

Send-off at the Senedd for charity soldiers

A DOZEN Welsh soldiers were honoured by Rhodri Morgan at the Senedd yesterday as they continued their mammoth charity fundraising journey from Bosnia to Bangor.

Captain James Westropp and his team from 1st Battalion Welsh Guards set off from Eastern Europe on 1 March this year.

They completed the first leg of the gruelling Iron Guardsman challenge by bicycle, kayak and on foot including three marathons in three days.

During the month-long trip they crossed eight countries and the channel, arriving in London on March 31.

They were greeted by their Colonel, HRH the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, and spent some time in London taking part in the Trooping of the Colours ceremony.

On Sunday June 17, to coincide with an event commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War, they set off once more.

Yesterday (fri) they arrived in the Welsh capital where the First Minister greeted them before sending them off on the final leg of their journey.

Commenting that Rhodri Morgan was a nice guy, Captain Westropp said, I was really surprised that he came.

We were touched that he came out and saw us off.

He seemed to be very interested in the whole thing, very supportive.

It was a bonus.

Captain Westropp said that morale in the group was good and that they had recovered well from the first stage of the challenge.

He continued, It took a couple of weeks just because, although the cycling was fine and the kayaking was ok, the three marathons at the end really saw everyone off.

But everyone's recovered and we're quite fired up for this leg.

The current trip, which is expected to take a total of nine days, will end in Bangor on June 26.

The whole exercise has been to raise money for three worthy causes the Army Benevolent Fund, the South Atlantic Medal Association and Everyman testicular cancer charity.

The goal was to raise 25,000 but already that has been exceeded by 5,000.

Captain Westropp added, The Falkland Islands campaign is an important part of our regimental history because we lost 36 men when the Sir Galahad was hit.

The group travelled to Hereford yesterday and will visit Shrewsbury and Chester en route to Bangor.

About the Author

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