

# THE ROYAL MARINES

## (per Mare per Terram)

■ by CAPT (GBR RN) Andy MALLOWS



The Royal Marines, the infantry land fighting element of the United Kingdom's Royal Navy, was formed as part of the Naval Service in 1755. The Royal Marines can trace their origins back as far as 1664, when English soldiers first went to sea to fight the Dutch. The Royal Marines are

therefore not only soldiers but also seamen, who were and are still today part of the complement of Royal Navy warships as well as fighting men in their own right within the land component. For almost 350 years the Royal Marines have been an integral part of Great Britain's Armed Forces and today can be found serving across the globe both on land and sea.

The Royal Marines have a proud history and unique traditions. Their colours do not carry individual battle honours in the manner of the regiments of the British Army but rather the

“globe itself” as the symbol of the Corps. The badge of the Royal Marines is designed to commemorate the history of the Corps. The Lion and Crown denotes a Royal regiment. King George III conferred this honour in 1802 “in consideration of the very meritorious services of the Marines in the late war.” The “Great Globe itself” surrounded by laurels was chosen by King George IV as a symbol of the Marines' successes in every quarter of the world. The laurels are believed to honour the gallantry they displayed during the investment and capture of Belle Isle, off Lorient, in April–June 1761. The word “Gibraltar” refers to the Siege of Gibraltar in 1704. It was awarded in 1827 by George IV as a special distinction for the services of four of the old Army Marine regiments (Queen's Own Marines, 1st Marines, 2nd Marines, 3rd Marines). All other honours gained by the Royal Marines are represented by the “Great Globe”. As a consequence, there are no battle honours displayed on the colours of the four battalion sized units in the corps. The fouled anchor, incorporated into the emblem in 1747, is the badge of the Lord High Admiral and shows that the Corps is part

of the Royal Navy. The motto of the Royal Marines: *Per Mare Per Terram* ("By Sea, By Land"), is believed to have been used for the first time in 1775 and reflects the dual role of the Corps that is still prevalent today.



A Royal Marine or "Royal" as they are sometimes referred to; is identifiable by his coveted Green Beret (awarded after some of the World's most grueling military training) and the Commando dagger illustrated on a shoulder flash. The Commando Dagger designed by two serving Royal Marines was standard issue in the Second World War. The Fairburn Sykes Knife (named after the designers) now indicates that the wearer is a member of 3 Commando Brigade, the lead component of the United Kingdom's Amphibious Forces.

The Green Beret with the Globe and Laurel Cap Badge is presented to an individual who has passed the arduous Commando Test. The Commando Test itself consists of a series of tests conducted in full fighting order of 32 lb (14.5 kg) of equipment taken on consecutive days and all four tests must be successfully completed within a seven day period; they include: a nine mile (14.5 km) speed march. The Endurance course, a six mile (9.65 km) course across rough moorland and woodland terrain followed by a marksmanship test. The Tarzan Assault Course, an assault course combined with an aerial confidence test. It starts with a death slide and ends with a rope climb up a thirty foot near-vertical wall in full fighting order, completed in 13 minutes. And finally, the 30 miler, a 30 mile (48 km) march across upland Dartmoor, completed within eight hours for recruits and seven hours for Royal Marine officers.

Completing the Commando course successfully entitles the recruit or officer to wear the coveted Green Beret but does not mean that the Royal Marine has finished his training. That decision will be made by the troop or batch train-

ing team and will depend on the recruit's or young officer's overall performance. Furthermore, officer training still consists of many more months.



Over the years the Royal Marines have been awarded numerous Battle Honours. From the American War of Independence to the Battle of Trafalgar; the Boxer Rebellion to the Boer War, World War and World War II. More recently Marines have fought in the Falklands Conflict, the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan. These Battle Honours are reflected in the Globe and Laurel cap badge indicating the global nature of the campaigns in which the Royal Marines have fought.

What marks out a Royal Marine Commando is the sense of spirit and ethos; defined simply ethos is what a group does and how it does it. The ethos of the Royal Marines refers to their role and the way they fulfil it. Since the Second World War, the Royal Marines have developed a specific function as commandos and amphibious forces, undertaking operations in harsh environments be they mountain, jungle, cold weather or desert. This ethos of commitment, teamwork and loyalty, combined with the Commando Spirit is indicative of the modern marine. The four elements of Commando Spirit; courage, determination, unselfishness, and cheerfulness in the face of adversity, are well known to all recruits by the time they complete Commando training. It is the individual characteristics of the modern commando allied to the commando spirit that makes the Marines who they are.

Today the Royal Marines continue their traditions in accordance with the Ethos and Commando spirit that defines who they are. They are the cold weather specialists within the United Kingdom Armed Forces and can be found operating in the Arctic, the Jungle, and the Deserts across the globe. They were the first into Afghanistan in 2002 and Iraq in 2003, since then they have served on numerous tours in both theatres and continue to live up to their motto, *Per Mare, Per Terram*.

***"I never knew an appeal to them for honour, courage or loyalty that they did not realise more than my expectations. If ever the hour of real danger should come to England, they will be found the country's sheet anchor".***

Sir John Jervis, Earl of St Vincent on the role of the Royal Marines 1805 ■