



THE MERCIAN REGIMENT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - Q4 2019

PRINT-FRIENDLY VERSION

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1 MERCIAN UPDATE

Capt T Skelding

Operation ORBITAL - Ukraine

1 MERCIAN's commitment to Op ORBITAL continues until the end of the year, with the last deployed troops arriving back in the UK just in time for Christmas. Throughout 2019 the constant stream of 1 MERCIAN-led Short-Term Training Teams have delivered much needed training to over a thousand soldiers from the Armed Forces of Ukraine as they conduct regular deployments to defend their country against Russian-led Separatist Forces.



Most recently we've been working with our Danish and Canadian counterparts delivering training in all aspects of soldiering, from basic marksmanship to advanced sniping; and Section tactics to Brigade planning.

In November troops deployed to the Odessa Military Academy conducted a service of remembrance at the site of a grave from a soldier who fell in the First World War; well cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, this site has survived to this day within a Ukrainian cemetery.

Boxing

The 1 MERCIAN boxing team has put a lot of hard training and long hours in this year. Many of the boxers went from complete novice to competing in their first fight in front of the whole Battalion.

Whilst our Battalion boxers were training in Bulford, one of last year's stand outs, LCpl Sheppard, has spent this year training on the Army Boxing Team. After a hugely successful bout at the inter services boxing championships, he beat his competition from the Royal Navy to take the title.

The final boxing event of the year was the 1 (Armoured Infantry) Brigade boxing competition, with 1 MERCIAN defending the title after last year's victory. Four MERCIAN boxers qualifying for the finals put up a valiant defence, conceding the championship. With our re-subordination to 20 (Armoured Infantry) Brigade now complete we're looking forward to testing some new competition next year!



Operation CABRIT – Estonia

We're delighted to announce the successful conclusion of A (Grenadier) Company's deployment to Estonia on Op CABRIT with the Kings Royal Hussars Battlegroup. The 125 troops of A (Grenadier) Company spent 9 months deployed in Estonia as part of the Enhanced Forward Protection Battlegroup, providing deterrent to Russian aggression in the Baltic states.

During their deployment they worked closely with the French Foreign Legion and as well as in Estonia they conducted exercises and defence engagement across the Baltics in Latvia and Lithuania. They are now on some much-deserved post operational deployment leave until next year.



Exercise VIRTUAL EAGLE

Back in September 1 MERCIAN took part in Exercise VIRTUAL EAGLE, a simulated Battlegroup exercise overseen by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory with the aim of testing future battlefield technology. The vehicle sheds were filled with over 300 networked computers allowing two rifle companies and an armoured squadron's-worth of Armoured Fighting Vehicles and Tanks to be commanded and crewed, all on the same virtual battlefield.

After a few days of familiarisation on the system the Battlegroup spent two weeks testing the effects of future weapons and protective systems against a live enemy on the virtual system, under the watchful eyes and clipboards of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory research team.



2 MERCIAN - CHAMPION COMPANY & SPORTS

SSgt (SSI) C Williams RAPTC

Champion Company has been a huge player in the Forecast of Events (FOE) for 2 Mercian in 2019. Companies have competed in several events spread across the year. These have included sporting events such as Rugby, Football and Athletics, along with more Battle PT events such as Super Teams, March & Shoot and the Log race. With the Champion Company still yet to be decided and the final event in Nov 2019, anticipation mounts as to who will be crowned Champion Company! The current standings are as follows:

Champion Company Event	Grenadier Coy	Malta Coy	Kohima Coy	Dragon Coy	HQ Coy
British Army Warrior Fitness	3	2	5	1	4
Cross Country 5.6km run	0 (DNA)	5	3	0 (DNA)	4
Rugby 7's	1	5	3	2	4
March and Shoot	2	5	3	0 (DNA)	4
Soldier Conditioning Review	5	4	1	2	3
Road Race 5km	3	2	5	1	4
Super Teams	0 (DNA)	5	2	4	3
Log Race					
Football 6's	3	2	5	1	4
Current Points Total:	17	30	27	11	30

The Battalion has also been very busy conducting various sports throughout BFC. In Oct/Nov 2019 the Battalion competed in the Cyprus Walk Down (4-member team over 25 miles) and achieved the fastest time.



To recognise the sporting achievements over the last 18 months, 2 Mercian held their first Sports Awards Dinner in Nov 2019. Colours and awards were presented to those who have represented significantly to sport and awards were presented in the following categories:

- Rising Sports Star of the Year 2019 – Winner – Pte Howdle
- The Capt Rupert Bowers Award 2019 – Winner – Sgt Farrell
- Sports Team of the Year 2019 – Winner – Cross Country
- Sports Personality of the Year 2019 – Winner – Cpl Silvers

Honouree guest Anthony Ogogo attended the awards which made for a memorable night for all in attendance and capped off a fantastic end to the year for the Battalion.



2 MERCIAN - C (KOHIMA) COMPANY LFTT – EXERCISE KOHIMA WARRIOR

2Lt D Davenport

Following a string of force protection duties C (Kohima) Company were happy to be back in the field training for our main purpose: warfighting. We initially deployed to RAF Akrotiri to complete TLFTT and to train those using the GPMG and Sharpshooter weapon systems. However, the main component of training was based at Pyla Ranges. Pyla offers spectacular views over the south coast of Cyprus and provides some challenging terrain to test junior commanders on tactics. Sgt Ross and Lt Bough started the training with individual and fire team activity and from this the effort and grit of the C (Kohima) Company soldiers was easy to see, they were happy to be back in the last bound position.

The intensity of the training increased quickly making full use of the platoon weapon systems and adding considerations for section 2IC's. C (Kohima) Company strives to push those with ability and as a result many found themselves working at a higher level than they're used to. Privates who have displayed an excellent attitude and robustness found themselves in appointment and 2IC's and Lance Corporals looking to promote, were nominated as section commanders. Even despite the lack of experience, those in appointment stepped up to the challenge and proved themselves capable of commanding combat infanteers in the most challenging of scenarios.

The battle camp culminated in a platoon attack, a chance to incorporate all lessons learned during the week. The insertion was assisted with the help of RAF 84 Squadron, providing a helicopter to deliver the troops to their line of departure. With 6 enemy positions located over a wide range of terrain the soldiers of C (Kohima) Company were tested in everything from the Platoon Commander's estimate and orders to the Grenadier bayoneting and clearing through the position. The exercise ended, as all good exercises do, with a CASEVAC up a re-entrant to the reorg location.

Overall, C (Kohima) Company displayed their true qualities as combat infanteers and those who are new to the Company, were awarded the Kukri flash. Welcome to the Company.



2 MERCIAN EX EAGLE BRIDGE

Maj M Brigham MBE

The aim of Ex EAGLE Bridge was twofold. Firstly, to train the conceptual component of fighting power, by developing our understanding of joint and combined arms operations studying Operation Market Garden. The second trains the moral, using our Regimental history to learn lessons from our past to train our junior leaders of today.

The exercise provided conceptual training to 30 JNCOs from 2 MERCIAN, starting with a description of the events and aiming to stimulate thought and debate, in order to exercise powers of analysis and decision making, aimed at the tactical level. A constant thread throughout the BFS was drawing comparisons between the historic and modern-day capabilities and challenges.

The exercise covered three main activities:

1. TEWTs. Each stand considered the tactical situation and provided a problem set that students had to answer with the combat estimate or by delivering QBOs. TEWTs were conducted at Joe's Bridge (tactical use of ground), Valkenswaard Tank Ambush (anti-armour tactics), Waal Bridge (obstacle crossing), Arnhem (Maj Cain's defence and break-through) and Oosterbeek 'Cauldron' (LSgt Baskeyfield).
2. Discussion Stands. These aimed to draw out lessons learnt, identify solutions to modern problems or discuss best practice. Discussions were conducted at Eindhoven (Defence), Son Bridge (Airborne Assault), SS at Nijmegen (Defence), Arnhem (a bridge too far).
3. Interest Visits. Interest visits were conducted at the 1st Airborne Division Museum, Maj Cain's landing west of Arnhem and use of gliders, crossing the Rhine, the Polish Airborne landing at Drielf, the British Evacuation across the lower Rhine and finally a visit to the unnamed grave of LSgt Baskeyfield.

The most inspiring and moving part of Ex EAGLES BRIDGE was following the stories of Lt Jack Reynolds MC, LSgt Baskeyfield VC and Maj Cain VC. These stories moved all the participants and inspired further study.



4 MERCIAN OVERVIEW

Maj P Bullard

This quarter has been both challenging and successful for 4 MERCIAN. The start of the period was dominated by Ex IRONWOLF 19 that saw 117 soldiers deploy to Lithuania as the British representation on a multi-national exercise in support of Op CABRIT, the first time the Army Reserves have taken on this deployment from the Regulars. The exercise improved integration with our NATO partners and between Army Reserves and Regulars. Conceptual development has continued on a monthly basis, with soldiers attending seminars on Georgian Information Warfare, counterinsurgency and political education from key note speakers.

On operations 4 MERCIAN have played our part. Four soldiers returned from deployment to Op CABRIT with 1 MERCIAN, and Capt Rawji has begun his PDT for his Op CROSSWAYS deployment in the new year. All this again proving the utility of the Army Reservists to the Fd Army. Soldiers not deployed have pushed themselves to improve their soldiering skills. The 4 MERCIAN Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL team this year achieved a highly coveted silver medal after months of training, setting the conditions for further success next year. Additionally, four soldiers deployed on Ex SPRINBOK in South Africa to successfully represent 4 MERCIAN in an international military skills competition.

4 MERCIAN understands the importance of sport and AT, and this quarter has seen a number of its individuals contribute to the Corps and Army level sport. The 4 MERCIAN Swim Team competed in the Army Reserve Swimming Championships winning numerous medals. Capt Bermingham (captain of the Army Waterpolo Team) instructed on the Army Swimming and Waterpolo Camp, Maj Hamilton (captain of Infantry Squash) represented the Infantry at the Inter Corps Squash Championships and Sgt Barry continued his role as Army Women's Football Coach in numerous fixtures.

The Bn is looking forward to a break over the Christmas period for an opportunity to reset and spend time with families. 2020 has a lot to excite the soldiers and to develop 4 MERCIAN, but before the Christmas Leave the Bn will deploy one final time on Ex SNOW EAGLE where the Companies will compete in the annual 4 MERCIAN March and Shoot competition and the Bn Christmas dinner. One final challenge of 2019!



4 MERCIAN RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Maj B Johnston MBE

Recruiting and retention are critical activities in sustaining 1, 2 and 4 MERCIAN; as such, they are everyone's business. We must continue to ATTRACT, RECRUIT, MENTOR and RETAIN high quality recruits and transferees from other reserve units and the Regular Army. This will require continuous review of processes, structures and C2.

Unit manning targets; a command-led joint endeavour to attract new talent, broaden the recruiting base and connect more effectively with society. Additionally, we intend to place greater emphasis on retaining the people already in the Regiment.

I wish to grow and sustain the MERCIAN Regiment, with a continued focus on quality and a shift in emphasis towards increasing our proportion of under-represented communities. I intend to consolidate A2020(R) structures IOT set the conditions to expand the geographic footprint into areas currently not represented enabling us to reach a wider, more diverse demographic which better reflects society.

The MERCIAN 'offer' must remain both credible and attractive and delivered as part of a combined approach with both our Regular and Reserves. The 'offer' should align with the Army, but emphasise uniquely attractive tribal brand of Regimental family, shared history, culture and comradeship. The 'offer' should also include:

- Pay/allowances. Including daily rates of pay, pension entitlements, annual bounty and paid leave.
- Military Training. Including opportunities to train across the world with the AR and Regular Army, as well as the unique opportunities increasingly afforded by the Bn's Defence Engagement activity.
- Courses. Both military and civilian outlining qualifications and professional experience.
- Sport and Adventurous Training. The latter should also connect with the Bn's Defence Engagement activity.

To be effective, 'the offer' must be realistic – otherwise it risks being detrimental to our recruiting and retention.

It requires the CoC to create a positive retention culture through meaningful training and belonging to a cohesive team. Only through improved inflow, driving the recruit pipeline and addressing retention will we sustainably grow to meet our ambitions. We all have a part to play in retention; value every soldier's contribution and treat them as individuals. This also includes delivering an exciting, meaningful and inspirational FOE by effectively communicating the Regular and Reserve narrative and showcasing our uniquely attractive Warrior brand. Emphasis must be placed on extending our reach with under-represented groups and female audiences, whilst maintaining our standing within our traditional recruiting base.

Prepare candidates for selection and training, whilst also maintaining interest and a sense of belonging in the candidate as they progress through the recruiting pipeline – key area to focus; medical and physical fitness.

Codifying the Offer Narrative, retention statement.

4 MERCIAN is a superb organisation, and a great place to work. It offers opportunities more varied, more exciting, more challenging and more interesting than any other job. It offers world class training, the chance to be present when history is made, to see and do things that a bus driver or a teacher could only ever dream of. In 4 MERCIAN you can be a member of a high-performing team, made up of talented individuals, who will nurture and develop you. At 4 MERCIAN you can travel, do adventurous training, fire an array of weapons or throw grenades, operate expensive kit, and be challenged. All while you are on a career path that will make you feel proud and your family feel proud too. You are paid to be fit, to play sport and to wake up before dawn in the country side or on an operational deployment far further afield, and in all these places do exciting things that push you to your limit. 4 MERCIAN offers an amazing life. To retain its people, it must make sure that these opportunities are not outweighed by negatives that, with some imagination and investment, are possible to fix.'



4 MERCIAN CAMBRIAN PATROL

4 Mercian patrols team achieved a silver medal on Cambrian Patrol 2019. This has been a significant milestone in the Battalion's history. Since the amalgamation in 2007, the reserve element have either maxed out at a certificate or not been able to attend due to OTXs. The team achieved something great, something which resembles the true reflection of the Battalion's soldiering skills.

The training started in glorious Leek, where the team formed up and worked on their navigation and weight carriage. Having spent hours navigating with 55lbs on their backs the team soon realised what the patrol exercise would entail. This did not deter anyone, it only ignited more spirit to do something that the Battalion has not been able to achieve for many years.

The next part of training took them to the infamous Brecon Beacons, where the load was increased, and the routes became more difficult. There would be no reason to climb harsh mountains on the exercise, however the men had trained hard in order to overcome any difficult terrain that the exercise threw their way. The team summited Pen Y Fan, as well as climbing up VW valley and Fan Fawr.

Finally, an SOP phase was conducted back in sunny Leek, not so sunny at the time. However, all skills were swept up, culminating in contact drills including various casualty evacuation drills. The idea behind this was to master the basics and ensure the battlecraft syllabus was followed to every letter.

The time arrived, where the team linked up the night before and enjoyed a 3-course meal of takeaway pizza to carb up before the big day. The team departed at 0245 hours and made way to the designated RV, which was a small school opposite a large car park deep inside Llandovery within the Black Mountains region. DS weighed the team and instructed them to move to the next RV which was the reception area. The reception area was already bogged down with clay like mud due to torrential rain. The team trudged up to receive a safety brief, and immediately constructed a model pit in the beautiful rain. Orders were given and before they knew it, they were moved off at 1200 hours. The release point was a sharp 350m ascent up a saddle. Once out of sight, the team

stopped for a few minutes to catch their breath back and started to laugh at the ridiculous rain and terrain that they were battling against. Nonetheless, the team moved on and arrived at the first stand which was a CBRN decontamination lane. Dressed in full romeo and climbing up a hill, the team realised that full CBRN dress is not a laughing matter and were more than glad to strip down once told to.



Confidence grew as the patrol progressed. A series of unmanned RVs and overtaking teams had boosted morale even higher and before they knew it, the light had disappeared, and the patrol were already into the recce stage 10 hours in. Through swift progress, the patrol afforded a handful of hours sleep. Concurrently a patrol report was compiled. Trying to scribble in red crayon under red light does not help!

At 0300 hours the patrol stepped off to the next stand which as river crossing at night. Having done this through daylight hours, the night seemed to be a lot colder! At 0400 the last man crossed, and the team were all huddled up into an administration area getting changed back into almost dry clothes. Some would argue that it was unpleasant, the best way to look at it is that it is a recovery ice bath. Great for athletes, great for soldiers!

An onward movement took them to a lying up position, where further orders were given, and the patrol report was handed in. At this time, sunlight emerged, and things became brighter. The team were informed that they were the second team to come through, which made them wonder where all the other 18 teams ended up!



Nonetheless, the patrol's concern was the next RV and after a few more hours of patrolling, they encountered the counter explosive ordnance stand where a lane had to be cleared through a minefield. At this point a game of cat and mouse emerged as the lead patrol were in sight.

The penultimate stand was located in Cielini Village, where a snap medical and counter artillery fire stand was presented to the patrol. Patrol Commander and 2ic conducted the counter artillery fire and the remainder did vehicle recognition and assembled a radio in order to send a message. All objectives were met, and a new grid was given following the successful completion of the mission.

The next grid was to link up with a recce callsign and move into an area to destroy an enemy position. The route was at least a 10km slog uphill with short sharp downhills. It goes without saying that this was the most challenging part of the patrol where every single member had a moment to question their resolve. Out of nowhere a small shelter had appeared and the patrol had moved into it to recuperate for 30 minutes. Warm kit, rations, hot chocolate was on the go and this had reset the patrol. Again, mastering the basics of administration goes a long way. There is nothing complicated about it, just do the basics well. After a few more kilometres of hobbling and wincing, the team were receiving a live downlink off a drone feed and they moved into a forming up position (FUP) and carried out a section attack with live overhead fire at night, which resulted in the processing of one captured personnel (CPers). This was to be the final testing moment for the patrol. After 30 hours of patrolling, they were still able to flick the switch and destroy an enemy position with focussed aggression.



After 35 hours, they arrived at Drovers Arms and were thrown into a room to conduct a hot debrief. After thorough questioning, the DS gave a final grid. This sent the patrol to Farm 7 which led them to endex! The team were high in spirits and before they knew it their patrol manager, CSgt Nicholls arrived in the rescue vehicle to take them back to Sennybridge Camp for a well-deserved rest.

Looking back, the patrol were the 17th team to be released out of 19 and were 2nd to finish. They completed the patrol in 35 hours out of the allocated 48 hours, and that is with almost 5 hours of rest, covering no less than 60kms. The silver medal is a start and the Battalion's patrol team will be aiming for gold in 2020.

Well done 4 Mercian and the team members, Capt Rawji, Cpl Noble, Cpl Holmes, LCpl Grant, LCpl Higgs, LCpl Hulkes, Pte Watts and Pte Robinson! And last but not least, to CSgt Nicholls for facilitating and taking the training as well as the G4 support given by various individuals from the Battalion.



4 MERCIAN D (DRAGON) COY UPDATE

Maj I Nellins

The final quarter of the year was dominated by Ex IRON FIST. The G1, G4 and G7 preparation provided an excellent focus, but didn't stop D Company from conducting other activities. D Company manning and attendance continues to improve through both good retention and improved recruiting. A steady flow of recruits have progressed through Phase 1 Training and are ready to complete the Combat Infantryman's Course early in the New Year.

Ex IRON WOLF is covered separately but it was a great success for D Company. 29 members of the Company deployed on the exercise, effectively furnishing a full Rifle Platoon and a small Support Team.

The 4MERC Cambrian Patrol Team had a heavy D Company influence with 4 of the 8-man team coming from 'the Dragons'. Cpl Sam Holmes, LCpl Josh Grant, LCpl 'Incredible' Hulkes and Pte Tim Robinson provided the backbone of the team and are congratulated on their achievement of gaining a Silver Medal. Their achievement has inspired others in the Company, so the aim is to fully furnish a Cambrian Patrol Team from D Company for next year.

The Company Second in Command, Capt Will Rose, organised a Clay Pigeon Shooting Weekend in early December. Nine members of the Company attended the weekend, held at Bisley, and enjoyed the experience of shooting in a different style to a normal range day.

The December Training Weekend included a March and Shoot Competition and a Christmas Dinner on the Saturday and a multi skills FIBUA Ex on the Sunday. The D Company March and Shoot Team were the clear winners and were presented with the trophy during the Christmas Dinner.

Congratulations to LCpl 'Rooky' Rook on his award of the Volunteer Reserve Service Medal (VRSM). Also, congratulations to LCpl Declan O'Rourke on his promotion to LCpl. Declan will be leaving us in January to start the Regular Army Commissioning Course at RMA Sandhurst. We wish him all the best for the future. There will be a lot of changes in D Company early in the New Year and there are a lot of opportunities and activities to look forward to and we all look forward to getting the most from the planned exercises and AT opportunities.



MERCIAN REGIMENTAL BAND UPDATE

This quarter has seen The Band of the Mercian Regiment complete our ATX, welcome a new DOM, and be out on parade in all British weathers.

In Autumn, our successful training concert “Hearts and Minds”, held at Market Drayton Festival Centre, saw the Band working with guest soloists including a violinist from The Countess of Wessex Strings Orchestra, providing valuable concert experience for our musicians.

The Band were invited back to the impressive Hartlebury Castle, to perform as part of the Beating Retreat in support ABF The Soldiers Charity, finishing just as dusk settled over the castle: well-timed or we'd not have been able to see our music!

In November, The Band was on their ATX based at Cosford. This enabled valuable training time for full band, marching band, and small group work. There was also time for training towards TEQ progression and to introduce concepts of improvisation and blues music - we never stop learning!

The first engagement of the ATX was at the National Memorial Arboretum, in Alrewas, as part of a moving service to open the Royal British Legion Field of Remembrance. Here, The Band played out for the first time under the direction of our new Director of Music, Major Ian Johnson, who has joined us from The Band of the Scots Guards. Welcome to the Reserves, Sir.

Our ability to Stand Firm was put to the test as The Band provided the musical support for the 4th Regiment Royal Artillery Medal Parade, in a very wet and cold Catterick. As the medals were presented and the rain lashed at everyone on parade, the music to ‘A Bridge Too Far’ seemed apt! Luckily the uniforms were dry in time for Remembrance Sunday.

On Remembrance Sunday the sun shone down on Birmingham City Centre as the city gathered together. After the service and laying of the wreaths, The Band led the parade on a complete circuit of the Cathedral Square and past the dais, where the salute was taken by the Vice Lord Lieutenant and the Lord Mayor of Birmingham.

CPD has been in action with Corporals Cooper and Robert completing their JNCO CLM course and Musicians Wykes and Kryszczczuk sitting their TEQ 2 practical exams.



MVRA

Members of the Mercian Volunteers Regimental Association holding their Annual Service at the 'Mercian Grove' at the National Memorial Arboretum on Wednesday 6 November 2019.



WORCESTER BRANCH W.F.R.A.

Sunday 27th October 2019 was the 105th anniversary of the Battle of Gheluvelt Commemoration Service, held at the Interpretative Feature in Gheluvelt Park Worcester. The Park was opened in 1922 by Field Marshal John French, 1st Earl of Ypres in 1922 on the 17th June to commemorate the Regiment's part in the battle, who stopped a major German offensive on the 31st October 1914 and was recognised as an action of significant importance.

The weather on the day was kind to the congregation as it had been virtual nonstop rain for for the previous 48hrs causing widespread flooding.

This ceremony is organised annually by Worcester Branch W.F.R.A.

Attending the service was the Deputy Lord Lieutenant Brigadier Roger Brunt CBE, The High Sheriff of Worcestershire Edward Holloway Esq, MP for Worcestershire Robin Walker and Mayor of Worcester, Councillor Allah Ditta. Also in attendance were Capt. R Jones and Capt. C Bermingham of the Mercian Regiment. Inspector D Troth of West Mercia Police.

The Reverend Canon Paul Tongue, Honorary Padre of Worcester Branch conducted the service.

Afterwards at the Gheluvelt buffet Worcester Branch members Brian and John Hewlett were awarded Association Merit Awards for their unstinting work in support of Worcester Branch, they were presented the awards by the High Sheriff of Worcestershire.

WFR 50 EVENTS

There are two events organised to celebrate 50 years since the formation of the WFR. Both are ticketed events and further details can be obtained from:

Worcester – Friday 28 February 2020. Secretary of Worcester Branch, Nigel Fish
nigelfish@ymail.com

Mablethorpe – Saturday 29 February 2020. Chair of Chesterfield Branch, John Johnson
johntyjohn@msn.com



ST GEORGE'S CHURCH BERLIN

Cindy Clark, Assistant Regimental Secretary

The original Anglican St Georges Church, Berlin was destroyed in the War and was located in what became, in 1945, the Soviet Sector of Berlin.

In 1950, a new church was built in the British Sector of Berlin to serve as the Garrison Church for a congregation that consisted mostly of members of the British Forces.



When the church was re-built, both ends of all the pews bore the units that had been stationed in Berlin since the war. Over the course of time, some of the insignia disappeared and the church set out to restore them.

This included the scroll from the Worcestershire Regiment Shield and RHQ were delighted to be able to donate a new scroll to aid the restoration, which is now almost complete.



THE MERCIAN REGIMENT MUSEUM WORCESTERSHIRE

Dr John Paddock

The current temporary exhibition in the Worcestershire Soldier Gallery forms part of our commemorations for World War 2 and follows the 1st Battalion the Worcestershire Regiment in North-West Europe in 1944/45, from the beaches of Normandy to the Rhine.

We are also planning permanent improvements to the gallery. Currently, there is no display that considers or explores the role of the Army or the Regiment as a repository for cultural heritage. Neither are the treasures of the Regiment and the Officers' Mess dealt with. The Museum therefore is planning a new large case and interpretation to deal with this oversight. The case will allow changing and flexible displays along the themes with a price tag in the region of £18,000.

At Dancox House, our volunteers continue to work on our WWI database enhancement and augmentation. There are currently 52,707 entries. The Museum is also taking part in the Army Museum Ogilvy Trust sponsored Libor-funded archive digitisation project. We have just received our notification pack and are busily packing elements of the archives for scanning in March 2020.

Following their successful trip to Bletchley Park the Friends of the museum are looking forward to their Christmas Social and a packed events programme. The highlights include a trip to National Memorial Arboretum in April and a talk on "The Worcesters at Kohima" given by Hugh Richards (grandson of Brigadier Hugh Richards, who commanded the garrison at Kohima)



100TH BIRTHDAY OF WILLIAM BARLOW

In November the Mercian Regiment wished a Happy Birthday to ex-Stafford William Barlow. Private Derby was in attendance for this very special day.

Barlow fought in France and Germany during WWII, where he was a driver mechanic and was taking equipment and stores where needed. He was awarded 5 medals for his service.



MERCIAN TARTAN

The Mercian Regiment has an official Tartan! Ties, bow ties, scarves and wraps in Regimental colours; a British made product from a company that supports UK Armed Forces Charities.

The products can be ordered from www.theministryoftartan.co.uk.