

OFFICERS' MESS

In December 1995, 4RAR took over the running of the Mess from 1 Brigade and it was formally renamed the 4RAR Officers' Mess. The Mess was shared between 4RAR, 110 Sig Sqn and 145 Sig Sqn. The occasion was marked by drinks in the Mess by the 4RAR officers who were present in the Battalion at the time. No money could be spared to put over the bar due to the financial situation at the time and the somewhat less than generous assistance given to the Battalion from 1 Brigade, however this issue was addressed by the Lieutenants of 145 Sig Sqn by their generous donation of furniture obtained from the previous occupants of the Mess.

The last 12 months have seen the Mess continue to grow, not only in terms of membership but also in terms of Mess spirit, activities and functions. The Mess now holds the Battalion Colours in a specially built cabinet. The year has been punctuated regularly by Thursday morning work parties for the officers and have seen the Mess take on a more unique and unit oriented feel, so that today, the Mess has its own distinct atmosphere and character. These work parties have seen Lieutenants walking around the roof setting up the television antenna and cleaning gutters, Captains installing the sprinkler system and drilling holes in walls and Majors raking leaves and supervising the Lieutenants.

The end of 1995 was marked by a formal dining night where Captains Miles and Wilkinson set the standards that the Lieutenants of the Battalion have continued to aspire to today. 1996 has been marked by several functions of note, in particular the B Coy 'German Night' which led to calls for no more Sour Cream, Wilko's 'A Night at Hill Top' and finally the Captains' 'Mystery Flight'. Numerous other functions have been held in the Mess ranging from happy hours with 1 Field Hospital, mixed and formal dining in nights and casual dinners. The Regimental Dining in Night held in June concluded with orders for the recall of the Battalion being given and the deployment of the majority of the Battalion on a five day exercise. Even with this activity imminent, several officers continued to drink through the night, reporting as quite ready for war the next morning.

The wives and fiancés of the Mess members have supported the Mess strongly in all its activities throughout the year. Their influence was enough to force the Mess to redecorate the Ladies Toilets to give it a more feminine appearance and have a good deal of influence. The subject of another officers' work party.

A fierce competition was completed at the beginning of 1996 to decide upon who would receive the dubious honour of the 'Commanding Officer's Champion'. A great deal of effort was put in by all the 4RAR Lieutenants who participated and LT Pollard of 145 Sig Sqn. Though LT Pollard proved very competitive in the events of mental agility he could not compete with the Infantry in the events of physical and drinking prowess. Ultimately LT Crisp, after a slow initial start proved to be unbeatable and took the honours.

110 and 145 Signals Squadron muppets have all contributed to the character of the Mess and have supported the Mess in everything it has done, they have continued to provide light amusement to everyone in the Mess and made the Mess what it is.

The Mess looks forward to an active year in 1997 as membership continues to grow and the character of the Mess continues to build.