

REPORT ON THE COLONEL'S FUND GRENAДИER GUARDS AS AT 31 DEC 13

The Colonel's Fund continues to be supervised by a Steering Committee on behalf of the Regimental Trustees. The Steering Committee reviews the Fund's activities on a regular basis, whilst day to day management is carried out by the Director of Welfare and the Regimental Welfare Committee. The basic thrust of this year's report remains the same as for 2012 because the work that is being done, the challenges faced and the support offered have hardly changed.

The Fund remains busy. During 2013, donations have continued to come in with many individuals contributing. Their generosity is very much appreciated. As at 31 Dec 13, the fund had raised £2,883,267 and had spent £991,134.

Since the fund was launched in 2007, the MOD has greatly improved its support to injured servicemen and the advent of the Army Recovery Capability and Personnel Recovery Units have been very welcome. In addition, the creation of the H4H Operational Fund, administered by the ABF "The Soldier's Charity", has meant that most of the needs of injured servicemen are increasingly well met. These two factors have enabled the Colonel's Fund to focus more on families of the injured and bereaved families, as well as continuing to provide support to injured Grenadiers.

Matt Ellmer, the Regimental Casualty Officer, continues to do a sterling job providing welfare support to over 43 seriously wounded Grenadiers and 16 bereaved families. His responsibilities remain:

- To ensure that the Regiment is involved at every stage of a wounded Grenadier's rehabilitation. He monitors their Individual Recovery Pathway (IRP) to ensure that they have access to the key services and resources required to help them, either to return to duty, or to make a smooth transition into an appropriately skilled civilian life. This involves:
 - Maintaining a strong working relationship with the 1st Battalion's Unit Welfare Officer (UWO).
 - Developing a network of serving and retired Grenadiers, charities and the commercial sector in order to identify sources of support and employment.
 - Drawing on the Colonel's Fund to give financial assistance in providing advice, welfare, and benevolence quickly to the point of need.
 - Co-ordinating holiday offers, sporting and adventure training opportunities and other generous offers of help, all of which are geared to aiding recovery.
 - Effective mentoring and being a dedicated and trusted ally, who will help individuals explore new ideas for the future.
 - Constantly being alert for opportunities to upgrade Individual Recovery Plans (IRPs) with practical and financial help from either the Colonel's Fund or the ABF Operational Fund. Examples of this are the provision of funding for training courses, specialist orthopaedic beds, exercise bikes and light weight wheelchairs.
 - Providing the reassurance that wounded Grenadiers have the full support of the Regiment behind them, and highlighting the benefits that this brings. This bespoke support helps build self-esteem, mental strength and resourcefulness at times when individuals may be feeling low or depressed.
- To provide support to bereaved families. Initially managed by the Unit Welfare Officer (UWO), at an appropriate time, the families become the responsibility of the RCO to give the enduring Regimental support for as long as they wish for it. The ghastliness of bereavement and the stress for families coping with the serious injuries of their sons or husbands takes a

huge toll. The RCO co-ordinates all our efforts to alleviate the stresses and strains to these families. This involves:

- Acting as a Regimental point of contact, offering reassurance, giving confidential advice, mentoring, and actively seeking opportunities for their lives to be enhanced as they recover from their loss.
- Assisting families in a myriad of ways, supported by appropriate financial assistance from the Colonel's Fund. A "nothing is too much trouble" approach from all Grenadiers has helped to build a strong connection with the families concerned for which they often express their gratitude. We are proud to have them continue as members of the Regimental family.

In addition to funding the work of the RCO and providing financial support to those who need it, The Colonel's Fund continues to offer:

- Free financial advice by professional Financial Advisers for those in receipt of large sums from compensation and insurance.
- Holidays for those who have been seriously wounded and their close families, and for the close families of those who were killed, in order to give them the opportunity to recharge their batteries.

There remains the as yet unknown toll of mental casualties. In 2013 we have continued to see cases of PTSD and the Colonel's Fund has been able to offer support to those suffering from it. The major challenge remains that of discovering who is suffering mental problems in the first place, so that help and support can be offered.

In the Autumn of 2012, the idea emerged for the Wellington to Waterloo (W2W) Bicycle Ride. On the morning of Tuesday 24 Sep 13, 161 riders and their supporters drawn from the broad spectrum of the Regimental Family left Wellington Barracks led by the Regimental Band and marched with their bikes to the Guards Memorial; after a short wreath-laying ceremony, everyone formed up for the start and after a few encouraging words from the Prime Minister, off they went, heading for Folkstone. By Thursday evening everyone had arrived at Waterloo having cycled via Calais, Ypres, and Oudenarde, in time for a most enjoyable party and a more sedentary trip home on Eurostar. Many participants commented that the W2W Bike Ride was the most enjoyable and inclusive event that they had ever taken part in during their time in the Regiment; from that alone, it can be considered an outstanding success. For The Colonel's Fund, the financial result of the Bike Ride, at 31 Dec 13, was a net profit of £287557. However since then, the net result is £343k, an increase substantially due to Gift Aid being reclaimed, which is an outstanding achievement.

W2W was the last major centrally organised fund-raising event for the foreseeable future. Of course, the fund remains open for donations, legacies and any individually generated fund-raising efforts.

You can remain confident that the Regiment is continuing to provide the appropriate support whenever and wherever it is needed, and in doing so, is upholding its great traditions.