

Final farewell to the Welsh

by WO2 Hall

"Fire the what RSM, Sir?"
 "The Royal Salute Sergeant Major."
 "Not wanting to speak out of turn sir, but isn't that what Gun Bunnies do sir?"
 "Not anymore son. Now sort it out."

You may ask why 22nd Regiment Royal Artillery was asked to fire a Royal Salute in the capital of Wales, Cardiff. One of the reasons was this would be the last official military duty that the Regiment would undertake before going into suspended animation. The second reason; the title 'Welsh Gunners' was awarded to the Regiment in 1967 after the then 22nd Air Defence Regiment Royal Artillery fired the Royal Salute on the occasion of His Royal Highness Prince Charles being granted the title Prince of Wales. So what a befitting way to bring the Regiment and its title of the Welsh Gunners to an end.

Normally this honour would fall to 100 Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers) who are based in Newport and without their expertise, guidance and support the successful firing of the Royal Salute would not have been possible.



Firing 21 gun Royal Salute



The Past and Present: Ex and serving members play a friendly game of rugby

It started with, letters to RAGTT (UK) requesting help and a course was hastily convened. It was an outstanding success, with the GTT SMIG's WO2 Corrigan and WO2 Jones turning 30 'cloud punchers' into respectable Light Gun operators in five days. The next problem how to fit 30 strapping Welshmen and women into the three sets of Blues which the Regiment owned! However with half the Royal Regiment on standby (especially 104 Regt RA (V) and many a dodgy tailor in tow, the deadline was met.... just.

With all the training completed it was back to the Regiment for the forthcoming disbandment parade. For most of the salute party this was a major event and most had key parts to play. With the successful completion of the parade came seven weeks POTL post Cyprus and NI to unwind and study drill books relentlessly.

On Wednesday, 4 February with everyone in one piece and ready to go, it was the start of two days of rehearsals, inspections and late nights brushing up on skills learnt seven weeks earlier. The rehearsals at Cardiff Castle were quite memorable, especially for the various tourists visiting the castle in the pouring rain. So the sight of our four gun detachments being expertly drilled by WO2 (SMIG) Blanchette from RAGTT



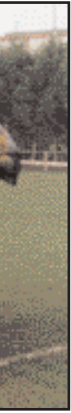
The Deputy Lady Mayor of Cardiff inspects D Sub with the CO

(UK) certainly brought a cheer to what was initially a very dreary day. With rehearsals complete to the satisfaction of WO1 (RSM) G McIntosh (now WO1 (RASM) G McIntosh) it was off for an early night in preparation for the Royal Salute.

Friday, 6 February saw the Royal Salute. With everyone safely in place at Ty Llewellyn TA Centre and final preparations and inspections complete, some inspirational words from the RSM set the scene for a very successful day for the Regiment. Meanwhile all the Regiments Officers and Warrant Officers and many other members past and present were congregating in the Angel Hotel for pre-salute drinks and to greet the inspecting officers. As this was taking place the guns were being escorted through the streets of Cardiff and being brought into position in the castle ready for the salute. So with all the guests in place and the guns in position there was nothing that could spoil what was to be a very important day for the Welsh Gunners. The Salute Group marched on to the Royal Artillery Band playing and adopted detachments rear. Then the senior serving saluting officer Brigadier Cholerton (Commander 160 Bde) and the Lady Deputy Mayor of Cardiff inspected the troops. With this complete all that was left was to fire 21 rounds starting at precisely midday. It was then with some surprise that Cardiff Fire Brigade came racing into the Castle sirens blazing, thinking that it was on fire. False alarm! However this did not detract from the occasion merely adding to

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Gunners



the guest list with all the fire-fighters joining in with the guests to watch.

Post salute drinks were then taken in the Mansion House where all guests were invited back to celebrate and in some cases commiserate the last official duty 22nd Regiment Royal Artillery (Welsh Gunners) were ever to carryout. That evening a dinner night was staged for all senior Warrant Officers and Officers of the Regiment along with the main guest, Major General J Milne CB (Regtl Hon Col).

It was then onto the coaches early next morning for a trip to Bedwas Rugby Club for a past verses present thrash in the mud otherwise known as a game of rugby. It is at this point that I would like to thank all of the past team. For some had travelled from Germany and remote parts of the country. This just goes to show the support for the Regiment that is still felt. The game itself probably would not have featured on Sky Sports but for all those that were involved it was certainly rather entertaining. With the present team eventually running out winners 49 – 15. Even if the past team did have twenty players on the pitch for the last ten minutes of the game! With half the Regiments chefs on duty at the club no one went hungry after the game. Washed down with a few well-deserved beverages the stories of amazing tries scored from ones own 22 started to flow. This was to be a perfect finish to the end of an era for 22nd Regiment Royal Artillery (Welsh Gunners).

In summary there are too many people to thank individually for making this period in the Regiments history so successful. But on behalf of the Regiment and all its members a debt of gratitude is definitely owed to all that assisted and supported this important time for the Regiment.



The then RSM 22 Regt RA, WO1 McIntosh and his heavies

REGULAR ARMY

Brig CC Brown late RA is promoted to the substantive rank of Maj Gen 01 Apr 04 with seniority of the same date

Regular Commissions

Lt Col TP Clarke retires on retired pay 02 May 04 and is appointed to Reserve of Officers

Lt Col RH Hurst retires on retired pay 03 May 04

Maj CJ Mears retires on retired pay 12 May 04 and is appointed to Reserve of Officers

Maj CM Wood retires on retired pay 12 Apr 04 and is appointed to Reserve of Officers
Capt SA Rumbold from IRC 14 Oct 03 to be Capt with seniority 09 Feb 00 (Belated Entry)

Lt HM Jennings to be Capt 11 Feb 04

Lt JD Walters to be Capt 11 Feb 04

Regular Commissions (Late Entry)

Maj RJT Hill retires on retired pay 28 Apr 04

Maj IE Tate retires on retired pay 31 Mar 04 and is appointed to Reserve of Officers

Intermediate Regular Commissions

Capt GHC Bedford retires 09 May 04 and is appointed to Reserve of Officers

Capt ER Cleland from SSC 14 Oct 03 to be Capt with seniority 13 Oct 03 (Belated Entry)

Capt N Cross from SSC 14 Oct 03 to be Capt with seniority 10 Oct 00 (Belated Entry)

Capt JP Garton from SSC 14 Oct 03 to be Capt with seniority 10 Aug 01 (Belated Entry)

Lt TG Vincent to be Capt 10 Apr 04

Short Service Commissions

Capt CJW Morelli relinquishes commission 13 Apr 04

Lt MJD Fellows to be Capt 11 Feb 04

2Lt JP Grimsdell to be Lt 16 Jan 04

2Lt SNJ Deakin to be Lt 13 Apr 04

2Lt CSH Hewitt to be Lt 13 Apr 04

2Lt JMF Howard to be Lt 13 Apr 04

2Lt JR Manchip to be Lt 13 Apr 04

2Lt THJ Sawyer to be Lt 13 Apr 04

REGULAR ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS

Short Service Commissions

Capt JK Bate from The Active List 10 Apr 04 to be Capt

Capt MD Elliott from The Active List 7 May 04 to be Capt

Class II

Capt AC Copley from TA Group A 27 Oct 03 to be Capt (Belated Entry)

Capt R Hamlett from TA Group A 01 Nov 03 to be Capt (Belated Entry)

TA Group A

Maj DB Holley to be Lt Col 16 Apr 04

Capt P Hatton to be Maj 01 Mar 04

Capt RI Taylor resigns commission 16 Mar 04

Lt EM Aitken to be Capt 17 Dec 03

Lt AJ Bazley to be Capt 01 Mar 04

Lt MS Burton retires 31 Dec 03 and is appointed to Reserve of Officers (substituted for the notification in Gazette (Supplement) dated 20 Apr 04)

Lt M Collins to be Capt 16 Aug 03 (Belated Entry)

Lt (on probation) RJ Collins is confirmed as Lt 15 Aug 02 (Belated Entry)

Lt TW Hope to be Capt 01 Feb 04 (substituted for the notification in Gazette (Supplement) dated 23 Mar 04)

Lt NP Hurst resigns commission 22 Dec 03

Lt DS Joyce resigns commission 02 Apr 04

Lt T Lavender resigns commission 4 Jul 03 (Belated Entry)

Lt (on probation) I Morgan is confirmed as Lt 28 Feb 03

Lt HL Parnham resigns commission 28 Oct 03 (Belated Entry)

Lt RD Porter resigns commission 15 Dec 03

2Lt (on probation) VA Glass is confirmed as 2Lt 01 Apr 03

2Lt PP Larkham to be Lt 4 Aug 03 (Belated Entry)

2Lt SB Mattimore to be Lt 05 Aug 03 (Belated Entry)

2Lt W Reed to be Lt 01 Mar 04

2Lt (on probation) RJ Simcock resigns commission 11 Jun 03 (Belated Entry)

2Lt EAJ Wrigley to be Lt 01 Jun 03 (Belated Entry)

O Cdt D Gracie to be 2Lt (on probation) 08 Feb 04

CV Wilton to be 2Lt 21 Nov 03 with seniority 5 May 02 (formerly Royal Navy)

TA Group B

Capt (NRPS) CG Newman from AGC (Staff and Personnel Support Branch) (V) 01 Dec 03 to be Capt (NRPS) with seniority 16 Oct 00