "I find it fascinating, we have seen a lot of change over the last four years, the Canal Zone medal for the Suez campaign was authorised, the Elizabeth Cross was introduced for families whose loved ones died on operations, the new Accumulated Service Medal is now being issued and we are working on the Diamond Jubilee medal."

As well as new medals the office is still kept busy with the historic, 200 to 300 applications each week being received for Second World War awards. The majority of these applications, mainly from next of kin of those who served, are for the 1939–45 Star or the France–Germany Star which was issued for D-Day. The office still receives more than 30 enquiries a week about First World War medals although they stopped dealing with these in 1998.



"The best part of the job is dealing with veterans, we receive many letters thanking us for our work from veterans and their families and it's a great feeling to know that we have helped them by being able to issue a medal after all this time", said Roger.

However, the majority of medals are issued for ongoing and recent operations and it's good news for those involved in them. "We are now able to process applications for current operations quicker than before, this is thanks to the Joint Personnel Administration system, we can have medals issued before a Regiment has returned from the operation, all boxed and ready to be presented", Roger said.



# From Gloucester to the Glacier

By Capt Barney Meehan GBR Army



■ Maj John Harrington

EX ARCADE SNOWMASTER 12 saw 40 members of HQ ARRC and the ARRC Sp Bn conduct a week's skiing in Fulmpes, Austria. In preparation for the ARRC's arrival, there had been record levels of snow in Austria. The amount of snow usually expected during a season had fallen during a week.

After a 22 hour coach ride, on which every film Will Ferrell has ever appeared in was screened, we arrived in a picturesque and very white Fulmpes. With Schlick 2000 on the hotel's doorstep and the Stubai Glacier a short drive away, there was no shortage of both on and off-piste routes, which catered for all abilities, which ranged from complete novice to seasoned Norway warrior.

The amount of snow initially restricted the use of all the slopes due to the avalanche threat, although as the week went on, the weather improved and the group made use of some of the best skiing conditions ever experienced in the area. All of the group were able to work towards Ski Foundation stages 1 and 2. The 1 RAF and 4 Army instructors that we had for the week had varying challenges, from ensuring that boots were on the right feet to reining in the more experienced from going too far off piste.

LCpl Craig Merrison had set the pace in his group for most of the week, although regretted this when attempting to ski through fresh powder. Having shot down the side of the piste next to the tree line, he failed to stop in time and flew into the trees, completely disappearing out of sight. Once the remainder of the group had composed themselves and stopped laughing, two ski poles could be seen sticking out of the vegetation, as Craig dragged himself out.



■ WO2 Steve Metham approaches a gate on the slalom

Half expecting tales of his time in Narnia, and that he had actually been away for years, Craig carried on, his white ski jacket looking more like a Celtic shirt with his new green stripes implanted on his back.

There were a few injuries, but nothing major. Knees, muscle strains, egos and ideas of how good a skier some thought they were being the main ones. The aches and strains were eased by the sauna and wellness room at the hotel. As the group were predominantly British, the hotel staff politely pointed out that they would waiver the naked rule for the sauna, providing that Trigger Buxton would stop dancing in the bar.

The week ended with a slalom race, complete with gates and supporters/ hecklers. Everyone competed under either beginner, intermediate or advanced. The beginners group impressively went from putting on skis for the first time to racing within a week and achieving respectable times all round, Sgt Lindsay Hodgson gaining the best time. There was little between the Intermediate group as Capt Boorman (Ger) pipped LCpl Craig Merrison, while Maj Ash Lawes won the advanced group and his time was only narrowly beaten by 2 of the 5 instructors.



■ Maj Simon Feaver really enjoys the sledging



■ WO2 Sean Clench forgets SSgt Chrissy Jones was sat on the back

# Events Diary

Date	Event
<b>March 2012</b>	
17 Mar – 29 Apr	<b>Lambing at Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park</b> Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park, near Guiting Power, Cheltenham GL54 5UG 10.30am – 5pm Tickets: adults £7.95, children (3 – 16) £6.50, senior citizens £7.50, family £26.00 (2 adults + 2 children), under 3's free <a href="http://www.cotswoldfarmpark.co.uk">www.cotswoldfarmpark.co.uk</a>
<b>April 2012</b>	
1 Apr	<b>Water Festival &amp; Boat Jumble at Gloucester Docks</b> Gloucester Waterways Museum, Llanthony Warehouse, The Docks GL1 2EH 10am – 3pm, tickets £3.50 <i>Accompanied children under 14 free</i> <a href="http://www.gloucesterwaterwaysmuseum.org.uk">www.gloucesterwaterwaysmuseum.org.uk</a>
2 Apr – 9 Apr	<b>Easter Bonanza at Dean Heritage Centre</b> Dean Heritage Centre, Camp Mill, Soudley, Glos. GL14 2UB 10am – 5pm Gift aid prices: adults £5.40, child (5 – 16) £4.40, concessions £4.65, Family (2 adults and up to 4 children) £19.80 <a href="http://www.deanheritagecentre.com">www.deanheritagecentre.com</a>
3 Apr – 10 Apr	<b>Easter Art Activities at Nature in Art</b> Nature in Art, Wallsworth Hall, Nr Twigworth, Gloucester, GL2 9PA <i>Various times and prices</i> <a href="http://www.nature-in-art.org.uk">www.nature-in-art.org.uk</a>
14 Apr – 15 Apr	<b>Days Out with Thomas at Dean Forest Railway</b> Dean Forest Railway, Norchard, Forest Road, Lydney, Gloucester GL15 4ET Visit <a href="http://www.deanforestrailway.co.uk">www.deanforestrailway.co.uk</a> for times Online prices – adult £14, child £8 (2 – 16 yrs), family £44.00 (2 + 2). <i>Family ticket includes £4 gift voucher which is valid in the Platelayer's Buffet or the Railway Gift Shop</i>

Date	Event
Open daily until Sept 2012	<b>Sandford Parks Lido, Cheltenham opens</b> Sandford Parks Lido, Keynsham Road 11am – 7.30pm, 6.30am – 9am on Mon, Wed & Fri, 8am – 9.30am on Sunday. Normal admission prices: adult £4.20, concession £2.20, under 5's FREE, family of 2 £6, family of 3 £10, family of 4 £12. Early morning/late swim rates (after 6pm) adult £3.20, concession £1.80 <a href="http://www.sandfordparksnado.org.uk">www.sandfordparksnado.org.uk</a>
28 Apr – 29 Apr	<b>Highnam Court Spring Fair</b> Highnam Court, Highnam, Gloucester, GL2 8DP 10.30am – 5pm £5 in advance (£6 on the gate) <i>Under 12's free</i> <a href="http://www.highnamcourtspringfair.co.uk">www.highnamcourtspringfair.co.uk</a>
<b>May 2012</b>	
2 May – 7 May	<b>Cheltenham Jazz Festival 2012</b> Various locations in Cheltenham Various times Tickets available from Box office tel 01242 505 444
18 May – 19 May	<b>Event: Lakfest 2012</b> Croft Farm Waterpark, Bredons Hardwick, Tewkesbury GL20 7EE Gates open at 2pm. They will remain open for the following hours: Friday 2pm – midnight, Saturday 8am – 11pm, Sunday 7am – 2pm Tickets: Earlybird tickets: Adults weekend £69, child (11 – 15) £39. Weekend + camping £79 for adults, £49 child (11 – 15). Available online <a href="http://www.croftfarmleisure.co.uk">www.croftfarmleisure.co.uk</a>
20 May	<b>Cheltenham Cycle Challenge</b> Starting and finishing at the Abbey Stadium, Cheltenham Football Ground, Whaddon Road 8:30am Registration forms available by visiting <a href="http://www.cheltenhamchallenge.co.uk">www.cheltenhamchallenge.co.uk</a> <i>A 30 mile on/off road cycle challenge over beautiful Cotswold countryside featuring both on road and off road elements</i>

Date	Event
<b>June 2012</b>	
1 Jun	<b>Robert Dover's Cotswold Olimpick Games</b> Dover Hill, Chipping Campden, Glos. 7.30pm, there is a small entry charge <a href="http://www.olimpickgames.co.uk">www.olimpickgames.co.uk</a>
4 Jun	<b>Event: Tetbury Woolsack Races</b> Tetbury, Gloucester Festivities begin at 10am. Races start 2pm <a href="http://www.tetburywoolsack.co.uk">www.tetburywoolsack.co.uk</a>
5 Jun – 8 Jun	<b>Half Term Activities at Nature in Art</b> Wallsworth Hall, A38, Twigworth, Gloucester GL2 9PA. 10.30am – 12.30pm and 2.30pm – 4.30pm Various prices <a href="http://www.nature-in-art.org.uk">www.nature-in-art.org.uk</a>
8 Jun – 10 Jun	<b>Wychwood Festival 2012</b> Cheltenham Racecourse <a href="http://www.wychwoodfestival.com">www.wychwoodfestival.com</a>
12 Jun – 17 Jun	<b>Cheltenham Science Festival 2012</b> Cheltenham Town Hall, Imperial Square Various times, prices vary <a href="http://www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/science">www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/science</a>
22 Jun	<b>Will Young at Westonbirt Arboretum</b> The National Arboretum, Westonbirt, Tetbury, GL8 8QS Concert car parks open at 6pm with live music starting at 7.30pm Tickets £35.00 (subject to booking fee) go on sale at 9.00am Friday 16th December from the Forestry Commission box office tel 03000 680400 or buy online at <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/music">www.forestry.gov.uk/music</a>
23 Jun	<b>Plan B at Westonbirt Arboretum</b> The National Arboretum, Westonbirt, Tetbury, GL8 8QS. Concert car parks open at 6pm with live music starting at 7.30pm Tickets £32.00 (subject to booking fee) from the Forestry Commission box office tel 03000 680400 or buy online at <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/music">www.forestry.gov.uk/music</a>
24 Jun	<b>Madness at Westonbirt Arboretum</b> Westonbirt Arboretum, near Tetbury, Gloucestershire Tickets £36.50 (subject to booking fee) go on sale at 9.00am Friday 13 January from the Forestry Commission box office tel 03000 680400 or buy online at <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/music">www.forestry.gov.uk/music</a>
30 Jun – 1 Jul	<b>Cotswold Show 2012</b> Cirencester Park, Cirencester, GL7 2BU (use Deer Park School entrance GL7 1XB) Date: 9am – 6pm Tickets: In advance: Adults (15 years +) £8.80; Children 3 – 14 £3.20 On the gate: Adults (15 yrs +) £11; Children (3 – 14 yrs) £4; Under 3s & dogs: FREE Book online at <a href="http://www.cotswoldshow.co.uk">www.cotswoldshow.co.uk</a> or call the Booking Office on 01749 814089 <i>Tickets are also available at Cirencester Tourist Information Centre, Corinium Museum, Park Street, Cirencester GL7 2BX. Tel: 01285 654180</i>

Date	Event
<b>July 2012</b>	
1 Jul	<b>Race for Life at Cheltenham Racecourse</b> Cheltenham Racecourse, Gloucestershire GL50 4SH 10k at 2.30pm, 5k at 11am Entry costs £14.99 per adult, £10 under 16's <a href="http://raceforlife.cancerresearchuk.org">raceforlife.cancerresearchuk.org</a>
4 Jul – 15 Jul	<b>Cheltenham Music Festival 2012</b> Venues throughout Cheltenham Time: Various times, prices vary <a href="http://www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/music">www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/music</a>
6 Jul – 9 Jul	<b>'Barn on the Farm' Music Festival</b> Over Farm, Gloucester GL2 8DB Farm gates open for festival 10am Friday 8 July, Tickets TBC <a href="http://www.barnonthefarm.co.uk">www.barnonthefarm.co.uk</a>
7 Jul – 8 Jul	<b>Royal International Air Tattoo</b> Fairford, Gloucestershire Gates open at 7.30am. Flying display starts at 10.00am Tickets: Early bird tickets available for £29 until 4 January 2012. Children under 16 FREE when accompanied by an adult ticket holder. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Tickets can be purchased at <a href="http://www.airtattoo.com">www.airtattoo.com</a> or by calling the Ticket Office on 0800 107 1940 <i>No tickets are available on the gates. Also Available in selected Barclays Banks and Tourist Information Centres</i>
7 Jul	<b>Event: Midsummer Fiesta, Cheltenham</b> Montpellier Gardens, Cheltenham 12 noon – 9pm, <i>FREE admission</i> <a href="http://midsummerfiesta.com">midsummerfiesta.com</a>
11 Jul – 22 Jul	<b>Cheltenham Cricket Festival 2012</b> Cheltenham College, Bath Road, GL53 7LD Cricket commences from 10.30am Ticket prices vary <a href="http://midsummerfiesta.com">midsummerfiesta.com</a>
14 Jul – 15 July	<b>Tewkesbury Medieval Festival 2012</b> Lower Lode Lane, Tewkesbury Free entry although there's a small fee for car parking, <a href="http://www.tewkesburymedievalfestival.org">www.tewkesburymedievalfestival.org</a>

## Olympic Torch Relay in Gloucestershire

The Olympic Torch will be carried through the following locations in Gloucestershire:

### Wednesday 23 May

• Cirencester • Stroud • Painswick • Brockworth • Shurdington • Cheltenham (evening celebration)

### Thursday 24 May

• Gloucester • Maisemore • Hartpury • Corse & Staunton

## Wychwood Music Festival 2012

8 – 10 June

Widely regarded as the UK's most family and green friendly festival, Wychwood has gone from strength to strength over the last five years fast becoming the UK's most successful independent arts event of the summer season.

The weekend promises a magical weekend of:

- Music • Workshops • Comedy • Poetry
- Real Ales • Great food • Global Trading Village
- Healing gardens • Idyllic camping

For further information phone Wychwood Music Festival Box Office: 01993 772580

# ARRC Group Welfare Update

By Major Joanne Robinson

This edition of the Bulletin sees us bid farewell to Capt Matt Pittaway who has been standing in as the ARRC Sp Bn Welfare Officer during 2011 and early 2012. He will jet off to Cyprus to run the decompression task for 20 Armd Bde before returning to 14 Sqn as the 2IC. On behalf of everyone I thank him for his time and hard work within the Innsworth Station Welfare Office. As one leaves the team another arrives and I take this opportunity to welcome WO2 (BSM) Andy Griffin who joined us in Nov 2011 as the new Support Battalion Welfare Warrant Officer.

May I also take this opportunity to thank the Operational Welfare Support Cell who did a sterling job whilst HQ ARRC was deployed on operations. They organised and ran some fantastic trips and events throughout the year and you can read all about their last outing to the Hilton beauty salon in this edition. Hopefully everyone who took part in the trips, events and the Families Sunday Lunches will agree that they did an excellent job. Their office in the Innsworth Station Community Centre has now closed with all welfare enquiries now being handled by the ARRC Group Welfare Office.

The Welfare Office continues to provide the single and married soldiers and their family with first line welfare support and assistance, if you are not sure if we can assist then come and ask us. The office is located behind the Mace Shop next to the Innsworth Station Community Centre.

We hold coffee mornings/afternoons on the following days:

Innsworth Station Community Centre	Every Wednesday 10:00 – 11:00
The Beacon Children's Centre, Kingsway	Every Wednesday 13:30 – 14:30



■ Coffee Morning at Kingsway



■ WO2 (BSM) Andy Griffin, ARRC Support Battalion Welfare Warrant Officer

We also manage two contact houses in Middleton Lawn, Innsworth and the Innsworth Station Community Centre. Both facilities are available to hire by military personnel and the Community Centre is also available for hire by civilians. If you would like further information then drop in and see us. These clubs are currently available at the Community Centre.

Just ask at the Welfare Office for further details

- Mums and Tots – Mon and Thurs 09:30 – 11:30
- Dance – Fri 15:30 – 17:00
- Rainbows – Wed 17:30 – 18:30
- Musical Mayhem – Tues 10:30 – 11:30
- Beavers and Scouts – Mon 17:30 – 21:00
- Cubs – Fri 18:00 – 20:00

# Operational Welfare Support Cell – Update

By Sgt Owen Woodman



Now that HQ ARRC has completed its deployment to Afghanistan I am saddened to tell you that the Operational Welfare Support Cell (OWSC) is now closed. Headed up by Maj Tony O'Rourke, WO2 Al Burke, Miss Jeanette Gavin and myself, our main role was to organise days out and lunches for all the families who had loved ones deployed on ROTO 1 and 2. We hope that you have participated in and enjoyed our shopping and cultural trips, the Summer Fete, or the Children's Christmas Party. We have also organised the Families' Sunday Lunches which have proved very popular especially with the younger guests.

Before Christmas we were tasked with organising our last event and we decided on a pamper day for the wives. Out of the blue The Hilton Hotel and Escape Spa Club in Tewkesbury rang us with a fantastic offer that we could not refuse. We were able to arrange treatments over 4 days in January which certainly allowed ROTO2 wives one last treat before partners arrived home from Afghanistan.

Set in 140 acres of parkland the Hilton Hotel and Escape Spa Hotel was the perfect place to relax, unwind and enjoy all of the facilities. Over 4 days 40 wives enjoyed the various spa treatments on offer and I would like to thank the Hotel and Spa staff for all their help in making the event a fitting way to mark the end of the OWSC.

Over the course of HQ ARRC's deployment, the OWSC organised 24 different events that were enjoyed by over 2,200 people. We would like to thank everyone who has supported us and hopefully we have made life slightly easier for families of those who deployed.



■ Cadbury's World – One of many great trips organised by the OWSC



■ Sgt Owen Woodman and WO2 Alan Burke

# Housing Update – Kingsway

By Major Joanne Robinson



■ New to Kingsway, Co Co Coffee Lounge

As the ARRC returns from their commitment in Afghanistan an even greater focus will rest upon the issues that make everyday life acceptable to military personnel and their families. This, coupled with the part we have to play in the Gloucestershire community, is in many ways the final chapter to the ARRC's move from Rheindahlen. A key issue, which has the interest of many, is that of housing. This short article aims to provide a brief description of the ARRC's housing for the wider NATO community and some detail on housing developments for those already serving in the ARRC.

ARRC have a 135 Bulk Lease Hire (BLH) houses within Gloucestershire; a small proportion of the 899 properties that the Defence Infrastructure Organization (Operations) have on long term BLH throughout the country. Whilst there are six other enclaves of service housing dotted around Gloucester, Kingsway is our main BLH location. As the newest of all sites it is an ever improving estate which has already come a long way from when the ARRC first moved in 18 months ago. There has, without question, been a period of adjustment for those who live there. The new UK builds are not the same construction or size as the more traditional style service families' accommodation although the image of these modern town houses, with contemporary interiors, is far from unsatisfactory for the vast majority of residents. Constructive criticism and transparency of the estate's developing nature are now laying the foundations for the military communities that will follow. The points below are a good example of how the estate continues to improve with new facilities being developed all the time.



■ The Barn Owl Pub

In addition to the Innsworth Station Welfare Office running coffee afternoons every Wed at 1330 hrs, the Kingsway Residents Association actively encourages and develops a local sense of community. Military residents are encouraged to join with regular events such as quiz nights and a community litter picks going on across the estate.

Forthcoming events include the Queens Jubilee celebrations combined with the Big Lunch (4 Jun), Kingsway in Bloom (18 Aug) and a Gloucester Carnival 2012 float on 28 July.

So what's coming to Kingsway...

**The Barn Owl Pub.** The Barn Owl has now opened its doors to the public and is slowly growing its clientele.

**Sports Facilities.** A number of sporting facilities, including a bowling green, 8 tennis courts and a sports pavilion should be ready for the summer.

**Schools.** A second junior school is being opened on September 13.

**Community Centre.** A new community centre will be built next to the junior school throughout Summer 2012.

**Hair and Beauty Salon.** The Ice Hair and Beauty Salon opens on 28 February next to Kingsway's Tesco Express.

**Veterinary Practice.** A new vets is also planned to open in the vicinity of Tesco Express.

**ASDA.** The ASDA is the preferred partner for the proposed development of a 4.5 acre site at the entrance of the Kingsway estate off the A38 in Quedgeley. The store is expected to open in 2013.



■ Site for development of the new ASDA

**Road Adoption Updates.** A number of roads are currently being upgraded, including:

- Woodvale and Valley Gardens target adoption date in March 12.
- Surfacing should be complete and adoption achieved of Thatcham Ave and Brize Ave by March 13.
- Goose Bay Drive's anticipated adoption by late 2013.
- The local centre link road from Nass Lane's anticipated adoption is late 2013/2014.

A useful website for dates and activities is [www.kingsway-villagers.co.uk](http://www.kingsway-villagers.co.uk)

# Innsworth Station Photographic Club

Interested in photography?

Then why not come along to the Innsworth Station Photographic Club. It's open to all Serving members and their families.

The aim of the club is to encourage and promote photography, from beginners to the experienced photographer. It's for anyone who wants to take better pictures, improve technical skills, meets new people and appreciate all aspects of photography. Joining the club is a great way to enhance your photographic skills and knowledge, meeting others who share the same interest at the same time. You do not need top of the range camera equipment, any type of camera will do.

Run by two professional photographers employed within HQ ARRC, the club has a full and diverse programme, which includes lessons, competitions and photographic outings.

The Club will be meeting at 1830 hrs on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2012 at the Innsworth Station Conference Centre.

Find us on Facebook for further information or call WO2 Stu McKenzie on 01452 718395.



# Easter traditions from around the world

## United Kingdom

It is tradition to eat hot cross buns on Good Friday, as they symbolise the cross on which Jesus was crucified. Traditional dinner is prepared on Easter Sunday consisting of lamb, potatoes and lots of vegetables. People exchange Easter Eggs, Easter bread, hot cross buns and other gifts, such as clothes, chocolates or holidays packages, with one another. Easter bonnets or baskets are made that are decorated with things like daffodils. Easter bonnet competitions are also held and a large number of children participate in them. As a part of the tradition, the winner gets an Easter egg.

## United States of America

Easter in the U.S. is celebrated in many different ways by many different religions. Most often, it is celebrated with traditional church services and family festive celebrations. On Easter Sunday in New York and other cities, large street parades are held where people show off their new clothes and Easter bonnets. The parade is often led by someone carrying a candle or a cross.

Easter is a time to eat special foods, usually baked ham, potatoes and vegetables.

## Germany

In Germany, Easter is started by covering the cross on Good Friday. On this day they eat dishes which have fish in them. Easter begins with attendance at a mass, traditionally begun Saturday evening and continued into Sunday morning. Easter Sunday is often family-oriented, during which a variety of sweet foods are consumed, such as cookies, cake and chocolate. Often the most anticipated part of the day is the hiding of eggs and cookies in the garden.

A town in Germany called Oberammergau, performs a 'passion play' at Easter time, traditionally every ten years (the next one is scheduled to occur in 2020). The passion play tells the story of the suffering, crucifixion and death of Jesus. Approximately 1200 villagers perform in this six-hour play.

## Spain

On Palm Sunday, people go to mass in the morning. Children carry palm leaves to be blessed by the priest. Boys carry a simple palm branch, and the girls carry a branch that has been decorated. They often have sweets, tinsel or other decorations hanging from them.

In Christian churches, Ash Wednesday is the first day of the penitential season of Lent, named for the ceremonial placing of ashes on the forehead as a sign of penitence. In Roman Catholic Church, ashes obtained from burned palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday are blessed before mass on Ash Wednesday. The priest place the blessed ashes on the foreheads of the officiating priests, the clergy, and the congregation, while reciting over each one the following: "Remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return".

During Easter festivals, the saints or *pasos* are carried through the streets by specially chosen people, some of whom wear the traditional hooded costumes of the community.

## Italy

In Italy olive branches are used on Palm Sunday instead of palm branches.

Pretzels are often a significant Easter food, the twisted shape representing arms crossed in prayer.

The season of Lent is traditionally preceded by a carnival with colourful pageants, masquerades, dancing, music and all kinds of merrymaking. *Carnavale* festivals usually begin in January and last until Ash Wednesday. An important part of the carnival is traditionally the wearing of masks.



## Greece

In Greece people carry around a brightly coloured egg on Easter Sunday. When they meet another person they knock their eggs together and say, "Christ is risen". Greeks eat a round, flat loaf marked with a cross that is decorated with red Easter eggs called *Christopsomon*.

Easter in Greece is often celebrated with family-oriented religious festivals. Greeks traditionally fast through Lent. On Good Friday, flags fly at half-mast, church bells toll, and in the evening after a church service there will be a candle-lit procession – priests in their robes, gilt crosses and then the congregation – to the town square.

## Poland

In Poland, Easter is celebrated with a holiday item called the Blessing Basket. The basket is traditionally prepared on the Saturday before Easter. Inside the basket they place beautifully coloured eggs, bread, cake, salt, paper and white coloured sausages and with the basket that is then taken to the local church to be blessed. Every item in the basket has symbolic meaning: coloured eggs signify the risen Christ, bread and salt are for good health and a prosperous life, and sausages are considered to be a 'wish' for abundant food and fertility for the coming spring.

Another Easter tradition in Poland is the tradition of *watering*, one during which people splash each other with water, and action believed to bring good health to all.

## Netherlands

On Palm Sunday, or *Palm Zondag*, Dutch children go in processions from farm to farm collecting eggs for the Easter sports. To find the eggs they carry a curiously decorated stick known as a *Palmpaas* or Easter "palm". This stick is attached to a hoop which is covered with boxwood and adorned with coloured paper flags, egg shells, sugar rings, oranges, raisins, figs, chocolate eggs, small cakes and baked dough figures or swans or cocks.

On Easter Sunday, there is a special Easter meal. The table is decorated with coloured eggs and spring flowers, and *Paasbrood*, a sweet bread with raisins and currants. In eastern Netherlands, almost every village lights an Easter bonfire on a hill or high point. People begin collecting wood for the fires weeks in advance, each area attempting to outdo each other by building the biggest and best fire.

## Hot Cross Buns

Serve up a treat this Easter with this very British hot cross bun recipe. Makes about 12 buns.

### Ingredients

- 2 oz (50 g) caster sugar, plus 1 level teaspoon
- 1 level tablespoon dried yeast
- 1 lb (450 g) plain flour
- 1 level teaspoon salt
- 1 rounded teaspoon mixed spice
- 3 oz (75 g) currants
- 2 oz (50 g) cut mixed peel
- 1½-2 fl oz (40-55 ml) warmed milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 oz (50 g) butter, melted

For the glaze:

- 2 level tablespoons granulated sugar

### Directions

1. First stir the teaspoon of caster sugar into 5 fl oz (150 ml) hand-hot water, then sprinkle in the dried yeast and leave it until a good frothy 'beer' head forms.
2. Meanwhile sift the flour, salt and mixed spice into a mixing bowl and add the remaining 2 oz (50 g) of sugar, the currants and mixed peel. Then make a well in the centre, pour in the yeast mixture plus 1½ fl oz (40 ml) of milk (again hand-hot), the beaten egg and the melted butter. Now mix it to a dough, starting with a wooden spoon and finishing with your hands (add a spot more milk if it needs it).
3. Then transfer the dough on to a clean surface and knead it until it feels smooth and elastic – about 6 minutes. Now pop it back into the bowl, cover the bowl with a lightly oiled plastic bag, and leave it in a warm place to rise – it will take about an hour to double its original size. Then turn it out and knead it again, back down to its original size.
4. Divide the mixture into 12 round portions, arrange them on the greased baking sheet (allowing plenty of room for expansion), and make a deep cross on each one with a sharp knife. Leave them to rise once more, covering again with the oiled polythene bag, for about 25 minutes. Meanwhile pre-heat the oven to gas mark 7, 425°F (220°C).
5. Bake the buns for about 15 minutes. Then, while they're cooking, melt the sugar and 2 tablespoons of water for the glaze over a gentle heat and brush the buns with it as soon as they come out of the oven, to make them nice and sticky.



■ Hot Cross Buns

# Blue Star Discounts

## Discounts for ARRC Group personnel and their families

Blue Star is designed to raise awareness of those businesses, shops and members of the local community that specifically support ARRC Group offering discounts, deals or support to ARRC Group personnel.

Those that we are aware of are shown below. Please contact us with any more that you may be aware of so we can share the information with the ARRC group family and continue to expand our database.

Company	Address	Contact	Support offer
TSL	The Sandwich Lady 42 Winchcombe Street Cheltenham, GL52 2ND	07951745106	Decent Hand Cut Sandwiches, Gourmet Coffee, Homemade Cakes and healthy snacks. <a href="http://www.thesandwichlady.co.uk/">http://www.thesandwichlady.co.uk/</a> Email:Caroline@thesandwichlady.co.uk
Flower Works	4 Worcester Street Gloucester, GL1 3AA	01452 530 381	10% discount when ordering online or via phone. Must quote code 240 when booking.
Toni & Guy	35 Northgate Street Gloucester, GL1 2AN	01452 413 322	Discounts for both personnel and their families. Does not apply at weekends. Ask for discount when booking, show ID card when paying.
CROFTS Grooming Parlour	11 Oldbury Road Tewkesbury, GL20 5NA	01684 274 900	£5 discount available on production of ID card.
421 Taxi	278 Barton Street Gloucester, GL1 4JJ	01452 421 421	10% discount for service families.
Virgin Active	Centre Severn Gloucester, GL4 3HR	01452 634 400	Monthly deals available for ARRC personnel and families, call for latest offers.
Gloucester Rugby	Kingsholm Road Gloucester, GL1 3AX	01452 872 287	Discount available depending on seating area. Show ID card. Earlier you book the greater the deal.
Esporta Health Club Health & Leisure	Delta Way Gloucester, GL3 4BJ	01452 651 000	10% off membership and reduced joining fees for HQ ARRC personnel and families.
Woodward Auto Vehicle Services	Innsworth Tech Park Gloucester, GL3 1DL	01452 731 188	Reduced hourly labour charge. Ask for Mr Woodward.
Innsworth Auto Colour Services	Innsworth Tech Park Gloucester, GL3 1DL	01452 731 417	5% discount on services.
Cheltenham Cycles	61 Winchcombe Street Cheltenham, GL52 2NE	01242 255 414	10% discount on majority of stock.
Kate's Barber Shop	218 Bristol Street Gloucester, GL1 5TA	07539 907 445	30% discount off cut & colour on a Tuesday and Wednesday. Call and speak to Carol.
John Weygang Optometrists	31 Morley Avenue Churchdown Gloucester, GL3 3TL	01452 855 484	15% discount off private purchase spectacles. Authorised by MOD to measure for respirator spectacles.
Graham's School of Motoring	7 Leven Close Longlevens Gloucester, GL2 0AP	07939 340 168	10% discount on hourly rate.
APD Auto Parts Auto parts and diagnostics	25 Neptune Business Park Tewkesbury Road Cheltenham, GL51 9FB	01242 222 041	Motor vehicle spare parts service. Trade discount available for members and families.
CROFT FARM Waterpark	Bredon's Hardwick Tewkesbury, GL20 7EE	01684 772 321	Various offers depending on the activity. Call and ask for Tom.
M-Tags Engraving	Chestnuts Farm Norton, Gloucester, GL2 9LH	01452 730 429	5% discount offered.
Cheltenham Regency Hotel	Gloucester Road Staverton Cheltenham, GL51 0ST	01452 713 226	Quote 'IMJIN' when making booking, need to be confirmed by fax or email: <a href="mailto:info@cheltenhamregency.co.uk">info@cheltenhamregency.co.uk</a>

# ARRC Community Facebook Group

## A unique and secure social network for ARRC staff and their families

Following the success of the ARRCnet Facebook site – which was designed to help support the families throughout the duration of the ARRC's deployment to Afghanistan in 2011 – we are launching a new and improved version for the wider ARRC Community.

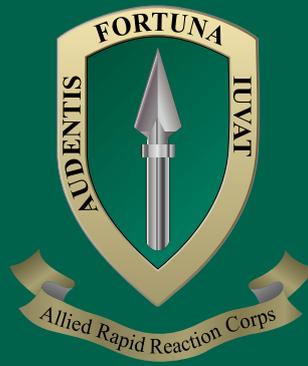
The new page is designed to be enduring and broader in its appeal. It will follow the same style as the previous version in that it will be a private group designed to enable all those with a connection to the ARRC to chat and share ideas. It aims to become primary forum for ARRC staff and their families to exchange information.

To join in and start sharing information search for 'ARRC Community' on Facebook and ask to join the group.



## Bulletin: Useful Contacts

Organisation	Telephone	Mobile
Gloucestershire Police	101 (non-emergency)	
MOD Police	Office: 01452 730804 (not 24 hrs)	07771626346
Imjin Barracks Guardroom – MPGS	01452 717089	
Public Affairs Office	01452 718007	
Station Staff Officer	01452 712612 Ext 7848	
Welfare Office	01452 730309	
Imjin Barracks Medical Centre	01452 712612 Ext 5982	
Innsworth Hive	01452 712612 Ext 7936	
Defence Housing Estates Innsworth	01452 739223	
Touchstone	0800 9882 433	
Modern Housing Solutions	0800 7076000	
Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre	01452 519951	
NHS Direct	0845 4647	
Innsworth Barber Shop	01452 712612 Ext 6033	
Gloucester Tourist Information Centre	01452 396572	
Cheltenham Tourist Information Centre	01242 522878	
Gloucester City Council	01452 522232	
GL1 Leisure Centre	01452 396666	



## CONNECT WITH HQ ARRC ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- Find HQ ARRC on Facebook for the latest news updates.
- Browse HQ ARRC's online photo albums using Flickr's HQ ARRC's photostream.
- Follow HQ ARRC on Twitter and stay informed on current events using tweets, video links and other information.
- Find more in depth information about the ARRC on our website.
- For staff and families of the ARRC there is a private Facebook group. Search for ARRC Community and ask to join the group.



[www.rrc.nato.int](http://www.rrc.nato.int)



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[www.youtube.com/  
user/HQARRC](http://www.youtube.com/user/HQARRC)



[www.facebook.com/  
groups/rrccommunity](http://www.facebook.com/groups/rrccommunity)

Email: [pao.webmaster@rrc.nato.int](mailto:pao.webmaster@rrc.nato.int)  
Telephone: 01452 718500