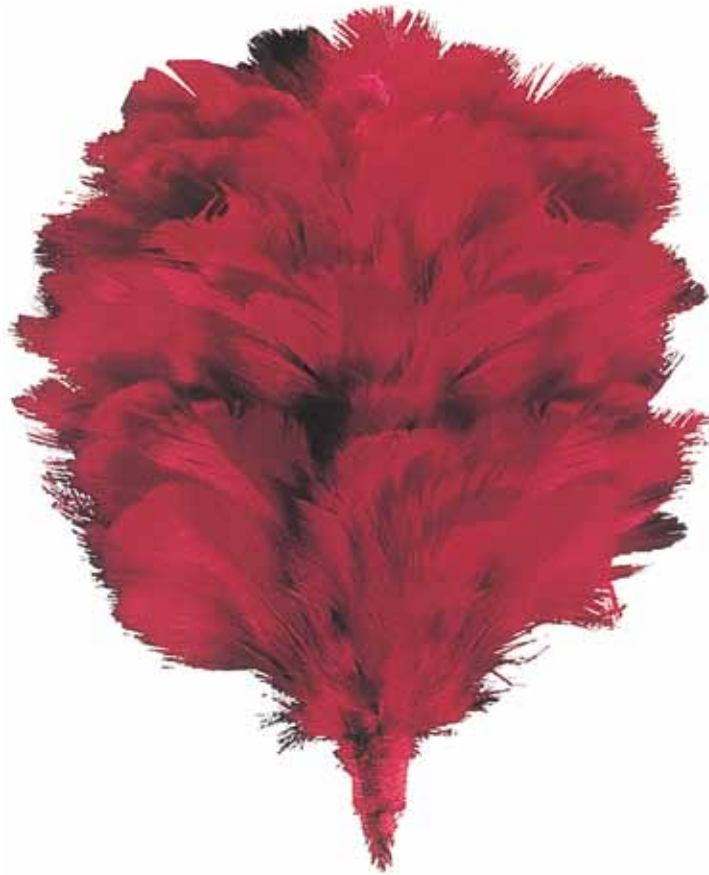


No. 151  
May 2015



# THE RED HACKLE

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No. 151

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May 2015

# THE RED HACKLE

*The Chronicle of  
The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment),  
its successor The Black Watch,  
3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland,  
The Affiliated Regiments  
and The Black Watch Association*

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*On 24th October 2014, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Keating placed a Cross of Remembrance on the Great War "Memorial Wall" at Balhousie Castle. The names of the soldiers being commemorated were William Langslow, Hugh McDonald and James Wright.*

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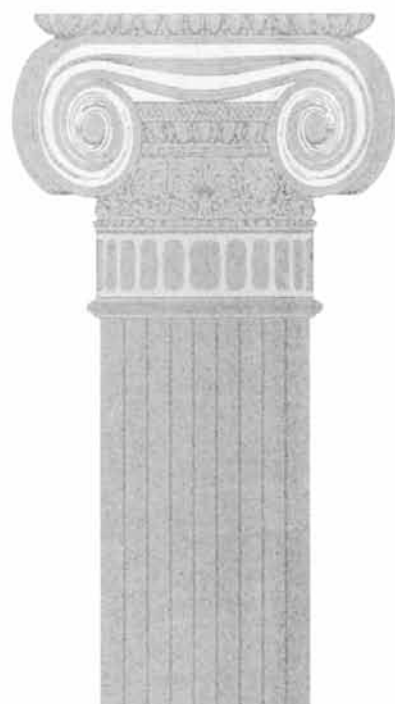
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# THE RED HACKLE



*The Chronicle of  
The Black Watch  
(Royal Highland Regiment)  
its successor  
The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion  
The Royal Regiment of Scotland  
The Affiliated Regiments  
and  
The Black Watch Association*

**May 2015  
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## Editorial

After the excitement and activity of last year when the Association's focus was firmly on Black Watch Corner, we prepared for the autumn and winter and Branches of the Association held their various dinners and the traditional Burns Suppers. The annual Remembrance Service for the families of those killed in Iraq and Afghanistan was conducted at Balhousie Castle on 7 November and was well attended. Local children from Kinnoull Primary School sang their own composition of a song called "We will Remember";

*Turn your thoughts on that occasion  
To those who fought and died in war  
Years have passed and time has forgotten but  
We will remember the soldiers once more*

The Perth Branch Dinner commemorates the award of the Croix de Guerre by the French 5th Army to the 6th (Perthshire) Battalion after the Battle of Tardenois in July 1918; the Angus Branch holds its annual El Alamein Dinner, the Fife Branch their Rhine Crossing Dinner (the 7th Battalion were the first Allied troops to cross the River Rhine in March 1945), the recently formed Edinburgh Branch will have held its first Al Basrah Dinner on 9 May 2015 whilst the Highland Branch will also hold its Aberfeldy Dinner on the same date.

In a new development the Association has created links with each Company in The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, the aim being to foster closer ties between the old regiment and those who continue to wear the Red Hackle. The linkages are as follows;

Battalion Headquarters	– Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Branch and London Branch
A (Grenadier) Company	– Angus Branch
B Company	– Fife Branch
C (Fire Support) Company	– Perth Branch
D Company	– Dundee Branch
HQ Company	– Highland Branch

The Museum of The Black Watch, supported by the Association has established a Great War Memorial Wall in the grounds of Balhousie Castle. At 11 am on the 100th anniversary of the death of an officer or soldier killed in the First World War, a cross of remembrance bearing his name is placed on the wall. The Museum Staff have also prepared an exhibition of work by the First World War artist Joseph Gray which is well worth a visit.

Events commemorating both the First and Second World War are recorded in the articles section of the magazine and remind us of the sacrifice made by our forebears and just how few of our Second World War veterans are now able to travel to Europe and beyond.

Finally, The Black Watch Battalion has had a very compressed programme as it prepared to deploy as a Battalion Headquarters and two Companies to support the UN in Cyprus. Those staying at Fort George will undertake training in Kenya and France but the battalion will not be together in Fort George until the autumn.

The opinions expressed in the articles of the magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Regiment or the MOD. This publication contains official information. It should be treated with discretion by the recipient.

"The Red Hackle" is published every six months in May and November. Contributions large and small will always be welcome. They should be typewritten in double spacing on one side of the paper only. Photographs, cartoons and sketches of Regimental interest are also welcome and will be returned if requested.

All material for inclusion in the various issues must reach the Editor not later than 1 April and 1 October respectively.

From 1 January 2013, bulk orders are supplied at a rate of £7 per copy. Individual copies are sent out to permanent subscribers, both in the UK and abroad, at a subscription rate of £14 annually for UK subscribers, £30 annually to Europe and £30 annually Worldwide by airmail. A Gift Aid Scheme is available for individual subscribers who are subject to UK tax. The magazine fund benefits from tax reclaimed in this way. All subscriptions should be sent to the Editor, The Red Hackle Magazine, Balhousie Castle, Hay Street, Perth PH1 5HR, and those interested in the Gift Aid Scheme, will on request be provided with the correct forms for completion.





# Regimental News

## FORECAST OF EVENTS 2015

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
6 June	Angus Branch Armed Forces Day	Arbroath
15 June	Officers' and Ladies' London Lunch	Caledonian Club London
16 June	Golf v A&SH	Roxburghe
19 June	Regimental Golf Competition	Muckart
20 June	Regimental Reunion	Perth
21 June	Regimental Muster "Waterloo 200"	Aberfeldy
13 September	Fife Branch Alma Lunch	Kirkcaldy
20 September	Angus Branch Standard Rededication	Glamis Parish Church
25-27 September	Loos Centenary Weekend	Dundee
24 October	Angus Branch El Alamein Dinner	RBLs Forfar
30 October	Officers' Gathering Dinner	Perth
6 November	Balhouses Castle Remembrance Service	Perth
13 November	Curling v A&SH	Stirling
14 November	Op BANNER Dinner	Perth
19 November	London Branch Dinner	Victory Services Club London
19 December	Officers' Regimental Ball	Errol Park (tbc)

## OFFICERS COMMISSIONED INTO THE BLACK WATCH (ROYAL HIGHLAND REGIMENT) AND STILL SERVING ON 1 MARCH 2015

After The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) was merged into the Royal Regiment of Scotland, we published a list of all those officers serving in the Regiment on 27 March 2006, the day before the merger. There were 75 names. Since then 46 officers have retired and as at 1 March 2015 the list consists of 29 names:

Maj Gen J M Cowan (Retires 19 September 2015)  
 Brig A J Aitken  
 Col L R MacDuff  
 Col J C Roddis  
 Col B M A Wrench  
 Lt Col M J F Ewing  
 Lt Col R S J Hedderwick  
 Lt Col R R E Lindsay  
 Lt Col A D MacGillivray  
 Lt Col A M Philp  
 Lt Col N K G Tomlin  
 Lt Col M A N Williamson  
 Maj J R P Bailey  
 Maj C M B Broadbent  
 Maj D W Bruce  
 Maj W A Colquhoun  
 Maj N Colquhoun  
 Maj A L Colville  
 Maj A V Cooper  
 Maj B Cooper  
 Maj D C Close  
 Maj S P Dallard  
 Maj J E Kelmanson

Maj T J Petransky  
 Maj J S Prowse  
 Maj R F Sandford  
 Maj D M Sheldrick  
 Maj S G Small  
 Maj A R W Watson

(Retires 5 October 2015)  
 (Retires 12 September 2015)  
  
 (Retires 5 October 2015)

## HIGHLAND FURIES VOLUME 2

Victoria Schofield's research for Volume 2 of our Regimental history has continued apace. This volume will record the Regiment's story from 1899 to 2006 but will also take the reader up to the Laying up of the Old Colours in June 2012. Her detailed research and the breadth of the subject matter (two World Wars) has been challenging but it is hoped that it will be published in 2016.

## GREAT WAR MEMORIAL WALL

The Museum of The Black Watch has established a Great War Memorial Wall in the grounds of Balhouses Castle. At 11am on the one hundredth anniversary of the death of an officer or soldier, killed in the First World War, a cross of remembrance bearing his name is placed on the wall. The Trustees of The Black Watch Association have agreed to give a grant of £1,000 per year to the Museum, to assist with the project that will run from 2014-2018.

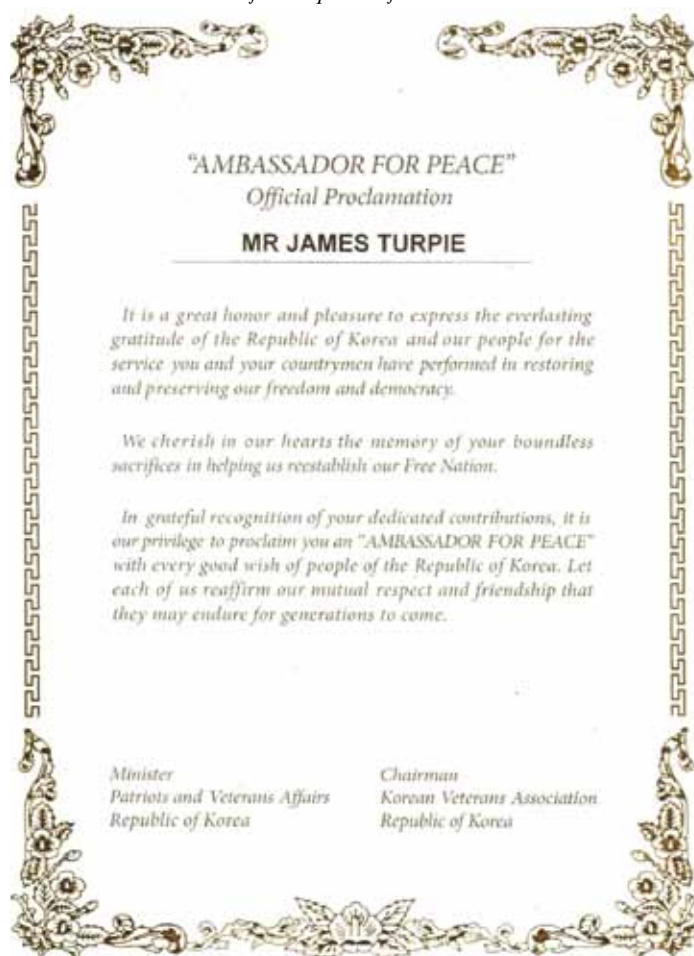
Lieutenant Colonel Jim Keating placed a cross on behalf of The Black Watch Association during one of the ceremonies in October 2014 (see Frontispiece).

## AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE

Readers may be interested to know that Korean veterans have been awarded a medal by the Government of the Republic of Korea. A certificate recognising each veteran's contribution to peace and the freedom of the people of the Republic of Korea was enclosed with the medal.



*The Ambassador for Peace Medal awarded by the Government of the Republic of Korea.*



*The certificate for Korean War veterans.*

## GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING SCOTLAND

The current GOC Scotland will not be replaced when he departs at the end of July 2015 and Army Headquarters Scotland, based at Craigiehall, will close. The Army proposes to maintain its representational profile in Scotland.

The Military Secretary based in Glasgow will take on the additional role of GOC Scotland and will carry out limited representational duties at two star level.

In addition a new, part time two star post will undertake representational duties as Governor of Edinburgh Castle and will play a key role at State Ceremonial and other events.

## OFFICER RECRUITING

If readers hear of any young men who are interested in joining The Black Watch Battalion as an officer they should be put in touch with the Adjutant whose email address is; 3 SCOTS-Adjt@mod.uk.

## LORD LIEUTENANT OF FIFE

Mrs Margaret Dean CVO, the Lord Lieutenant of Fife, a former President of The Black Watch Association has retired as Lord Lieutenant. Her successor is Mr Robert W Balfour FRICS who has already visited Balhousie Castle and met the Association staff. He has kindly agreed to be a Vice President of The Black Watch Association.

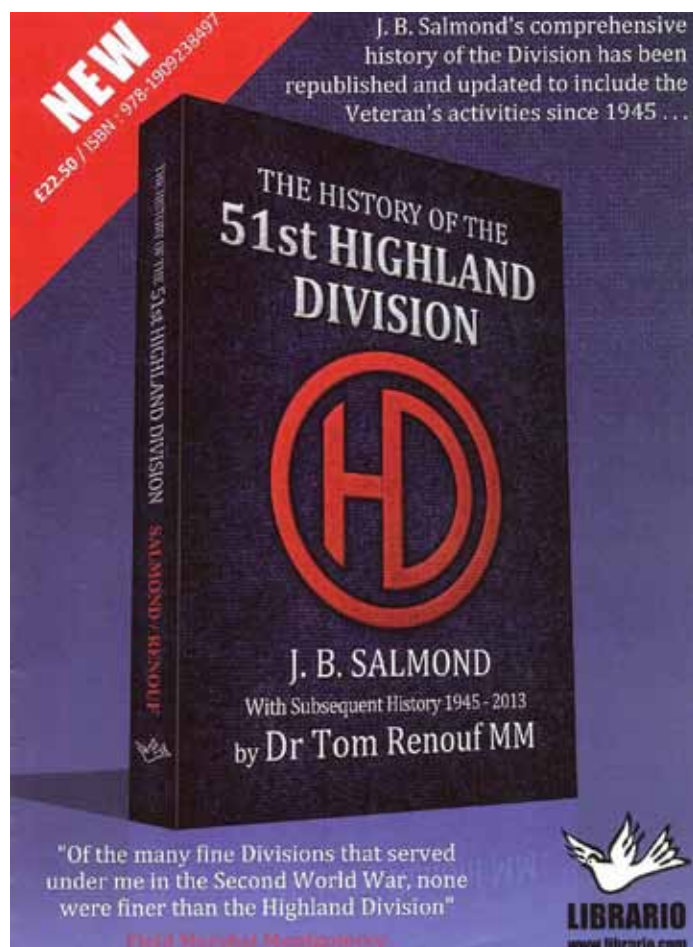
## 51ST HIGHLAND DIVISION – UPDATED HISTORY

Field Marshal Montgomery said: “Of the many fine Divisions that served under me in the Second World War, none were finer than the Highland Division”.

The spirit of the Division has been kept alive by a number of veterans over the years and readers are encouraged to look at [www.51hd.co.uk](http://www.51hd.co.uk) which is an online museum funded by the 51st Highland Division and Ross Bequest Trust.

You should also note that an updated edition of J B Salmond's history of the Division has just been published by Librario and includes an update of the subsequent history from 1945-2013.

This book will appeal to veterans of The Black Watch and those currently serving in The Royal Regiment of Scotland.



The new and updated edition of J B Salmond's history of the 51st Highland Division can be bought from [www.librario.com](http://www.librario.com) for £22.50.

## BLACK WATCH CORNER STATUETTE

A bronze resin statuette of the statue at Black Watch Corner measuring 10 inches can be purchased from Kerry Caster at the Powderhall Bronze Factory [info@powderhallbronze.co.uk](mailto:info@powderhallbronze.co.uk).



*The Black Watch Corner Statuette.*

## SIR RONALD GRIERSON

The Daily Telegraph recorded the death of Sir Ronald Grierson, aged 93, who was a German-Jewish émigré whose family moved to London in 1936. He served with The Black Watch and the war time SAS and he became a banker and public servant and an international networker par excellence.

A full obituary can be found on the Daily Telegraph on line.

## KANDAHAR REEL

The sale of instructions for the Kandahar Reel, which was written by Captain Andy Colquhoun (now retired) and Captain Rob Colquhoun, during the 2009 tour of Afghanistan, has raised over £2,500 for The Soldiers' Charity. It was produced and marketed by the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

Captain Andy Colquhoun currently works for Fortis Logistique in the Congo.

Having left The Black Watch at the end of 2011, he moved to the Congo-Brazzaville jungle at the beginning of 2012 to set up and run a gold exploration camp. After 18 months he moved to a South African logistics company based in Pointe Noire while the gold company refinanced. At the beginning of 2014 he was appointed as the Managing Director of Fortis Logistique. Fortis traditionally services the mining industry in Congo although with difficult times in mining, Fortis has achieved stability and enabled growth with an extensive beer haulage and distribution network. Fortis has doubled in size in the past 12 months and is now not only expanding its services within Congo but looking into opportunities being presented to it in other countries such as Zambia and Senegal.

Captain Rob Colquhoun is Assistant Military Assistant to Commander Land Forces, Lieutenant General James Everard and he moves to Shrivenham to start ICSC(L) in September 2015.



## CURLING REPORT 2014-2015

*By Major JMK Erskine MBE*

On 14 November 2014 the Black Watch hosted the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in Perth in the annual fixture competing for the Macrae Cup. The final score was 16-18 and so once again the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders retained the cup. As the score suggests it was a close match but that only tells half the story. The 'A' Rink led by Tim Usher looked down and out after 4 ends trailing by 7-0. However, winning the next three ends by 5, 4 and 2 shots turned this game upside down. Unfortunately the opposition won the final end by 3 shots thus this game ended 11-10 in the Black Watch's favour. Meanwhile the 'B' Rink's match was extremely tight. After six ends The Black Watch rink skipped by Selby Macduff-Duncan was leading by 5-3. Unfortunately the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders' 'B' Rink won the last two ends by 4 shots and 1 shot thus winning this game by 8-5. Inevitably there were a lot of 'If Onlys' after what was an extremely enjoyable and somewhat tense match, the main one being 'If only it had been agreed to play 7 ends before the match started' because when it came to that stage the Black Watch was 2 shots up. It was then that heads were being scratched as to what would happen if both teams were level at the end of the eighth end. As it was no one needed to bother. Finally, Duncan Cameron also wanted it recorded that a nameless member of the Black Watch did achieve a record – the shortest distance travelled by a stone in the match. It barely went ten feet!! The teams were:

'A' Rink: Tim Usher, Will Henderson, Alex Beveridge, David Noble

'B' Rink: Selby Macduff-Duncan, Jamie Erskine, Duncan Cameron, Alan McEwan.

The next match was due to be against the HIGHLANDERS in January. Unfortunately they were unable to raise a rink and so the match had to be cancelled.

The Regiment was represented in the Highland and Lowland Brigade Curling matches during the season. On 5 February Selby Macduff-Duncan and Malcolm Innes took part in the match against the New Club and for the first time in six years the Highland and Lowland Club won this match. The score was 23-15. Selby skipped his team which peeled 5-5. On 19 March the annual fixture between the Club and the Royal Company of Archers was once again held at Kinross. The Regiment contributed four players to the Highland and Lowland Brigade Curling Club team, namely Willie Henderson, Jamie Erskine, Jamie Montgomery and Selby Macduff-Duncan. Three others, Duncan Cameron, James Duncan Millar and Mike Riddell-Webster curled for the Royal Company of Archers. The match was fairly even until the sixth ends when the four Highland and Lowland Brigade Clubs rinks combined to win by 19 shots. That really settled the match which at the end was won by the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Curling Club by 37-25.

The final event of the season was the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Curling Club Bonspiel which was held in Perth on 26 March 2015. The Regiment raised three rinks. They were as follows:

'A' Rink; James Duncan Millar, Tim Usher, Duncan Cameron, Roddy Riddell

'B' Rink: Jamie Montgomery, Will Henderson, Alex Beveridge, David Noble



*The winning Black Watch team at the Highland and Lowland Brigade Club curling Bonspiel consisted of David Noble, Willie Henderson, Jamie Montgomery (skip) and Alec Beveridge. Major General Mark Strudwick the Club President presented the cup.*

'C' Rink: Selby Macduff-Duncan, Jamie Erskine, Hugh Rose, Malcolm Innes.

In the first session, over 6 ends, the Black Watch 'A' rink was narrowly beaten 5-6 by the Royal Regiment of Scotland 'B' rink, the Black Watch 'B' rink had a convincing 10-1 win over Lowlanders 'C' and the Black Watch 'C' rink managed to win 3 shots at the last end to save some face but still lost 3-8 against the Highlanders 'A' rink. After a very good lunch the second session, also over 6 ends, took place and the matches were based on the scores in the first session. This time the Black Watch 'A' rink had a very competitive match against Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 'B' rink and peeled 7-7; the 'B' rink had an excellent 9-3 win against the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 'A' team and the 'Black Watch 'C' rink beat the Lowlanders 'C' rink by 8-4. This meant the Black Watch 'B' rink was the leading rink going into the third and final session which was played over 5 ends. Was it possible that a Black Watch rink could retain the trophy it won last year and with the same skip? After an exciting match they beat the Lowlanders 'B' rink by 5-2 and Jamie Montgomery was the winning skip for the second year running. A great achievement. Meanwhile the Black Watch 'A' rink lost 1-5 to the Lowlanders 'A' rink and the Black Watch 'C' rink had its second win of the day 5-3, this time against Highlanders 'B'. While it is always good to win, the Bonspiel is also an excellent occasion to catch up with friends from throughout the Club and is really enjoyed by everyone. It is comradeship at its best. It is marvellous the Regiment can still put out three very competitive rinks and the Convenor would like to thank all those who took part in the Bonspiel and in the other matches in the season.

Finally but by no means least, a big thank you from the curlers for the support the Black Watch Association gives to them throughout the year. The match versus the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders will take place on Friday 13 November 2015.

## BLACK WATCH ASSOCIATION ALL RANKS GOLF MEETING

*By Major AM Stewart BEM*

The annual Association all ranks golf meeting will take place on 19th June 2015 which, as is the norm, is the day before the Regimental Reunion. The competition will be held at Muckhart Golf Club. The competition is again very generously subsidised by the Black Watch Association and strongly supported and sponsored by both Sidey Ltd and Falcon Food Services.

This is a first class day's golf with full catering and can be enjoyed by Black Watch Association members and serving members of 3 SCOTS. Due to the tremendous support we enjoy from the Association and our sponsors, we can offer excellent value for money along with some very good prizes for those who are lucky enough to play well on the day. Full details are contained at [www.societygolfing.co.uk](http://www.societygolfing.co.uk) by going to Access Your Society Area and entering the username 'blackwatch' and the password 'fortytwa'. Anyone who is not already listed as a member on this site, but would like to play, or just to be added for future years should get in touch with Maj (Retd) Alex Stewart at [akstewart42@btinternet.com](mailto:akstewart42@btinternet.com).

## REMEMBRANCE SERVICE PERTH



*The annual Association Remembrance Service was held at Balhousie Castle on 7 November 2014 and was attended by families and local school children as well as serving soldiers and Association members.*



## STALAGLUFT VI VISIT



*This photograph was taken at Stalagluft VI in Poland and was the site of the Great Escape. It shows a number of Black Watch officers flanking Lieutenant General James Everard, Commander Land Forces. Third from left Captain Jamie Tait (ADC to GOC 3 Div) and then Lieutenant Colonel Adrian Reilly (MA to CLF), CLF, Major General James Cowan (GOC 3 Div), Colonel Ben Wrench (Assistant Director Collective Training).*



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Angus Ferguson  
Major General Mike Riddell-Webster CBE, DSO  
Sean O'Reilly

## **FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH**

*By Sarah Riddell-Webster*

In October the Friends were delighted to welcome Professor Sir Hew Strachan, Chichele Professor of The History of War at All Souls, Oxford to Balhousie Castle. Sir Hew gave a fascinating lecture on the subject of Scotland and The Great War. The evening was sold out with 95 people attending, many of whom had not been to a lecture at the museum before. A month later we had a documentary screening of Scotland's Greatest Warrior. This was a follow up to the excellent lecture that Professor Ted Cowan had given for us last year on the role of James Graham, 1st Marquis of Montrose in the Covenanting revolution. By the time this edition of The Red Hackle goes to press we will have had Professor Gary Sheffield visit Balhousie Castle to give a lecture on Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig.

The Friends Committee arranged two visits for members to other military museums recently. In the autumn, 16 members visited Fort George. It was a perfect day for exploring the Fort, plenty of sunshine and not too much wind. We were extremely well looked after by the officers of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland who gave us a delicious lunch in the Officers' Mess before we walked the short distance to the Regimental Museum of The Highlanders (Queen's Own Highlanders Collection). We were greeted at the front door by two Royal Regiment of Scotland pipers playing tunes familiar to any Highlander. We started our visit with a short film, which outlined the history of the Regiment from its beginnings up to the current day. The museum has been beautifully laid out over three floors. There were knowledgeable staff on hand who told us some of the history and tales behind much of the wonderful collection on display. More recently, a slightly smaller group have enjoyed a rather less clement day at Edinburgh Castle visiting the National War Museum. Awaiting them was a rich treasure of Scottish military prowess over the past four centuries, ranging from the Blue, Green and Yellow Brigades that fought under Gustavus Adolphus in the 30 Years' War to recent events in Afghanistan. A short but excellent film covered high points across the centuries and set the scene for an Aladdin's cave of weapons, uniforms, medals and paintings. As ever, there was far too much to take in during a short visit but that gives us a good reason to organise another trip in the future. The group then made its way up to the impressive National War Memorial, which contains the names of all Scots who laid down their lives in the two World Wars.



*Friends visit to Fort George.*



Friends' members have enjoyed previews of both the 'Red Jackets and Feather Bonnets' exhibition and also the current Joseph Gray exhibition, along with a talk from the curator. The artwork of Joseph Gray is simply stunning and his life story extremely interesting. Many of the pictures on display have been loaned by other collections in Dundee and the DC Thomson Archive, so this is a rare opportunity to see so much of Gray's work exhibited simultaneously. I am absolutely delighted that The Friends were able to assist in the staging of this outstanding artist's work.

If you have not been able to attend some or any of the events I have outlined in this article but would like to in the future there will be plenty of opportunities. There is a lecture to attend at Balhousie Castle every month. The special exhibitions change every three to four months and there are trips organized to other military museums twice a year. You can see the full calendar of events by visiting the web site at [www.theblackwatch.co.uk](http://www.theblackwatch.co.uk).

## MUSEUM NOTES

### A NEW CEO AT THE MUSEUM

Anne Kinnes started her career in Yorkshire working in a variety of management roles, including a Michelin Star restaurant and a luxury hotel. In 1992 she moved to Scotland where she fell in love not only with a Scottish chef, but also with the country and all it has to offer, especially food and drink. This provided a great platform for the next eight years. She was employed at Scotland's Larder which at that time was the only Food and Drink based visitor attraction in Scotland. Anne then became Chairman of Fife Visitor Attractions, which led to her working with Visit Scotland as Strategic Development Manager and latterly Business Product Manager. Her two consecutive roles involved managing national strategy in key areas of food and drink, rural access and transport.

In 2010, as part of their continued commitment and investment to Whisky Tourism in Scotland, Morrison Bowmore Distillers appointed Anne Kinnes to the role of Visitor Centre Operations and Development Manager. In this role, visitor numbers and income generated across all three distilleries increased. Leading a team of over 40 staff, Anne was responsible for providing leadership and strategic direction whilst ensuring the delivery of a world class service to each and every visitor.

Anne's Black Watch journey began in January this year and with her experience in hospitality and tourism matched with the strong beliefs and values of The Black Watch Museum she aims to support the team to ensure that the castle and museum are one of 'Scotland's Leading Visitor Attractions'. In September 2014, the museum was awarded the prestigious 5 Star Grading from Visit Scotland; only 5% of all Scotland's attractions achieve this.

This year the Museum & Café have welcomed just short of sixty thousand visitors through its doors. Our visitors are coming from across the globe and we aim at all times when they enter the Home of the Black Watch, to experience world class service whether they are visiting the museum, having a cup of coffee or buying a gift in the shop.

We are introducing some new experiences at the castle and in February this year we began our daily guided tour. This happens at 12.00 each day and is an hour long tour with your personal guide. This is aimed at those visitors who would like to find out a little bit more about the iconic Black Watch. These have proved to be popular with fabulous feedback from visitors taking part. We are about to begin our next exciting project which is the refurbishment of The Wavell Room. This room will be able to be used for private meetings but in the longer term we hope it will be used for fine dining for up to 12 people.

Our programme to involve the local community where ever possible continues through schools, local Scout groups coming to visit and of course our popular lectures series will continue.

For the first time ever this year we are having our Summer Festival. This will take place on 29th August. There will be a variety of events and workshops to entertain all the family. We do hope that we will see some of Red Hackle readers at this event. We are looking forward to another busy summer and of course look forward to welcoming you all to The Black Watch Museum.

## ARCHIVED MATERIAL TO BE DIGITISED

In March 2015 over 20,000 pieces of paper were packaged up and transported to Townsweb Archiving to be digitised. The work is

being carried out as the final chapter of the Heritage Lottery funded redevelopment project.

The digitised material will be put online before the end of the year, making it more easily accessible by members of the public. Much of the First World War collection – including diaries and papers – is included in the digitisation project.

## NEW ARRIVALS TO THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

In December 2014 the Museum was pleased to have a Tower of London Poppy donated to the collection. The poppy was given in memory of the donor's great grandfather. The Tower Poppies exhibition – *Blood Swept Land and Seas of Red* – captured the national interest last year, and we are very grateful to have a small part of that spectacle at the Museum. The Museum Team intend to display the poppy annually around Remembrance Day.



*After the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, 1915, oil on canvas after Joseph Gray.*



*Night Sentry, sketch on paper by Joseph Gray.*

In January 2015 a truly remarkable item was loaned to the Museum as part of a larger donated collection – a hat made from a hospital blanket in Crete, to assist the wearer in escaping German capture. Private Blair was in hospital in Crete in 1942 when a surprised German invasion resulted in the hospitalised men becoming prisoners of war. Blair was not fit to attempt escape, but was able to make a hat to aid another soldier. Having successfully escaped, that soldier sent the hat to his mother, to be sent to Blair's family as a token of his appreciation. The cap and other items belonging to Blair will form part of the *Sons of The Black Watch* display from May 2015, to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

#### Joseph Gray: fighter-writer and war artist

From February to mid-May 2015 the Museum hosted an exhibition of the work of Joseph Gray. The exhibition featured examples of Gray's work from the City of Dundee Council collections, the Andrew Paterson Collection and the University of Dundee Museum collections, with the cooperation of DC Thomson & Co Ltd.

On the outbreak of war, a group of journalists from Dundee enlisted in the 4th (City of Dundee) Battalion, The Black Watch. They were the 'Fighter-Writers', and amongst their number was Joseph Gray. Gray's experiences of the Front Line were to influence his later work in creating portraits vividly depicting the men he served with and the landscapes surrounding them; these works were a testament to the "brotherhood-in-arms" that Gray and his comrades experienced.

Joseph Gray was born at South Shields, Tyne and Wear in 1890. He was the son of a master mariner and, as a result, trained as a marine engineer before studying art under John Heys. While at South Shields School of Art, Gray was assistant art master and travelled widely, working in galleries in France, Holland, Russia, Germany and Spain.

Aged 22, Gray joined the staff at newspaper publisher DC Thomson in Dundee as a black and white artist, beginning his long association with the city. Gray worked as an illustrator for the *Courier* and other associated papers. The bonds of comradeship

formed during his early years in Dundee were to influence Gray and his colleagues to join the 4th (City of Dundee) Battalion at the outbreak of war. Gray later recalled the transformation of the Battalion from a disparate group of men coming from all walks of life: "The entirely new conditions of life ... made an indelible impression, but above all was the subtle feeling, almost undefinable at the time, that we no longer lived each for himself. We had become members of a brotherhood-in-arms."

Upon reaching the trenches, Gray's talent for technical drawing were quickly recognised and utilised. Gray was with the 4th Battalion at the battles of Neuve Chapelle and Loos, where he was attached to the Intelligence Staff to draw plans of the German positions. In 1916 Gray was invalided home having been wounded by sniper-fire and suffering from bouts of trench fever. He returned to work at DC Thomson and found a new role as war artist and correspondent to *The Graphic*.

Gray began work on pictures depicting life at the Front. He thought of himself as old school; his intention was to illustrate the First World War as he and his comrades saw it. Gray's sketches of the Front and his portraits, were detailed, accurate and emotive. Many of his portraits and sketches became studies for later large-scale oil paintings, including *The 4th Black Watch in the Attack* (on display at the Museum). Another of these is *After Neuve Chapelle*, which depicts the Battalion on the day of their first engagement with the enemy on 10 March 1915. It forms part of a series of large scale paintings by Gray of various regiments who served during this time. The *Evening Telegraph* claimed: "It is a work vivid with the glow of personal experience and surcharged with the tragedy of a great and disastrous day." The painting was presented to Dundee's permanent collection in 1922 and copies were made in aid of the Memorial Home in Broughty Ferry.

Gray's legacy is a body of work built out of an intense feeling of brotherhood-in-arms, achieved despite the adversity and loss suffered by Gray and the men of the 4th. Gray illustrates this in his own words: "...it is the Fourth Black Watch that essentially personifies for us both the splendour and the sorrow of our sacrifice. Individually we may follow the fortunes of other units, but in the Fourth the whole city finds glory in victory and grief in adversity."



*In the Attack, oil on canvas by Joseph Gray.*



# Correspondence

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Dear Editor

## PENINSULAR WAR 200

In the November 2014 issue of *The Red Hackle* (p.32) a brass badge is illustrated with an article commemorating the Peninsular War.

During this period none of the Highland Regiments had large feather bonnet badges, particularly a thistle star badge, and by that reasoning has no connection with the 42nd Royal Highland Regiment of Foot. What is shown in the photograph is a device worn by the, then, 3rd Regiment of Foot Guards and is probably a mount from a sword belt plate, c.1793.

Thomas Moles

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Dear Editor

## LIEUTENANT COLONEL PETER MACDUFF TD

Following the death of my Grandmother in 2008 I began to research my family tree and quickly discovered that several members of the family had served during the First World War. I was surprised to find out that my Great-Great Grandfather, Peter MacDuff was one of them, as I had assumed he would have been too old to serve. However I tracked down his medal index card, which confirmed that he had been a Major then a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Highlanders and on the 'Staff'.

After moving to Lochgelly in Fife to take up the position of Headmaster at a local school in 1889, Peter MacDuff was commissioned on 12 May 1891 as a Second Lieutenant in the 6th (Fifeshire) Volunteer Battalion of the Black Watch, also known as the 'Lochgelly Company'. By 1903 he was a Captain, and by the time of the Territorial Act of 1907 he was in command of the company with the rank of Honorary Major.

In 1910 he was awarded the Territorial Decoration for 20 years Territorial service, and when the First World War broke out he was 56 years old. In May 1915, despite his age, he was sent to France with the 1/7th (Fife) Battalion, part of 2nd Highland Brigade in the Highland Division. A few days after arriving, the Highland Division was renamed the 51st (Highland) Division and the battalion became part of 153rd Brigade.

After initially being sent to the Ypres salient, the battalion also spent time around Aveluy and Auchonvillers on the Somme but on 9th November 1915 Peter was invalided home. From here I am unsure what his exact movements were. In January 1916 he was gazetted as a temporary Lieutenant Colonel. His obituary in the Dundee Courier states that he was then sent back to France in command of a pioneer battalion, before later being put in charge of the 3/7th Reserve Battalion of The Black Watch in Ripon, Yorkshire. The obituary goes on to say that when this battalion was merged with others in September 1916, he returned home. However, an article in another paper states that he was called up again in August 1917, finally returning home in February 1919. His retirement was announced in the London Gazette in March 1919.

In 1924 Lieutenant Colonel MacDuff led the ex-servicemen at the unveiling of the Lochgelly war memorial. His son, Second Lieutenant William MacDuff (my Great-Great Uncle) is named on the memorial, having been killed leading his platoon (Border Regiment) in an attack on 2nd December 1917. One can only wonder what Peter must have been feeling as his son's name was read out along with the other 268 casualties, many of whom would no doubt have been known to him as pupils at the local school during his time as Headmaster.

Peter MacDuff died in 1930, and his funeral was attended by many former members of the Fife Territorial battalion. He is buried in Ballingry cemetery, Fife.

Aside from clarifying the details of his war service, one further mystery remains. No one in the family knows what happened to the medals awarded to Peter and his sons William and Donald (who served with the Scottish Horse and Royal Engineers and survived the war.



*Peter MacDuff photographed in April 1915 just before the 1/7th Battalion embarked for France and Flanders.*



*Lochgelly War Memorial.*

Peter's were evidently disposed of at some point, as they were sold at Glendining's auctioneers in London in 1991, the auction consisting solely of items from 'The Samson Collection of Orders, Decorations and Medals to the Black Watch'. Ultimately it would mean a great deal if I could bring Peter's medals back into the family's possession, but it would give me great comfort just to know where they are. If any member of the Association has any knowledge of their possible whereabouts, I would be grateful if you could let me know. I can be contacted by email at a\_s\_arnold@yahoo.co.uk or by phone on 07950 021197.

Andrew Arnold

*Editor's note: I was sent this poem after Major Peter Watson died and have printed it in his memory. His obituary is contained in this magazine and he wrote the poem in 1961.*

### The Old Soldier

Oh give me a poem of the fighting; Now I am no longer young  
Of the hot-blooded roar of the cannon  
The battles, the wars that we won  
I'm tired of this civvy frustration  
The hours and the trains and the desks  
Oh for a breath of the desert  
Where men rubbed shoulders with death  
Yes, I love my family and homeland,  
The comforts I sometimes enjoy  
But I pine for that terrible friendship  
No bullets or mines could destroy  
Asleep still on desert's grey loneliness  
I've friends, whom my heart broke to see  
Rise up in the morning like heroes  
And ere dusk they were taken from me  
I pine, how I pine, for their friendship  
Their joy and their passion for life  
And my mind ever fills with a longing  
To seize them again to the my breast  
For me they are all of them heroes  
Jack, Micky, Kenneth and George  
And I see them forever in dreaming  
Marching straight, and eternally tall  
Oh I love them, and all of their living  
And never a day can pass  
But I think of our precious friendship  
And those days they were gathered to God

Peter Watson MC

For and in memory of  
Jack Christensen, Micky Stevens, Kenneth Gillies,  
George Morrison

Ardoch  
Murthly  
Perthshire PH1 4HB

Dear Editor

### GUN CLUB HILL BARRACKS IN KOWLOON AND HONG KONG TODAY

In November 2014, my wife and I were invited out to Hong Kong for eight days in order to visit her son who is working for the Swire Group Airline, Cathay Pacific. We travelled both ways in style in Business Class, which is a wonderful experience and ensured we arrived in very good order for our action-packed week.

I had served with the 1st Battalion from 1973-1974 when I was commanding A (Grenadier) Company. We were stationed mainly at Erskine Camp on the Sai Kung Peninsula but also for some months in Gun Club Hill Barracks in Kowloon. This was a very interesting overseas tour and I was fortunate to return again to the then Colony in 1979 and 1980. But I had not been back for 34 years and I saw the most amazing changes.

Before I go any further, I must recall the Handover of the British Colony to the Chinese in 1997 in which the 1st Battalion played such a major part in the final impressive ceremony, which took place in pouring rain, and where the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) took over from the British Army. Those on that parade, 17 years ago, would also be astounded at the huge changes I observed in Hong Kong.

I took the opportunity to visit Gun Club Hill Barracks between Austin Road and Jordan Road in Kowloon. I did not see any sentry

or anyone moving around at the main gate and I did not ring to ask the PLA to allow me in, for I was on holiday and did not fancy being apprehended! However I did take a photograph of the Main Gate which was nothing like as smart as when the 1st Battalion were in residence and the trees surrounding the drive and Guardroom were much in need of pruning. The PLA apparently keep a very low profile in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Police appear able to keep the peace and were in evidence whilst we were in Victoria during some of the student riots and disturbances which were then taking place.

The Main Square and the Officers Mess, fine Colonial barrack examples, are still in existence but a vast new PLA Hospital has been built on the former MT Square with an eleven storey high block of operating theatres and wards behind an impressive crescent-shaped front.

My wife and I were astounded at the changes to the skyline which we first noticed taking the Star Ferry to and from Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. There are very few buildings I could recognise, for so many of the former buildings have been raised to the ground and new higher and higher skyscrapers have been put up in their places. The once proud Jardine Matheson building, with its huge circular windows, which was erected in 1974, is still there but it is now overwhelmed by buildings twice the height.

On the Kowloon side, the newly reclaimed land has provided a half-mile extension to the harbour which is now occupied by new Ocean Liner Terminals and so the Peninsular Hotel lies well back inland nowadays. I was on the lookout for the Hotel's fleet of lovely old green Rolls Royces and found that they had been replaced by an even more modern fleet of Rolls vehicles. Kowloon now has the tallest building in Hong Kong, the International Commerce Centre which is 484 metres high and has 118 storeys.

There are now three road tunnels linking Kowloon and Victoria on Hong Kong Island-the first one having opened when our 1st Battalion were in the former Colony in 1974. There is now a Western Harbour Crossing linking Lai Chi Kok and Connaught Road West on the Island and another, the Eastern Harbour Crossing linking Kwun Tong to Wan Chai. And now there is the Mass Transit Railway which links the whole of Hong Kong territory and also Hong Kong International Airport at Lantau-amazing engineering feats. Despite these transport improvements the Star Ferries still operate from dawn to dusk and are popular with Hong Kong residents and tourists alike.



*The front entrance to Gun Club Hill Barracks, Hong Kong. The photograph was taken in November 2014 and it is interesting to note that the name plate remains in place. The 1st Battalion were stationed in the barracks from 1972-74.*



*An Army PR Photograph taken in 1973 shows a view towards Kowloon. Can anyone identify the soldiers?*



But we noticed the huge number of Cruise Liners in Port; ie we counted 16 when we went on an evening harbour cruise. The old Kai Tak Airport closed down when the new Hong Kong International Airport opened on Lantau Island. Now Kai Tak has been developed into a cruise liner terminal and we saw six huge ships tied up and aglow with lights. Some of these vessels hold over 3000 passengers and these are disgorged daily onto the streets of Hong Kong and Kowloon, so that it is very difficult to distinguish a resident from a tourist in the street, there are so many people shopping and moving about.

The Harbour is many times bigger than when I last saw it in 1980. Hong Kong has always been a major trading and financial station in the Far East, but since the Colony became part of China, trade has increased an hundredfold. One day we were fortunate to visit Deep Water Bay for an afternoon's swimming. But what was so interesting was the constant passing of vast loaded container ships which we could see sailing past both east and west, one every five minutes or so, along the South Coast of Hong Kong and making for the various parts of the vast Hong Kong Harbour.

I had been fortunate to have been a Member of the Royal Hong Kong Golf Club at Fanling from 1973-1974. As we were leaving one friend advised me to take out Life Absent Membership of the Club, which, for £95 would entitle me to resume my membership any time I came back to Hong Kong. Well, I have been very lucky to have returned three times since and this last time I was able to take my wife and stepson up to Fanling for lunch and a good tour around the place on one day and then play a great game of golf the following day.

Those who may remember the two courses at Fanling in the 1970's would find the scene much changed. Fanling is now quite a big town, merged with nearby Sheung Shui, being so near the former Chinese border, and there is a vast area of about fifteen 46-storey skyscrapers, about a mile away, which dominate many of the holes around the courses. All the courses now have real grass and watering systems to keep the grass growing whatever the weather. One feature still remaining is the ancient Chinese Tea House at the 9th Hole and where all golfers had to stop for ten minutes to have a drink and perhaps something to eat.

When we were in Hong Kong in the 1970's, the population was about 2.5 million-it is now 7.5 million. Thus building has taken place almost everywhere and those Border towns like Yuen Long, Lo Wu and Mam Kok are all large towns, all linked to the Mass Transit Railway and motorways to Kowloon.

We returned from Fanling on the Mass Transit Railway. The weekend we were in Hong Kong was typical of all weekends and the Kowloon to China train was packed with people who had spent the time shopping in all the wonderful shops on the Island or in Kowloon itself. Many Chinese had bought new suitcases to transport their purchases back home, but some had just plastic bin liners or had wrapped their goods in all sorts of bags.

Our visit coincided with Remembrance Sunday and we were most impressed how over one thousand people gathered at the Cenotaph outside the new Hong Kong Club building in Victoria. The Cenotaph is an exact copy of the one in London and we watched as over 130 wreaths were laid around it by the elite in Hong Kong and all the many British Ex Servicemen's organisations still operating strongly. The British Military Attaché to China was present and the Hong Kong Police Band, including three Pipers, provided music for the Service. The Last Post and Reveille were sounded from a special balcony, built especially for that purpose, on about the tenth floor of the Hong Kong Club, which overlooked the scene that day. It was all most impressive.

We learnt that there are 7,600 high rise buildings currently in existence but over 200 more are proposed for early construction. Hong Kong never seemed to go to sleep and was a fascinating place to visit, though changed almost out of all recognition as far as I was concerned.

**Major C B Innes**

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Dear Editor

#### **MEMORIAL TO A FORGOTTEN WAR**

On the 3rd of December 2014 just over 300 veterans of the Korean War joined Mr Michael Fallon Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Yun Byung-se the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for the South Korean Government and many others to witness the unveiling of a new

£1 million memorial, on land between the Thames and the Ministry of Defence. The Duke of Gloucester unveiled the statue which had been paid for by the South Korean Government, as well as Korean Companies and Koreans living in Britain.

Sixty years after the conflict that cost 1,106 British lives ended, five Black Watch veterans of the conflict joined those paying tribute to the nearly 80,000 men who served in Korea – most of whom were National Servicemen. Mr Darling, Mr McNab, Mr Hirst, Mr Eason and Mr Hubble braved the cold December winds to take part in a ceremony that was long overdue.

**T Hubble**

*Editor's note: On one side of the memorial are inscribed the following words; In this fierce and brutal conflict those who fought included many Second World War veterans reinforced by reservists and young National Servicemen.*

*The land battle was fought against numerically superior communist forces. The terrain was mountainous and the weather extreme. 81,084 British servicemen served in the theatre of operations. 1,106 were killed in action. Thousands were wounded and 1,060 suffered as prisoners of war.*



*The Korean War Memorial was unveiled on land between the River Thames and the Ministry of Defence in December 2014.*

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Dear Editor

#### A UNIFORM DEBATE

With reference to the article in the May 2014 issue (p.65), I do not believe the Busby illustrated was worn by the 1st Administrative Battalion of the Perthshire Rifle Volunteers. The reason being that the headdress badge is not the pattern worn by that battalion. What was worn was a bugle horn badge of the same style but without the thistle central device. A Busby and badge of the correct pattern is in the collection of Perth Local Museum and a watercolour by Major-General J M Grierson clearly shows a void in the centre of the badge. Furthermore there are a number of factual errors in the piece regarding dates and changes of dress of this battalion.

The Busby was worn by the battalion from 1878 and continued in use until 1883 when it was replaced by a Glengarry. Prior to the adoption of the Busby a tall diced shako was worn, the pattern of which is not known for certain, but it does not appear to be the lower Quilted Pattern which was worn in the regular army from 1861-1869. The battalion did not adopt the Home Service pattern spiked helmet at any period of its history. Within the text, the badge is occasionally described as a stringed bugle, which it is not; what is worn is a bugle horn, a very different instrument and badge. It also states that early militia units in Britain were known as Rifle Volunteers. This is incorrect as the Militia and Rifle Volunteers had a completely different history and had no connection with one another until 1881, and that was purely through their connection to the regular Black Watch.

I realise much of the text was generalising as to what the British Army was wearing but in context with the photograph of the Busby it is not specific and if left unchallenged could be misleading.

**Thomas Moles**

#### References:

Historical Sketch of the 4th (Perthshire), Volunteer Battalion The Black Watch, by Captain George D Pullar. John A McCulloch, Edinburgh 1907.

Records of the Scottish Volunteer Force, 1859-1908, by Major-General J M Grierson.

William Blackwood and Sons Edinburgh and London, 1909.

**Editor's note:** Thomas Moles has spent 30 years researching the uniforms of the British Army and for 25 years has paid particular attention to the dress and fittings of The Black Watch and their Volunteer Rifle Battalions.

17 cours Dr Chaubaud  
09500 Mirepoix  
FRANCE

Dear Editor

#### THE BATTLE OF TOULOUSE

Colonel Thornycroft's article on the Peninsular War 200 Commemorations in your last edition took me by surprise. It was not correct, as he had been told that Toulouse, the scene of the major battle, had declined to celebrate the event. It was, in fact, marked in some style. I know because I was there and the regiment was represented.

Since retiring to South West France some fifteen years ago I took up playing the pipes after a gap of over fifty years. By chance, I met up with two young piping enthusiasts who had attended master classes in Scottish music on the bagpipes. One of them makes medieval armour for museums and is also a stone carver. The other is an officer with the Sapeurs-Pompiers. We have since expanded and can muster at least six pipers – all French and half my age. I have categorically banned white socks and dark glasses! Our group is known as the Pyrenean Pipers and as such, was invited by the Toulouse Conseil Municipal to take part in the events to mark the 200th Anniversary of the battle.

For those that do not know Toulouse, the battle took place on the high ground at Joliment to the East of the city, on 10th April 1814, which that year was Easter Sunday. Beside the nearby obser-

vatory stands a tall pink obelisk as a memorial and it was here on 5th April 2014 that a dedicated band of re-enactors, representing the various units involved were drawn up forming three sides of a square. The colours of the uniforms, especially the Napoleonic cavalry, artillery and infantry, were dazzling – gold, reds, blues, greens, black, yellows, white, browns, even fur. Their infantry sported the same red pantaloons as was still on issue in the French Army one hundred years later. The Portuguese were equipped with six working cannons, the Spanish had a contingent along with English Line Regiments, and, of course, The Highland Brigade the 42nd, the 79th and the 92nd – complete with a lady piper who claimed she had a Gordon Highlander in her pedigree. They were all German Nationals commanded by a German ex-army warrant officer with Hubble-like facial hair, armed with a twelve foot pike. The lady piper joined our group and we paraded alongside the French Imperial Guard Military Band – about a third of whom were fairly rotund middle-aged lady musicians. Speeches were made, wreaths laid, pipes played and each country's National Anthem sounded.

We then retired to a park on the banks of the Garonne where in true French tradition, a sumptuous meal was served, good wine included.

In spite of this we managed to entertain the considerable crowd of onlookers for some time to a selection of pipe tunes until the battle was re-enacted complete with musketry volley firing and the Portuguese cannons belching dense clouds of smoke.

A march to the Mairie had been planned where we were to have been the guests at a civic reception. Unfortunately, the imposing square, known as the Capitol where stands the Mairie, had been taken over by young, Right wing activists. The riot police had been mobilised complete with helmets, body armour, gas masks and riot shields. Tear gas filled the air. Our vin d'honneur was cancelled.

As we know, the Battle of Toulouse was unjustified as Napoleon had abdicated in Paris four days earlier but the news had not yet reached the French Marshal Soult who resolutely defended Toulouse against the coalition forces led by the Duke of Wellington. Each side sustained over 4,000 killed and wounded – of the 42nd, 54 were killed and 358 wounded. The day became known as Bloody Easter Sunday. One of my pipers, and archaeologist with Toulouse Congeal Municipal, tells me that no mass grave has yet been discovered. A small commemorative event is held at the obelisk every year.

**Andrew Wedderburn**

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Dear Editor

#### DUCHESS OF RICHMOND'S BALL

I wonder whether your readers would be interested in this my account of attending the Duchess of Richmond's Ball in Brussels in June 1965 and the 150th Anniversary Parade at the Chateau de Hougoumont held two days later.

The telephone rang in A Company Office and our Company Clerk said "Sir, you are wanted by the Commanding Officer". I hurried over to the CO's Office in Minden and found Colonel Tony Lithgow rather annoyed about things.

"Now look here, Colin, but for this wretched long exercise in June, I would be going to this myself with Bridge, I can assure you." "Going to what Sir?" I said

The CO then told me that the British Ambassador to Belgium had organised an Anniversary Ball to commemorate the Duchess of Richmond's Ball given in Brussels three days before the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. Every regiment that had been at Waterloo had been invited to send one officer and his lady to this Ball and my wife, Clovannis, and I were to represent The Black Watch.

Many will know that the Duchess of Richmond's Ball was interrupted by an ADC striding across the Ballroom floor to find the Duke of Wellington and to inform him that Napoleon's Army had advanced rapidly from Charleroi and might soon approach the important crossroads of Quatre Bras. From there the Emperor would be in a position to attack and divide the Allied Army which was then assembling south of Brussels.



"Napoleon has humbugged me By God! He has gained twenty-four hours on me," said the Duke.

Well, fifty years ago, Clovannis and I were invited to a great Dinner Party before the Ball by Baron and B Janssen who lived in the very lovely Chateau, Claire Colline, some ten miles South of Brussels.

After many introductions to all those present, which included the Prince and Princess of Brunswick and Field Marshal Sir Gerald and Lady Templer, we enjoyed some champagne, before the Baron called for our attention. "Ladies and Gentlemen", he said "I want you all to look down the long lawn here and try to pick out the ford in the river at the bottom of the hill. Here it was, on the evening of 18th June 1815 that Marshal Blucher and his Prussian Army galloped across the ford and then up the hill to join the Duke of Wellington's Army who were busy fighting the Battle of Waterloo. The Duke of Wellington referred to his final battle as having been "a close run thing" and indeed it was for the arrival of the Prussians turned the tide of battle in favour of the Allies and led to Napoleon's defeat.

We then went into the Chateau for a most delicious dinner which was served on gold and silver plate. After dinner we all made our way back into Brussels for the Ball which was held in the British Embassy.

It was a fabulous affair which was heralded by trumpeters of The Blues which announced the arrival of King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola of the Belgians and accompanied by the King's brother Prince Albert and his wife, the stunning Princess Paola of Liege. The Duke of Kent represented HM The Queen and the Duke of Wellington was also present.

Robert Graves, the poet then read from Lord Byron's poem Childe Harold with those famous opening lines:-

"There was a sound of revelry by night  
And Belgium's capital had gathered there  
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright  
The lamps shone o'er women and brave men  
But Hark! Hark! A deep sound strikes like a raging bell"

We had never attended such a gathering of the rich and famous and the diplomatic and military. Many ladies had taken out their tiaras and jewellery from the bank for the occasion but as Clovannis said, Princess Paola stole the show by wearing no jewellery and only the most lovely simple dress.

The mix of all those many Mess Dress uniforms and the flowers decorating the giant marquee were a sight to remember-and we were very fortunate to represent the Regiment. They had one Eightsome Reel and the Highland and Lowland regiment representatives gathered together and gave a very good account of themselves.

#### THE 150th ANNIVERSARY PARADE AT WATERLOO

Every Regiment that had taken part in the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 was invited to send a Representative Party to take part in a Commemorative Ceremony at the Chateau de Hougomont on the battlefield where some of the fiercest fighting took place on 18th June 1815.

We attended a Dress Rehearsal two days before and found that the farmer had failed to mow the grass on the Parade Ground, so that when we came to a halt, I certainly landed in a cowpat and my white spats were covered in muck and a revolting green grass stain. It took several bottles of Blanco to re-whiten my spats, I recall.

Two days later, along with Lieutenant Colonel Tony Lithgow, Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion and some 15 Jocks, we paraded as part of the British Army, forming one third of a Hollow Square Parade Ground. The Belgian farmer had still not mown the grass! But all 35 regiments who had taken part at Waterloo had sent a Contingent and the scene was most impressive.

The Allies, German and Prussian troops formed up on another flank and we awaited the arrival of the French-but they failed to turn up-to the great disappointment of everyone. I wonder whether they will have the decency to take part this year-the 200th Anniversary of Waterloo-when, I understand another Parade is to be held.

Major C B Innes

Laggan  
By Crieff PH7 4JL

Dear Editor

#### HOW WE COMMEMORATED THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO – 1965

No doubt plans are well advanced for events to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the battle in June this year. On the 150th Anniversary the Colour Parties of all those regiments which fought at Waterloo in 1815 were assembled for a parade on Horse Guards in London – and this was followed by a subsequent gathering of the Regimental Colours of these regiments in Belgium on the battlefield itself.

At the time, the 1st Battalion was stationed in Minden and Paul Sugden and I were selected to travel to London as the Colour Ensigns. The Commanding Officer was adamant that we were to wear Service Dress, which we duly did – but come the big day every other Colour Party was in period costume, Full Dress or at least Number One Dress. As luck would have it the form of the parade ended with us very near the centre of the line opposite the Royal Box.

The following day a signal arrived on the Commanding Officer's desk in Minden to the effect that "Her Majesty had noted with interest that The Black Watch had been the only regiment on parade in khaki". No doubt there was much scurrying about in the QM's and MTO's departments for a landrover was soon despatched to Brussels with a selection of different sizes of Number One Dress jackets and accoutrements.

You may have already guessed but come the parade at Waterloo everyone marched on amongst the buttercups and daisies in service Dress – except for The Black Watch resplendent in Number One Dress!!

Stephen Lindsay

## Book Reviews

#### A SOLDIER'S BEST FRIEND: Canine Heroes of Afghanistan

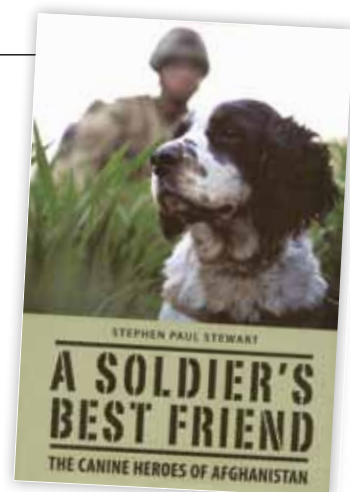
By Stephen Paul Stewart

Stephen Stewart, a news reporter with the Daily Record, was embedded with The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland in 2009 in Afghanistan and took part in a series of airborne strike missions.

As a result of his experiences he has written an in depth study of the selection, training methods and the operational use of military working dogs and he also focuses on the bonds built up between the handler and his dog. Soldiers on operations feel a greater sense of confidence when accompanied by a working dog. The constant battle to search and find roadside bombs was one aspect of operations that Afghanistan veterans will not forget and many lives were saved by the professionalism of the handler and his/her dog. Tragically, some handlers and their dogs were killed.

The book is well illustrated and contains a number of images of Black Watch soldiers on operations in Afghanistan.

Sandstone Press Ltd: ISBN 9781908734123: £14.99 hardback



# Obituaries

## MAJOR GEORDIE COX

Born in 1922, George Cox (Geordie) was at Trinity College, Cambridge when, in 1941, he was called up by the OCTU in Heysham. He had applied for The Black Watch as first preference, the Seaforths as second and the Scots Guards third, but found himself being summoned by the London Scottish. After some discussion he reported to The Black Watch training battalion based at Thurso Castle, and was then allocated to the company based in what is now Castle of Mey, but then called Barrogill. The Battle School at the castle was run by Berowald Innes and all young officers had to spend some time there. After a two year training period which included time as ships' adjutant, on the Queen Mary, it was off to the First Army in North Africa. En route the convoy was attacked just after passing Gibraltar but he arrived safely in Algeria and was sent to the 6th Battalion commanded by Brian Madden. The area was full of citrus orchards, well-guarded by trip-wires and shotguns causing the uninitiated and opportunistic soldier injury on occasion. Geordie was Platoon Commander of 1 Platoon A Company with 30 men and went via Tunisia to Egypt, with plans to transfer to Morocco to keep open the Strait of Gibraltar should Hitler have gone into Spain. Plans changed and instead of heading for Morocco they received orders to embark for Italy from Port Said in early 1944. Watching Vesuvius in full eruption on arrival at Naples must have been an awesome sight. On landing, he spent some time in the line in stone sangers some 300 yards from the enemy in the mountains North of Cassino – bitterly cold after Egypt, with snow on the ground at times. Casualties in his platoon were fortunately few, in part due to angle-iron pickets and chicken wire which offered some protection from mortar fire.



The final battle for Monte Cassino was different. (In the May 2009 edition of the Red Hackle, Geordie wrote an article "Monte Cassino – The final battle – May 1944). Action was frequent and, unfortunately, casualties mounted, although Geordie went without injury until a few weeks later outside Rome, when he was hit by shrapnel (parts which remained entangled in his leg muscle all his life) and was invalided out to Naples to recover. (As a 6'4" subaltern he was fortunate not to have been the target of a sniper. His brother Donald was not so lucky. He was killed in the 1st Battalion in Holland on 2nd November 1944 aged 21). Then, as Staff Captain with 8th Army HQ in the winter of 1944/45, Geordie moved up the East Coast of Italy and, on the day the war ended, found himself in the Po valley next to the 4th Indian Division who jubilantly released the remains of their munitions into the air. In Venice, gondola fights and temporarily confiscating vaporetos for races up the Grand Canal were all part and parcel of youthful exuberance. Eventually the 8th Army Headquarters moved to Austria. He was demobbed in 1946, as a 24 year old Major on the staff with a suit from Montague Burton, the well known 'Tailor of Taste'. Geordie then went back to Cambridge to complete his degree, also keeping wicket for Trinity.

He returned to Scotland and joined Jute Industries (a remnant of the family jute business) and married Mary Cumming in 1948. He lived near Dundee until 1968 when he moved to the family home of Gourdie, Murthly near Perth. He retired from Jute industries and took up dowsing (locating inter alia the previously lost remains of Black Watch men killed in the Battle of Ticonderoga, New York in 1758), painting, golf and other country pursuits. Ten years after the death of Mary, the mother of his children Charles, Ronnie and Anthony, he married Virginia in 2000, and they spent happy years together sharing their mutual love of painting, travelling and visiting old friends, many of which he had made during his time with The Black Watch. He died of natural causes in August 2014, aged 92, and, as his nephew General Sir Alistair Irwin said in the funeral address, 'For the rest of his life Geordie retained not only his pride in, and love for, his regiment but also, of course, very vivid memories particularly of Cassino. In fact he painted a picture of it many, many years later, re-awakening the memories of others who had been there with him and who thought it must have been done at the time, so accurate was the image. It is now a prized exhibit in The Black Watch Museum.'

C, R and A Cox

## CAPTAIN JOHN COX

John Cox was born on 2nd December 1938 in Weybridge, Surrey and brought up in Amulree, Perthshire. He died on 20th December 2014 after a long illness.

After school, he went to RMA Sandhurst in September 1957 and enjoyed his time split between socialising in London, rowing at Henley and enough military activity to ensure he was selected to be an Under Officer. He passed out well and was accepted for a commission in The Black Watch, with which he had family connections and which was his local Regiment.



John joined the 1st Battalion in Cyprus in January 1960, just after EOKA (who campaigned for Cyprus to have a union with Greece) had agreed a ceasefire, to be followed by Independence in August 1960. This meant that there was little soldiering to do and work finished with a late lunch, to be followed by extra mural activities on the beach, in Nicosia and Kyrenia. John was a talented guitarist and folksinger and member of the Ceilidh Club and those in his platoon will remember him entertaining them during evenings in Cyprus and at Battalion concerts. He has also accompanied the Regimental Medical Officer, Hugh Davidson, when he did charitable medical work in remote villages in the Troodos Mountains.

During the Cyprus tour the battalion trained in Libya and John took part in an expedition to the south of Libya, led by Willie Dudgeon. The expedition was a mechanical disaster as the vehicles fell apart and had to be recovered. Perhaps his smartest time in uniform was when he carried the Queen's Colour as part of The Black Watch Guard of Honour at a parade in Athens in May 1961, when the Duke of Gloucester, President of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, unveiled the Memorial to the more than 2000 Commonwealth soldiers buried at the Phaleron War Grave cemetery.

In November 1961, the battalion moved from Cyprus to become the Demonstration battalion at The School of Infantry at Warminster, with the battalion occupying Knook Camp. In 1962 he was a platoon commander in D Company based within the School of Infantry, commanded by Ian Critchley; and Jim Holderness was his Platoon Sergeant. In those days the unmarried officers of D Company lived in the gracious surroundings of the Old Officers' Mess and, to the consternation of the Mess staff, John moved in with Zoë, a very large Great Dane who slept on his bed. While there, the battalion did a training exercise in Malta before moving to Minden in West Germany where he became the Weapon Training Officer. Another training exercise in Libya took place in 1965 before he was posted to 1st British Corps on Bielefeld as GSO3 Training.

Returning to 1BW as Motor Transport Officer at Kirknewton, he went on exercise in Malaya, where he had the good fortune to see two tigers within half an hour. No one else saw a tiger during their entire time in Malaysia.

John was someone who always questioned the status quo and had a deeply analytical mind. Established norms and hierarchies were not really his scene. On return to Scotland he came to the conclusion that his talents could be better used elsewhere and in 1970 he resigned his commission.

He married Pippa in October 1963 and while in Germany his two children, Toby (sadly killed in a road accident in Singapore) and Becky, were born.

In civilian life he worked for Rank Xerox, latterly as their General Manager for South East Asia base in Singapore. Later in London, he became Director of Corporate Affairs for Knight-Ridder, an American company, before moving to Dumfriesshire in 1988 with his second wife, Toni, whom he met and married in Hong Kong in 1984; Irish and a kindred spirit, they had 30 gloriously happy years together. Working for Knight-Ridder, he travelled the world and, when retirement came, he set up a successful dog boarding business and established a fine garden, taking out his guitar from time to time.



## PHILIP HOWARD

It has always been something of a mystery why an Oxford classical double first, son of an English rugby international and a Greek tennis star, who sprang from Suffolk should have chosen to do his National Service in The Black Watch but he did and managed to leave an indelible memory on those who knew him and, through his most successful career as a Times journalist, gave the Regiment excellent and at times, humorous exposure to the nation.

The first of the few remaining Black Watch officers of that generation who met him was Colin Innes who “trained” him at Queen’s Barracks where he was in a platoon of mostly potential officers which included other luminaries in the shape of Willie Sanders, Brian Neil and Nick Tatton-Brown together with Peter Wishart who remained, possibly, his very best friend although destined for the Royal Scots.

“Trained”, roughly means that he was pretty untrainable due to poor eyesight, lost contact lenses and, despite a high level of athletic ability, a certain difficulty with completing drill movements with alacrity. Shooting was a particular problem with bullets from either the rifle or Bren gun flying over the target and showering the markers with mud. This barrier to passing off the square was sorted out by Adam Gurdon, who was the Depot Adjutant at the time and who obviously felt that Philip had much to offer the Regiment which other, merely good shots, lacked.

We all met up in Berlin but how Philip managed to get through the course at Eaton Hall remains a secret. He settled in but may have been deemed too rare a person to be given a rifle platoon and spent most of his service somewhere in HQ Company, including the MT Platoon where he drove John Moncrieff to distraction (if ever there were two personalities from opposite ends of the spectrum, it was those two). He was, however, a good games player, running the 440x relay in partnership with Nick Tatton-Brown at a time when, athletically, The Black Watch was particularly well endowed. Giles Le Maître a top sprinter, at least three Army level javelin throwers, Colin Innes with the hammer, “Big Jim” Holderness with several skills and Duncan Cameron who could run all day. He was also a destructive batsman and the sight of Philip and Colin Innes thrashing the opposition bowling in the echoing space of Hitler’s concrete Olympic stadium – The Maifeld – was a sight to see.

We moved to Redford Barracks in Edinburgh in November 1957 and settled into the round of military and social activity common to garrison life. Philip was a delight within a social sense, filling our minds with an endless stream of undergraduate ditties and leading subaltern expeditions around the city, seeking out the few places still operating after 2200hrs. A party was got up for a Ball and as Jamie Campbell had been sent to duty at Culterbraggan at the last moment, Philip was persuaded to don a white tie and take his place. There was a gathering before the ball in someone’s aunt’s house near the Dean Bridge and Philip met his future wife, Myrtle Houldsworth, for the first time. Observers noted that they were both simultaneously stunned with each other and so began an odyssey about which a small book could be written.

Initially, however, the courtship started with the whole Regiment looking on with Philip appearing in Myrtle’s tiny Austin 7 just as the Battalion was forming up for Monday morning muster parade and being driven round the square. He, himself had no role to play on such parades but someone must have been embarrassed!

Another Philip incident was the annual subalterns’ winter essay task. The subject may have been on the value of military history and word came out that his offering was heavily laced with quotations in Latin and Greek which challenged even the classically educated Second-in-Command, Nigel Noble.

Then we moved to Cyprus and a splendid bunch of National Service officers, including Philip, took their leave of us. But, in the case of Philip and The Black Watch, the saga that unfolded next needs to be recorded because of the part played by the brother officers he had just left behind.

We had been in Cyprus for some time when we received a *cri de coeur* from Myrtle asking whether we had any news of Philip who had disappeared into the USA. It was probably Jamie Campbell who got the message and some research was put in train. Other than the fact



that someone remembered Philip saying that his father had invited him to go to America as he had something of interest to show him, nothing else was known. I think that Jamie probably advised her to go and look for him. She did this, contacting a girl she had known all her life who was living in New York. This girl knew someone in the British Embassy who knew about Philip’s father, Peter Howard, and his high position in the worldwide Moral Rearmament movement.

They found him acting as a cook at the Moral Rearmament (MRA) summer headquarters on an island in Lake Michigan. He has been “kidnapped” by his father who had taken him to the winter headquarters in the Arizona Desert, relieved him of his passport (on some excuse) and had left him there until he “confessed his sins! Which was MRA speak for tying him into the organisation. Philip was aware of the “procedure” and refused to conform. Realising that there was going to be no quick solution, he took himself off to the kitchen and learnt to cook. But he was stranded, without a passport and at the mercy of the MRA.

Thanks to Myrtle’s Embassy man, they located him on the island, spirited him away, gave him identity and some new clothes and brought him back to Scotland where he and Myrtle were married in Ayr with only a handful of Black Watch officers there to support him. Tim Usher (who originally introduced them to each other) was best man and Colin Innes remembers, as one of the ushers, persuading some of the Houldsworth clan to sit on the groom’s side of the church to improve the visual balance. We were all a bit nervous that at the point in the marriage service when the “let or hindrance” question was asked that little men in dark suits would object from the back of the church. It didn’t happen but Philip went to the altar with a Penguin novel in his tail coat pocket which he had been reading before Myrtle arrived. It must be said that he made a swift recovery from a whisky-fuelled bachelor’s party with his mates the night before and his wedding day started with a cup of cold neat tea laced with an Alka Seltzer.

That evening, they went off safely into a life of journalism and family where Philip brought home the bacon and did most of the cooking while Myrtle drove the car and paid the bills. Nevertheless, this was not the last contact for they kept in touch with many of us, through Christmas cards and e-mails, right up to the end. Some of us were at their Ruby Wedding party at the Garrick Club and, in later years, they spent weekends with Duncan and Gilly Bengough at their home in Sidbury.

The Times gave him a splendid obituary on October 7th and there will be Black Watch representation at his memorial service on 28th November. The Regiment will remember him for a long time. His colleagues on the Times regarded him as a father figure and we share the sadness of the passing of both Philip and Myrtle with their children.

**Colin Innes, Tim Usher and Colin Campbell**

I believe it was in 1958 that Philip first walked into my Adjutant’s office to report for duty as a National Service Officer. Our conversation was way above my head from this triple classics scholar from Trinity, Oxford, but even at that early stage I recognised immense charm. I naturally wondered what the Jocks would make of him. Their response was immediate and doting and it was typical of Philip that wherever he found himself and whomever he was with, he became part of the surroundings.

Alec Macdonald Gaunt, our Athletics Officer, soon spotted his talents and had him in training for our 440 yds team in no time. Philip was always springing surprises and I well remember my father’s astonishment when, at the Army finals, Philip was seen quaffing a G and T before going on the track.

When he had finished his National Service he joined The Glasgow Herald as a reporter and at the time was making plans to marry Myrtle, the love of his life.

In about 1960 Philip joined the Times where he stayed until shortly before he died. There can be few people, who had an obituary in the Times filling a full page and a half and what a story of achievement it was.

Philip and Myrtle both remained great friends. We once asked them to stay and organised a Black Watch dinner party which started with some go-carting. When Philip’s turn came, he said he didn’t dare, because he had never learned to drive!

The Black Watch was blessed with some very unusual and talented National Service Officers but none could match Philip for his incredible academic background and his amazing ability to be a star wherever he found himself or whatever he was doing.

**Adam Gurdon**

### ALISTAIR GORDON KEDDIE

Alistair Keddie died on the 26th of March 2014 aged 91. He was commissioned into the Regiment as a Second Lieutenant in October 1942 and promoted to Lieutenant in April 1943. He suffered from wounds received at Demauville in August 1944. He was appointed Temporary Captain in April 1945 prior to the end of the Second World War.

His younger brother David who predeceased him by a number of years served in the 4th/5th Battalion and 51st Highland Volunteers.

Alistair visited Balhousie Castle on several occasions and I always found him to be friendly, modest and a real gentleman who always kept an interest in The Black Watch.

He is survived by his sons Michael and Gordon.

R J W Proctor

### COLONEL IAN KER

Colonel Ian Ker was born in Peshawar, (now in Pakistan) on 27 February 1938 and died after a brave fight against cancer on 7 December 2014. His father was a Colonel in the Indian Army and on the staff of General Neil Ritchie, when he was Commander-in-Chief Far East Land Forces, which explains why Ian joined The Black Watch.

After school at Marlborough, Ian spent some time in Canada, before starting his military career as a National Serviceman in the East Surrey Regiment. He went to Sandhurst in September 1957, where he was instantly recognised as a keen sportsman who played rugby, hockey and squash to a high level and a cadet with potential who was an Under Officer for his last half year at Sandhurst. During his time there, he did the Edward Bear parachute course at RAF Abingdon, where he had the interesting opportunity to spend some training time with Brigitte Bardot, the star of the film, *Babette Goes to War*.

After Sandhurst and Platoon Commanders' courses, Ian spent six months at The Black Watch Depot, Queens Barracks in Perth, before travelling by troopship to join the 1st Battalion in Alexander Barracks, Dhekelia, Cyprus as a platoon commander in D Company, commanded by Duncan Bengough. Then followed 18 months, which, apart from an exercise in Libya, was a quiet life with little serious soldiering to do. Work finished with a late lunch, to be followed by extra mural activities on the beach, in Nicosia and Kyrenia.

Ian was 2IC of the APC Platoon, when 1BW moved to be the Demonstration Battalion for the School of Infantry at Warminster in late 1961. The Battalion moved to Minden in West Germany in 1964, where he was appointed the Battalion Intelligence Officer.

In 1965 Ian was posted to Malaysia as an Instructor at the Federation's Military Academy, where amongst other non military sporting activities, he went on canoeing and bamboo rafting expeditions. He became a jungle warfare instructor and when he rejoined the battalion in 1969 he was a natural to be appointed Jungle Warfare Training Officer for the battalion during a training exercise in Malaysia. His Commanding Officer, General Andy Watson, said he did a "first class job" and it was, whilst there, that he acquired the nickname "ULU" (meaning Jungle in the local language), a nickname he never lost, while continuing to serve in the Regiment.

Passing the Staff College exam with flying colours he went to Shrivenham in 1969 and Camberley the following year. His first staff job was as DAAG at Army Strategic Command near Salisbury.

Before rejoining The Black Watch in Hong Kong in 1973, as a Company Commander, he did a short operational tour with the Argylls in South Armagh. From Hong Kong the battalion moved to Colchester and from there Ian did a four months operational tour, this time in West Belfast, where he was awarded the GOC Northern Ireland's Commendation.

Another staff appointment followed in the Ministry of Defence where he was responsible for RMA Sandhurst affairs. Then followed a brief tour as 2IC of the Battalion in Ballykinler, Northern Ireland, where during a strike he became Chief Fire Officer, Belfast.

In 1978 he took command of 1BW which had moved to Catterick. His first task was to host a visit by our Regiment's Colonel-in-Chief, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. Shortly afterwards Rifle Companies exercised in Cyprus and Guyana and Support Company was despatched to do an exchange with an Italian army unit, the Wolves of Tuscany. The Italian company sergeant major from the

exchange company to Catterick always saluted Ian, whenever they met, uttering the words "I surrender".

Next came a six month unaccompanied tour in Belize, which, although gaining independence in September 1981, continued to have members of the British armed forces based in the country to provide protection from Guatemala. Jungle training at Sennybridge was meant to be part of the lead up to this deployment but the snow in Wales forced a rethink in favour of more conventional European training.

Ian wrote in his Belize directive "This tour will provide an opportunity for unrestricted military training and many recreational activities" and this was exactly as it turned out with companies rotating through operational deployments near the Guatemalan border (with armoured cars, artillery, helicopters and RAF Harriers in close support), jungle training (without snow), the defence of Airport Camp near Belize City and much adventurous training, usually on or under the surface of the sea.

Ian was always keen on fitness, so every morning in Belize everyone, including Ian, did a three mile run starting at 5.45 am. He was assisted in this by his friendly parrot who used to fly the route hanging upside down from telephone lines hurling abuse at anyone seen to be slacking. All sports were his passion and the Battalion Rugger team led by Padre Norman Drummond beat the Mexican National team in Mexico City.

Returning to Catterick after this most successful tour in Belize, Ian next took the battalion to Werl in West Germany in a new role as a mechanised battalion in an armoured brigade. After twenty years away from the British Army of the Rhine, there was much to learn. A daunting task, but his professionalism and leadership ensured that the battalion was quickly trained to a higher standard than many others that had been there far longer.

After handing over command, he became GSO1 Training in HQ Northern Ireland and was Mentioned in Despatches, before spending two years as Deputy Commandant (really the Commandant) of the Zimbabwe Staff College in Harare from 1983-1985.

On promotion to Colonel, he became Commandant of the Small Arms Wing at The School of Infantry in Warminster from 1986-1988, where he was involved in the development of the new SA 80 rifle.

His last posting was as Defence Attaché in the British Embassy, Jakarta, Indonesia from 1989 to 1993 from which job he retired on 30 June 1993.

He stayed on with the military in a Retired Officer training post in Wilton responsible for overseas attachments, which included Nepal, Brunei, Belize, Kenya and the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS) in Canada. He was also Chairman of the London Branch of The Black Watch Association and arranged a number of successful reunions at Sandhurst for cadets from his Intake.

Ian had a no nonsense approach to military matters but always recognised the good qualities in others and made them feel valued. He was extremely good at remembering the names of all those in his company and battalion and was much respected by all ranks who found him so approachable on any subject. Throughout his life, Ian was at the forefront of many outdoor and athletic/sporting pursuits including shooting with both shotgun and rifle, cricket, hockey, tennis, squash, athletics, boxing, rugby, skiing, fencing and tug-of-war to name but a few. There are probably more references to Ian in The Red Hackle Magazine relating to achievements and skills in these areas than to any other member of the Regiment.

Ian met Bridget at a Ball while at Shrivenham and in 1970 they were married by Bridget's father, The Reverend Raymond Kingston MBE, MC. They had two children, Fiona and Alison, both now married with delightful children of their own, who have described their grandfather as "epic". Throughout his life with her, Bridget was a great support, not least when she was a highly regarded Commanding Officer's wife.

Not many will know of an amazing act of kindness carried out by Ian while he was in Indonesia. He had heard of the mother of a Royal Marine, who would hold a vigil outside the Ministry of Defence every year, because she had no information about the death of her son, Marine Thomas Collins, killed while on operations during the Malayan/Indonesian Emergency in the Indonesian jungle. Ian's love of the jungle and his own moral code persuaded him, with the approval of the British Ambassador, to search for the grave of this young man. He tracked down the Christian priest who had buried Marine Thomas and found his grave. His body was flown back to Britain after full Indonesian military honours, followed by a British military funeral with Royal Marine pall bearers.

Although not at all well in recent years and deciding not to continue with chemotherapy, Ian continued to be involved in many activities, social and military, and was one of the many who came to Black Watch





Corner near Ypres in May 1914 for the unveiling of the Memorial to the nearly 9000 men of the Regiment who gave their lives in World War 1.

A moving Service of Thanksgiving for Ian's life was held at St Peter and Paul Church in Heytesbury, Wiltshire on 16 January 2015, assisted by Norman Drummond, who was 1BW padre throughout Ian's period of command. The church was full to overflowing with friends, members of his Sandhurst intake from other Regiments and many from all ranks of The Black Watch. Addresses from Colonel Edward Cowan (Ian's Second-in-Command in Catterick, Belize and Werl) and many members of his family, young and old, reminded us all what a special person he was and how much he contributed to The Black Watch, whilst balancing military responsibilities with a happy family life, both while serving and during retirement.

#### LIUTENANT COLONEL J A C MAITLAND TD

Andrew Maitland died unexpectedly on 7 February 2015 aged 60. Born on 26 November 1954 he was educated at Winchester and he then attended Standard Military Course 4 at RMA Sandhurst and was commissioned into The Black Watch, joining the 1st Battalion in Colchester, in May 1974. He joined Delta Company which was then under the command of Garry Barnett as it prepared for the 1974 (June-October) tour of West Belfast. Andrew was given command of 13 Platoon and the other Platoon Commanders were Roddy Riddell (14 Platoon), Colour Sergeant "Pud" Walker (15 Platoon) and John Purvis of 10 GR, who commanded 16 Platoon. Tim Coles arrived during the tour and took command of 15 Platoon.



The Battalion had returned from Hong Kong in March of that year and had not completed a Northern Ireland tour since 1971 and so faced an intensive training package before deploying. Andrew, then aged 19 was thrown in at the deep end but he was supported by Sergeant Alec Beveridge. As young officers (compared to the age of today's Platoon Commanders) we relied on the help and advice of our NCOs and the guidance of a long suffering Company Commander and CSM Harry Berry.

After an in camp training package that lasted three weeks, some leave and a ten day NITAT training package at Hythe and Lydd, we travelled by troop train to Liverpool and then by Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship to Belfast. The "Golden Don" was deployed as a four platoon Company to Woodburn Camp in the Suffolk and Twinbrook area of Belfast. Endless patrols and Vehicle Check Points, guard duties and disrupted sleep patterns became part of our lives but D Company's tour passed without major incident. Sergeant Condie the Regimental Chef produced quite excellent food to fuel the hungry young officers of Delta Company and we enjoyed a seemingly endless supply of egg banjos after many patrols.

Back in Colchester, Andrew showed himself to be a fine cross country runner representing his Company and Battalion as the Maxwell Shield got under way. Soon the news of another tour in Belfast was public but over the autumn and winter months the battalion focussed on its Airportable Role and the preparation for the New Colours parade. Andrew was selected to carry the New Regimental Colour and on the 3rd of May 1975, which was a cold and blustery day, the Colonel-in-Chief presented the New Colours on a parade where the Commanding Officer, the Second-in-Command and Adjutant were all mounted.

NITAT training followed and Andrew, still in command of 13 Platoon returned with Delta Company to West Belfast but this time to Fort Monagh and the Turf Lodge. This tour was more challenging but had some variety with Andrew's platoon guarding Crumlin Road Jail for a period which only highlighted how badly paid we soldiers were compared to Prison Officers. The Provisional IRA "ceasefire" was in place and Delta Company had 16 of the 23 shooting incidents in the Battalion's TAOR. Andrew showed himself to be a physically rugged officer and well able to motivate his platoon, ensuring that standards both in camp and on the streets were maintained. The tour ended in October 1975 after a meeting of the Turf Lodge Luncheon Club, which was held in the Europa Hotel on the eve of our departure.

Unfortunately for Andrew, the battalion were warned off for another Northern Ireland tour but this time, it was to be a Residential Battalion tour of 18 months duration and based in Abercorn Barracks, Ballykinler. It

was this third tour of Northern Ireland that made him think that becoming a career soldier was not a good idea but before the move he fitted in some bobsleigh practice in Romania and St Moritz.

By the end of July 1976 the battalion were safely in Ballykinler and Andrew was by this stage a very experienced Platoon Commander. He was still commanding 13 Platoon and Delta Company were now under the command of Stephen Lindsay. Having tasted the life of a Prison Officer in 1975, he was sent to train as a fireman but was then disappointed not to be called out to fight fires. Deployments to Belfast and South Armagh were common place and riots would often break out and Andrew became adept at facing down the rioters and was always cool and calm. He also undertook an independent command at the RUC Station in Keady, whilst the rest of the Company were at Middletown.

Between deployments the people of Co Down were wonderfully kind. The young ladies of the County entertained and were entertained with great enthusiasm by the single officers.

Andrew left the Regiment in the Spring of 1978, having completed over three and a half years commanding 13 Platoon. He had developed as a person in that time. He was intelligent, thoughtful, and conscientious and was a caring Platoon Commander whose confidence had grown during his Short Service Commission. He had a wonderful sense of fun and enthusiasm but could switch to "serious mode" when needed.

After leaving the Regiment he went to the Royal College of Agriculture at Cirencester to train as a Chartered Surveyor and then began his career with Savills concentrating on the land management aspects of his profession. He worked in Wiltshire, Yorkshire and Oxfordshire and finally he returned to Wiltshire but by this time he was working for a small property company.

I suspect that to some degree he missed the Army life because very soon after leaving the Regular Army he joined the TA. He was a Troop Leader in the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, and after a spell in the Yorkshire Yeomanry (including Squadron Command) he returned to command a Squadron in Gloucester. He was then the Commanding Officer of The Royal Wessex Yeomanry and this period was a real highlight in his life. I am sure that his time as a Black Watch officer set him up for his new career and his success as a Territorial Army Commanding Officer.

Andrew married Susanna in May 1997 and they enjoyed travelling together to far flung corners of the globe including India to see tigers and New Zealand to experience an earthquake. Tennis, skiing, bridge, gardening, country pursuits and friends and family all added to the rich tapestry of their lives.

Whilst he only completed a Short Service Commission in the Regiment he developed life-long friendships with both officers and his soldiers and he was very proud to meet up with four of his 13 Platoon compatriots at Black Watch Corner in May last year (Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies, Major Alec Stewart, WO1 David Stacey and WO1 Billy Whytock). The Delta Company officers of 1974 were also on parade, including Dick Parata who had travelled over from New Zealand.

When he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma he was determined to live life as fully as he could and despite the painful side effects of his treatment he did not complain. He was a man of faith and integrity and lived his life to the full with great energy and vitality. In his daily life he followed the maxim of his school motto; "Manners Makyth Man". He will be greatly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

R M Riddell

#### ALASTER S (Hof) TEMPLETON

Alaster Templeton died on 8th October 2014 aged 81. He and I were at school together at Trinity College Glenalmond where he was a prefect. In 1951 we shared a bench in the science laboratory and wrestled with the mysteries of physics as propounded by Arnot Russell. Arnot also introduced us to hill walking and mountaineering and the fraternity of wild Scotland with its myths and legends. He had served with the Regiment in India at the end of World War Two and occasionally would tell us of his experiences with The Black Watch.



On leaving school, Alaster went to the West of Scotland College of Agriculture. Three years later I met up with him again in Berlin, now serving as a National Service subaltern with the 1st Battalion. He was shortly to become known as Hof, a nickname derived from the name of the Airport

Templehof, famed for the 1958 Berlin airlift. The name would remain with him for the rest of his life.

Well liked, outgoing and reliable, he was selected from a galaxy of bright young officers to command the Assault Pioneer Platoon. Was it because of his knowledge of agriculture, physics or his ability to play bridge? OC Support Company, that veteran warrior, Peter Buchanan was an ardent bridge enthusiast as well as a demanding military task master. Hof's cool professionalism seemed to appeal to Peter and Hof excelled in the role with imagination and resourcefulness. An example of this was his Platoon's achievement in building a raft on to which he drove a one ton truck which they then paddled across the River Harvel.

Mountaineering and the hills were still high on his agenda and this prompted him to take his men to Austria to ski. Before they left Berlin he taught them the rudiments of the sport by towing them behind his car on a long rope.

No mean sportsman, he also played rugby for the Battalion and was in the team that Giles Le Maitre organised to tour the British Zone of West Germany. To complicate matters, the tour coincided with the end of the Suez crisis and the start of the 1956 Hungarian uprising. Our hosts, the Royal Tank Regiment, were frantically repainting all their sand coloured vehicles, intended for Suez, back to olive green to meet the Soviet threat from the East. To give us flexibility and to reduce costs we had travelled in our own cars. In hindsight, with the prevailing international political tension, we were fortunate to be able to drive back through the Russian occupied Zone of East Germany without being stopped or even arrested before we regained Berlin.

Hof volunteered for an additional year of service and joined the team at Queen's Barracks in early 1958. The pace of life at the Depot was demanding not only for the recruits but also for the training staff. Each subaltern was responsible for a senior and a junior squad that could number up to fifty conscripted National Servicemen and enlisted regular recruits. By way of distraction and at the request of the Highland Brigade Colonel, Neville Blair, the Depot subalterns were encouraged to entertain certain young ladies of St Andrews University amongst who was Colonel Neville's daughter. She and her friends, weary of their cash strapped fellow students, would welcome a deputation of young officers from Perth. Needless to say Hof was one who accepted the challenge and several longstanding friendships were established.

By this time the 1st Battalion had returned from Berlin to Redford Barracks in Edinburgh. Hof had been a member of the athletics team which reached the finals of the Army Inter Unit Athletics Championship in Aldershot in 1957. He held the Battalion record for the 220 yards at 24.7 seconds and trained with the relay squad for that distance. His and the efforts of all those involved were rewarded with the Battalion winning the Championship in 1958. The team photograph in the October 1958 edition of the Red Hackle shows 2nd Lieutenant Templeton looking the spitting image of his brother, Douglas, who later served as a National Service subaltern with the 1st Battalion in Cyprus in the early 1960s. Hof also shot for the Depot at the Highland Division Rifle meeting and was a team medal winner.

On completion of his three years' National Service he joined the 6/7th Black Watch.

Fortuitously, his family owned a farmhouse on the southernmost tip of the Mull of Kintyre, near Carskief. He coerced the local farmer's wife to raise pheasant poults. Those that escaped the ubiquitous buzzards provided some challenging shooting. In the evenings by paraffin lamp light we would sit by the kitchen range and roast fully feathered snipe on the embers of the fire. These events coincided nicely with Hof's Territorial Army training weekends and were much enjoyed by his friends.

On leaving the Army he had joined his well respected family firm of high quality carpet manufacturers. Despite the kudos of supplying the carpet for Her Majesty The Queen's Coronation in Westminster Abbey the firm was taken over by competitors. It could not compete with cheaper modern techniques. So Hof moved south and became a stockbroker and at the same time transferred his military allegiance to the Green Jackets where he was promoted to Major.

We kept in contact as for many years he acted for me professionally. I valued his wise advice and his in-depth knowledge of our family dynamic. His was a profound and steady influence for which I shall always be grateful.

Now living in Suffolk he developed a keen interest in horses and riding. At an age where most of us were accumulating the kilos, Hof's competitive spirit and self-discipline saw him shedding stones to compete in point to point races – winning at least four. He also owned a horse which delighted him by appearing more than once in the winners' enclosure. I learned recently that, defying age, he had even attempted the Cresta Run.

He married Anne Prideaux in 1968 and they had two daughters, Katherine and Jane. As a couple they loved to entertain friends in their moated country rectory.

Hof was at heart a countryman and revelled in all aspects of country life in general and rural Scotland in particular. A man of many facets and of great charm and character, he made friends with people in all walks of life wherever he went. He always remained immensely proud of his connection with the Regiment.

**Andrew Wedderburn**

#### **CAPTAIN NEA TOPLISS**

Norman Topliss was born on 29 January 1925 and from 1936 to 1941 he attended Ewell Castle Boarding School in Surrey, where his older sister Diane was also educated. Unfortunately Norman's parents were bombed out of their home and business in 1941 and Norman had to leave the school.

In July 1943 Norman joined the Army and subsequently served with several regiments. His first was the one his father Ernest had served in: The Royal Sussex Regiment. He served with them in India and was later commissioned in this regiment. For most of 1945 he served with 1st Battalion The Black Watch before being posted to HQ Allied Forces SE Asia (2nd Echelon), which took him to Hong Kong and Japan. Norman left the Army as a Captain in October 1948 and went on to the Regular Army Reserve Officers (RARO) list.

Whilst in Hong Kong Norman met and fell in love with Lilian, who was in the ATS and working at the HQ. They were married in London in early 1949. Their first child, Nicolas, was born in 1949 and their daughter Eleanor in 1950. Following the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, Norman was recalled to active service and in December 1950 was posted to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, subsequently moving as a reinforcement to 1 KOSB in April 1951 and staying with them until his release from the Army in November that year. During his time in Korea, Norman suffered severe damage to both ears as a result of mortar fire and in later years became profoundly deaf.

Back in civilian life Norman joined Lloyds Bank, working for them in a management capacity for the remainder of his working life until his eventual retirement. During this time he and Lilian had two further sons, Mark in 1955 and Alexander in September 1964. Sadly Lilian died as a result of a brain tumour in September 2011.

Norman was a great supporter of various Regimental Associations, attending many reunions over the years. He was a great supporter of the Stoke-on-Trent Branch of The Black Watch Association and in 2013 also joined the London Branch. Norman was a tall, smart and upright man and a regular member of the Black Watch contingent at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. He was also a Royal British Legion standard bearer at The Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall in the 1980s. Norman coped very well on his own until 2014 when his health started to decline. Members who attended Black Watch Corner in May 2014 will remember that Norman was unwell then, although he was determined to attend all the events held there. Sadly, on returning home his health continued to deteriorate and at the end of August he was admitted to Rotherham hospital, where he died on the 17 October 2014. A good Association member and an extremely nice man, Norman will be much missed by his friends and colleagues.

**Jim Keating**

#### **MAJOR J P WATSON MC**

Peter Watson was born in Perth in 1920 and was educated at Perth Academy. His father Captain Sammy Watson was a well-known, Regimental character who had won the MC and bar as well as being Mentioned in Despatches during the Great War. He was the Secretary of the Black Watch Association from 1919-1946.

Peter joined the Royal Engineers at the outbreak of war and served with them in France until the evacuation from Dunkirk. He, along with Henry McKenzie-Johnston attended the same OCTU on the Isle of





Man. Peter was commissioned into The Black Watch in September 1941 and joined his father's old battalion, the 7th, in the Shetlands whereas Henry joined the 6th Battalion.

He went with the 7th Battalion to North Africa and was in Egypt in August 1942. He served as the Battalion Intelligence Officer in the battle of El Alamein during which he was wounded and was Mentioned in Despatches. His role was to advise the Commanding Officer on the axis of the battalion's advance. It had to be precise – by compass bearing across the featureless desert, paced out against the clock to keep the lead members of the battalion behind the “friendly fire” barrage. In an article he said about being wounded, “I did not feel the shrapnel go through my palm. I just thought it odd that my compass hand suddenly swung sideways. Then I noticed the blood and the dent on the compass but it was still working, so I pressed on. Then someone told me my breeches were bloody – another splinter had hit my backside and I hadn't felt that either.” The battalion took its objective, the Miteiriya Ridge in the first light of dawn and Peter was sent back by his CO to have his wounds dressed.

On 6 April 1943 he won the MC at Wadi Akarit for guiding the battalion through a minefield gap whilst under intense enemy Artillery fire. He showed extreme courage and resourcefulness and later in the battle was wounded when an explosion burst both his eardrums which caused severe bleeding. He continued to act as a guide bringing forward reinforcements. The citation stated “Lt Watson, throughout the whole day of the battle, displayed outstanding courage and devotion to duty under the most difficult and dangerous conditions and with complete disregard for his own personal safety.”

Reading an interview that was conducted by the Imperial War Museum about his experiences at El Alamein I was struck by the raw courage that a young man of 22 showed; how he felt he was letting the battalion and his soldiers down by going back to have his wounds tended; by the confidence that a good Commanding Officer (James Oliver) could imbue in his officers and men and the great sense of pride that Peter had in his being a Black Watch man.

He fought in Sicily and Italy and ended the war as a Staff Officer in BAOR. He then became a shipping broker.

Whilst working in Balhousie Castle I got to know Peter quite well. He was always keen to be at important Regimental events; the Second World War Veterans Dinner, the Aberfeldy Muster, the Laying up of Colours' Parade and his last event, the dedication of the memorial at Black Watch Corner where he proudly wore both his and his father's medals. His wife Bobbie was always at his side or close by.

He was also a loyal supporter of the London Branch.

He could be sharp but always said sorry if he later thought he was wrong; he was unfailingly polite and he was one of the few people who would write and say thank you after an event. The handwriting in his letters got worse as the years passed but there was a warmth and charm in what he wrote and his pride in the Regiment was unflinching.

He was the last known Black Watch officer to have served at the Battle of El Alamein.

**R M Riddell**

#### **JAMES RICHARD ANDERSON**

James Anderson died at Selkirk in the Scottish Borders on 22nd May 2014 following a short illness. Known as Jim he served in The Royal Scots before joining the Tyneside Scottish in February 1943.

He was part of the second wave of the Normandy Landings and on 25 June the Battalion assembled to attack La Grande Ferrie on route to Rauray where on 1 July, the Battalion knocked out 30 SS Panzer tanks but incurred heavy losses with only 200 men surviving the day from a complement of over 800. Only one of their six anti-tank guns was left functioning.

He was wounded in mid-July and he was later declared unfit for combat duties and was then deployed as a medical orderly in a training battalion, before being discharged on medical grounds.

His Release certificate described Jim as having “worked excellently” as “the good type on whom reliance can always be placed”.

He was a journeyman butcher to trade but following the war, this employment was no longer available, so he began to work with Scottish



Omnibuses Ltd where he remained with its successor companies until eventually retiring, after 42 years, as an inspector.

A keen supporter of the local rugby team, Jim's hobbies included hill walking, rifle shooting and photography, the latter two yielding a large haul of prizes and trophies.

A devoted family man, Jim is survived by his wife Patricia and sons Colin and Douglas.

Jim was fit and active until his final illness and with his cap always at a jaunty angle, was a “Weel kent face” about town. The large attendance at this funeral was testimony to this popularity.

**Colin Anderson**

#### **THOMAS BARR**

Thomas (Tam) was born on the 17th of September 1938 in Methil. He attended Methil Primary School and Aberhill Secondary, leaving in 1953 to start his working life as a trainee miner in the Michael Colliery, East Wemyss.

In 1959 he enlisted in The Black Watch and served for nine years with the Regiment. During this time he served in Cyprus, UK and BAOR. On demobilisation, it was back to Methil, where he held various jobs; the local Sawmill, Rothies Plastics, the Seafield Colliery to name a few but it was Forth Security that saw him through to retirement, a job he enjoyed immensely.

A lover of the outdoors, he thought nothing was better than to walk along the beach gathering whelks or spending hours in his garden. He enjoyed the simple pleasures of life. At his funeral, the Branch turned out in good numbers to lay him to rest in the local Methilmill Cemetery; his old Platoon Commander from his mortar days, Major Colin Innes attended the service. During his time with the Mortar Platoon, Tom served with other well known mortarmen namely, Lieutenant Colonel Fred Beattie, Jocky Foy, David McIllood, David McQueen and many more well known faces and I am sure some of them will be sitting round that table discussing the pros and cons of the 3 inch mortar against those of the 81mm mortar!

**R M Scott**

#### **IVAN STANLEY BURCH**

Ivan Burch died at Grantham, Lincolnshire aged 88 and is survived by his daughter Pamela and two grandsons.

Ivan enlisted into the Regiment at Grantham in 1943 and travelled the four hundred miles to Perth to commence his training at Queens Barracks and Kinfauns Castle. He was then posted to the Young Soldiers' Battalion for a short period before joining the 4th Battalion in Gibraltar.

Re-inforcements were required for the 51st Highland Division who were to take part in the forthcoming Normandy Landings and Ivan volunteered and was transferred to the 5th Battalion. He then found himself in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire to begin training for operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of Europe. On the 6th of June he landed on the Normandy Beaches with the 5th Battalion around 2000 hrs.

Ivan took part in all the heavy fighting at Caen, the Falaise Gap, the Ardennes, Gennep, Goch, Reichswald and the Rhine Crossing into Germany. He was Mentioned in Despatches and gained promotion to sergeant. He also moved across to the 1st Battalion where he teamed up with Jim Burrow who was then the battalion Mortar Platoon Sergeant; the two of them became inseparable until Jim's death. Along with Jim, Ivan was a founder member of the Stoke-on-Trent Branch of the Association and attended all the organised functions. They relived some of the dan-



gerous and often humorous incidents of war time. He also attended annual events at Balhousie Castle and took part in the numerous 51st Highland Division memorial pilgrimages to the towns and villages they had liberated many years before. His last visit to Perth was to attend the Second World War Veterans' dinner in Perth in 2013 where he kept the author of this article up until the small hours and despite his advanced years, was on parade the next day at Aberfeldy as bright as a button.

Whilst he was stationed in Duisburg he met and married Henny who sadly predeceased him but they had 56 long and happy years together. On his return from Germany in 1948, Ivan and Henny set up home in his home town of Grantham. There he trained as a plumber which helped him on his way to buying and renovating property at which he was most successful.

Ivan was a proud Black Watch soldier through and through and a proud Normandy Veteran who is sadly missed by all who knew him.

**R J W Proctor**

#### **JOHN DRUMMOND**

John died on the 9th of December 2014 aged 61. John who was also known as Tub was born on the 18th of February 1953 into a family of six living in Bowhill in Fife. He attended the Denend Primary School, Beath High School and then moved to Auchterderran. As a boy he joined the Bowhill Pipe Band and he became an accomplished piper.

On leaving school he took up an apprenticeship at the Rosyth Dockyard as a Blacksmith but only months before his time was served he decided to leave and head South to Corby where he took up employment in the iron works. A couple of years later it was up sticks again and head back North to his native Cardenden and the friends he had missed. At the ripe old age of 26, John decided to join The Black Watch, with the intention of joining the pipe band in Werl. His wish was granted and on completion of his training he was posted to Werl and he joined the Pipe Band.

After some time with the band, he joined 2 Platoon Alpha Company again finding himself among his Cardenden pals.

A big man with an even bigger personality, John soon became a much respected member of the platoon. On his demobilisation, he returned to his native Fife.

He was a well liked and respected soldier who gave a very accomplished tune on the pipes.

**R M Scott**

#### **DAVE FAIRLEY**

Dave Fairley died on 18th November 2014 aged 85. He served in the 2nd Battalion until it was disbanded in 1956 and he then joined the 1st Battalion.

He was a long-term member of the MT Platoon and as a driving instructor, taught many Black Watch men to drive. He completed his time in the Regiment in 1968 as the B Company MT Sergeant in Minden. On leaving the Army he settled in Edinburgh. He was well liked and respected.



#### **GEORGE JACKSON**

George Jackson, a member of the Stoke-on-Trent Branch died on 30 November 2014 in Manchester. He was 84.

George was called up in March 1947 and underwent his training in Elgin before joining The Black Watch. He spent his National Service in the UK and was discharged in March 1949 but re-enlisted joining the 1st Battalion in Duisburg.

He met and married his wife Inge in Duisburg and moved to Berlin with the battalion and in 1950 volunteered for service in Korea. At some stage



(by his own admission) he blotted his copy book in the Battalion and like Moses "wandered in the wilderness".

He was posted to Hara-Mura Battle Training School in Japan but rejoined the 1st Battalion when it arrived in Korea. He joined C Company. By October 1952 he had been promoted to Sergeant and he took part in the Battle of the Hook. He was wounded in April 1952.

He spent two years in Kenya during the Mau Mau Emergency and left the Army in October 1954.

George then served in the Manchester City Police and Greater Manchester Police from 1954-1984 leaving in the rank of Inspector.

#### **JOHN EDWARD HENSON**

John Henson died on the 8th of October 2014 aged 81. His funeral took place in West Bromwich on 28th of October.

John served in both Korea and Kenya with the 1st Battalion and kept in touch with the Regiment through The Black Watch Association.

**R J W Proctor**



#### **BERNIE (Tich) LEVIEN**

Born in Salford, Manchester, on 3 July 1926 Bernie left school aged 16. The Second World War was at its height and at 17 he volunteered for the army and was sent to The Black Watch for training. At 18 he was posted to the 1st Battalion and was a member of the leading company on the Rhine Crossing in 1945. Throughout his service, Bernie was known to all as 'Tich' and when the War ended he served with the battalion in Beilefeld and Duisburg where, for much of the time, he was batman to Pipe Major Rob Roy.

After his demob in 1948 Bernie went into the horse racing industry, working as a bookmaker for "Jolly Joe", his grandfather's on-course betting pitch, alongside his brother Monty Levien. "Jolly Joe" operated at Haydock Park, Sandown Park, Epsom and Newmarket amongst other places.

In 1950 Bernie met London born Stella Morris Rotterman and they married in 1951, moving from Manchester to London to be near Stella's work as a make-up artist in the film industry. Their daughter Hilary was born on 18th June 1953 on Ascot Gold Cup day and was nearly named Souepi in honour of the horse, ridden by Charlie Elliott, that won the cup that year. Luckily for Hilary, Stella insisted that she be named after Edmund Hillary, who had reached the summit of Mount Everest that year on the 29 May.

Bernie's grandfather retired in the 1950s and Monty left the firm in the 1960s, leaving Bernie to head "Jolly Joe" until he retired from racing in 2012.

Known simply as "Jolly Joe" by the Racing Post, Bernie worked on 64 Epsom Derby Days; he lost the most money of his career in one day when Frankie Dettori rode all seven winners on British Champions Day at Ascot in 1996 and is reputed to be the man who introduced John McCririck to bookmaking. In the 1970s Bernie also ran an evening school on the art of bookmaking and the structure of a racecourse at the Polytechnic of North London (now the London Metropolitan University) for betting shop based staff and other people interested in racing. Cheltenham was his favourite racecourse and the Ascot Gold Cup his favourite race.

Such was his skill at 'Tic-tac', the traditional method of signs used by bookmakers to communicate the odds of horses, that he was often asked by producers to provide technical advice to actors on how to preform Tic-tac on the stage. Racing was his business and his life. However outside of this he enjoyed amateur theatre, and after Stella died this is where he met Sally Head, his devoted partner of some 20 years, at a theatre production in North London.

Tich Levien never forgot his time as a Black Watch soldier and until his death in Cockfosters, Hertfordshire, on 2 February 2015, at the age of 88, maintained his contact with the Association as a member of the London Branch and, from time-to time, visited Balhousie Castle.

**Jim Keating**



### JAMES LINTON

James Linton served in the 1st Battalion from 1958-60 in Cyprus and looked back on his time in the Regiment with great pride. He served in the Signals Platoon and also attended many Regimental Reunions. He died on 7 January 2015.



### ALEC MCCARTHY

Alec (Big Eck) McCarthy died in his 73rd year on the 20th of November 2014 in Aberdeen after a short period of illness.

Eck joined the Regiment as a young entrant in the 4th/5th Battalion where he served for seven years before enlisting into the Regular Army in 1965. After completing his training at the Highland Brigade Training Depot at Bridge of Don, Aberdeen he joined the 1st Battalion which was stationed at Elizabeth Barracks, Minden as part of the British Army of the Rhine.

His TA experience soon came to the fore and promotion in a rifle company soon followed and by the time he had completed his twenty two year engagement he had a wide employability within the 1st Battalion and at "E". He served in Cyprus, Libya, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Northern Ireland and BAOR.

Eck was a great Regimental Character who was affectionately known as "Eckum Checkum," a nickname which he gained due to the thorough daily kit checks. These he carried out on the inmates of the Battalion Guard Room when he was the Regimental Provost Sergeant during the first two years the battalion spent in Werl, West Germany. He gained further promotion and retired as a Warrant Officer Class Two at the Scottish Infantry Depot Glencorse.

On completion of his Regular Army service he and his family settled in Aberdeen and he found work in the Security Industry. He also joined the Home Service Force (HSF) of the Territorial Army where he served for a number of years. On his retiral from the HSF, Eck became an Adult Instructor in the ACF and served some years with The Highlanders Battalion ACF in Aberdeen.

He is survived by his wife Jean and his three sons, Sandy, David and James. James is currently serving as a Black Watch Battalion instructor at School of Infantry.

Eck gave the impression of being very fierce but he was a great character who had a heart of gold and will be sadly missed.

**R W J Proctor**

### JOHN MCRAE

John died on the 23rd of December 2014 aged 104; he was probably our oldest living veteran at that time.

He was born on the 16th of November 1910 in the Irish Row, Methilhill which is now the site of the village local the Douglas Arms. John attended the Denbeath Primary and Secondary School, a walk of about a mile to and from the village. On leaving school he started as a trainee miner in the Durie Vale Mine and after it closed he moved to the Muiredge Colliery in Buckhaven.

John decided this wasn't the life for him and on the 12th of August 1930 and just before his twentieth birthday, enlisted into The Black Watch. An accomplished piper, John was first posted to the 2nd Battalion but after a short time was transferred to the 1st Battalion, where he became good friends with the future Pipe Major Rob Roy of Tobruk. This was a friendship that lasted long after they had both left the service. At the age of 27 John left the Regiment and took up employment with the Post Office. This break was to be short lived however as war broke out in 1939 and John found himself back in the kilt and heading for France. As history records, the 51st Highland Division found themselves trapped at St Valery and it was here that John was captured and taken prisoner.



Prisoners were transported up the Rhine in barges to an offloading station in Germany and then marched about a thousand miles into Poland. With the war's end he was demobilised and he returned to the village and the Post Office where he remained until his retirement. John loved the open air and well into his later years would be seen walking that half mile or so down to his local Bowling Club, where he would enjoy his pint, a wee nip and a game of Bingo. That gives you an idea of the measure of this unique old soldier.

A fuller record of his life was recorded on page 43 of the May 2011 Red Hackle when he celebrated his 100th birthday. On the day of his funeral, the Regiment turned out in good numbers to give him the send off he so richly deserved.

**R M Scott**

### WILLIAM MILLIGAN

William (Willie) Milligan died on the 7th of December 2014 aged 75 after a short fight against serious illness.

Willie who was from Lintrathen near Kirriemuir joined the Regiment in 1958 and trained with 133 Squad from October to December at Queens Barracks and then was posted to the 1ST Battalion in Cyprus. Here he was recruited into the Regimental Band and became a percussionist mainly playing the side drum. On the battalion's return to UK, Willie took part in 1963 North American tour and played at the White House in front of President John F Kennedy.

He was a great character who had a fine sense of humour. One day he fell foul of the RSM on one of the weekly RSM's parades at Warminster. With the RSM pointing at him with his pace stick for some idle drill movement, Willie was informed by the RSM "that there was an idiot at the end of his pace stick". Willie replied that "it isnae at my end sir"; needless to say he ended up in the Guard Room to sharpen up his drill!

He married Peggy in March 1964 and in the same year left the regiment and returned home to work with Peggy's father on his farm. He then worked in the local area as a gardener until retirement. He kept his percussionist skills active and played with local country dance bands right up until he took ill. He often took part in recorded and live radio performances.

He and Peggy were married for nearly 51 years and have two sons William and Stewart. Stewart followed his father into the regiment and was piper in the Pipes and Drums for a number of years before leaving to join the MOD Police.

**R J W Proctor**

### JOHN MORRISON

John died aged 55 in the Victoria hospital Kirkcaldy on Sunday the 21st of December 2014. He was born in Glenrothes on the 7th of October 1959. He attended Carlton Primary and Auchmuty Secondary schools to complete his education. It has to be said, he was noted for his unofficial holidays, preferring to be at home with some of his friends and a pack of cards rather than attending a geography lesson. On leaving school it was off to Gordon Barracks in Aberdeen as a Junior Soldier. This suited John; as a keen footballer and supporter of Aberdeen, being based two miles from the stadium was a bonus; as often as he could, he would go to watch his team, which at that time was managed by Sir Alex Ferguson.

On completion of his Junior Service, John was posted to Ballykinkler in Northern Ireland and joined Bravo Company but he



also served in Cyprus, Canada, Belize and BAOR. John was seen as an above average football player and this was soon spotted by David Stacey who then nurtured him, giving him a chance to play for the Battalion.

Another highlight in John's service was being posted as a member of the Infantry Display Team in Warminster, a posting he enjoyed immensely.

On completion of his service it was back to Glenrothes, leaving his many friends behind. John became a member of the British Legion in Glenrothes and was often heard to say, it's great, just like being in the Battalion Beer Bar, there are so many ex Jocks in the club.

Unfortunately John was diagnosed with diabetes which then led to a steady decline in his health. John was a man who enjoyed his life and even with the knowledge of his illness he showed great fortitude and bravery.

**R M Scott**

#### **ANGUS PIERCE**

Gus Pierce sadly died on 21st January two days after suffering a heart attack aged 68. He was diagnosed with cancer in 1983 when serving with the Regimental Band in Werl, West Germany. He was posted back to UK and managed to hold it at bay for 30 years as medical science and treatments advanced.

Gus joined the regiment as a Junior Bandsman in 1963 and was trained at Fort George as a member of the Highland Brigade Junior Band and in 1965 was posted to the 1st Battalion which was stationed in Minden, West Germany. He became a very competent euphonium player and also played the tenor horn. His ability as a musician was soon spotted and he was sent to Kneller Hall to attend the musician's course where he did very well and was a great advert for the Regimental Band which was always in the top tier of non-staff bands in the British Army. He became the euphonium soloist for the band and played in many prestigious venues throughout the world including the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow and the Albert Hall in London.

Hard work and musical accomplishment were rewarded with promotion and he was soon in the Sergeants Mess and would have gained further promotion had illness not kept him back.

Gus often gave the impression that he was a very serious and dour person but although he was meticulous in every task he undertook he had a good sense of humour and helped those who were not as talented as himself. Apart from music Gus was a very proficient football referee and passed on his skills and knowledge to others in the battalion and beyond. He refereed Company and Platoon fixtures in a firm and fair manner and he once whistled me off the touch line for criticising the match officials at a Senior Marinden intercompany match!

After he left the Army, Gus continued with his music and his talents and experience enhanced the Kingdom Brass Band who played at his funeral at Kirkcaldy Crematorium in February. He joined his local Probus Club and he visited Balhousie Castle with the club shortly before Christmas where I had the pleasure of meeting and catching up with him.

**R J W Proctor**

#### **IAN ROSS**

Ian Ross who was always known as Nye, died very suddenly in October 2014. At the end of his military service, Nye returned to work on the land around Brechin and Forfar.

He joined the 1st Battalion in Warminster in 1963 and was posted to D Company which was detached to the School of Infantry from the main element of the battalion which was stationed at Knook Camp.

In 1964 Nye became a member of the "Rocker Platoon" which was composed of volunteers from D Company and was commanded by Lieutenant Paul Sugden with Bob Ritchie as the Platoon Sergeant. The Rocker Platoon was formed to be part of the UN Peace Keeping Force in Cyprus and were the first Black Watch soldiers to wear the UN Blue Beret during their six month peace keeping duties.

On return from Cyprus, Nye became an AFV 432 driver in D



Company taking part in all the major exercises in Germany and a further six month UN tour of peace keeping duties in Cyprus from 1966 to 1967. On the battalion's return to Ritchie Camp, Kirknewton Nye joined the Motor Transport Platoon and was a most proficient and reliable 4 Ton Driver, an employment which he enjoyed until he left the army.

He always kept in touch with the Regiment by attending annual reunions and Branch meetings of the Angus Branch of the Association.

He was well liked by all who knew him and had a droll but keen sense of humour and a glint in his eye. He was a real son of the soil and Black Watch soldier who will be missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

**R J W Proctor**

#### **JOHN RYDE-ROGERS**

John Ryde-Rogers died at home in Littlethorpe, Leicestershire on the 3rd of October 2014 aged 87. He joined the regiment in 1945 aged 17 and was employed as a ship's clerk on troopships carrying Polish Troops home to Poland and obtained the rank of Corporal before being discharged in 1949.

In 1950 John joined the Leicester County Constabulary and then in 1956 moved to the Leicester City Police where he specialised in scenes of crime investigation, fingerprints and photography. He became head of the department, a position he held for 4 years. He spent the greater part of his service with the CID where he received three Commendations for outstanding work. He retired due to ill health in the rank of Sergeant after 25 years service. He then gained further employment for the next ten years as Administrative Officer with the local Leicester Frith Hospital.

He kept in touch with the regiment through membership of the Stoke-On-Trent Branch of the Association.

**R W J Proctor**

#### **ARTHUR EDWARD SIMMONDS**

Arthur Simmonds died on the 11th of November 2014 in his 91st year and was probably the oldest active Drum Major in the UK or even further afield. He was a founder member of The Black Watch Association Pipe Band and served with the band for 45 years most of the time as Drum Major. His last parade with the band took place when he led them at the RAF Association, National Servicemen's Annual Parade at the National Arboretum in October 2014, a month before he died.



Arthur was born on the 12th of June 1924 in Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent and was one of eleven children. He attended the local primary and secondary schools and left aged 14 to work in one of the pottery manufacturers which were eventually taken over by Royal Doulton.

In 1941 aged 17, Arthur tried to join the Royal Navy but became impatient as there was a waiting list. He then decided to join The Black Watch and enlisted into the Regiment at Hanley Recruiting office.

After completing his basic training at Queens Barracks in Perth, Arthur was posted to the Young Soldiers' Battalion which was stationed at Barrow-in-Furness. By the time he was 18 Arthur found himself on board a troop ship with the 6th Battalion which was sailing down the Clyde en route for Algiers to take part in Operation TORCH. After the fighting in North Africa ceased the Battalion soon found itself in Italy and Arthur took part in all of the major battles including Monte Casino, where he and three others had a narrow escape from the Germans by hiding in a cellar. He received shrapnel wounds to his face and head as a result of a German grenade being lobbed into the cellar. For most of his time in Italy he



was employed as a Company Runner which could be both demanding and dangerous. On the 15th December 1944 the battalion was then redeployed to Greece sailing from Taranto in Italy and landing at Piraeus, in Greece. Service in Greece continued until August 1945 when the battalion was disbanded after VJ Day.

On return to the UK, Arthur was posted to the Argylls and went on a further overseas tour of active service, this time in Palestine on peace keeping duties. On leaving the army in 1947 he returned to the Potteries and took up his old career in the potteries where remained until he retired in 1987.

Arthur married Vera on the 16th of January 1945 and they had many happy years together. Sadly Vera predeceased Arthur some years ago but like him she was a great supporter of The Black Watch and made an annual pilgrimage to Balhousie Castle until illness prevented her. They are survived by their daughter Pam and her husband Chris who is also a drummer in the Pipe Band.

**R W J Proctor**

#### **FRANK WALKER**

Frank Walker died in his home town of Arbroath on Saturday the 7th of March aged 75 after a short period of very serious illness.

Frank joined the Regiment in 1959 and after completing his basic training at Queens Barracks he joined the 1st Battalion in Cyprus and eventually became a member of the MT Platoon in which he served in both Warminster, when the Battalion was employed as Demonstration Battalion and Minden, West Germany as part of the British Army of The Rhine.

Frank returned to civilian life in 1965 and worked as a lorry driver for many years with W Brown Construction.



He never forgot his military service and was a great supporter of the Royal British Legion Scotland and carried out the duties of Standard Bearer and Chairman of the sadly now defunct Monifieth Branch. He was also an active member of the Angus Branch of the Black Watch Association and regularly attended monthly meeting and events until ill health prevented him.

**R J W Proctor**

The following deaths have also been recorded:

**William John Bohme** of Middlesex who died on 11th January 2015 aged 80.

**Michael Graham** from Ballingry, Fife died on 13th October aged 52. He served in 1 Platoon, A Grenadier Company between 1983-1986.

**Stan Dudzik** who served in the UK, Northern Ireland and BAOR died in December 2014. He was at one stage of his Army service the Battalion Butcher.

**John Falcus** who served with the Tyneside Scottish died on 14 October 2014 aged 81.

**Mr Ronnie Keane** from Livingstone who died during 2014. He was a lifelong friend and comrade of Thomas Morris with whom he served throughout the Second World War (see notice below).

**Edward James Frederick Leves** who died on 2nd November 2014.

**Neil McGregor**, a Corporal in the 1st Battalion died aged 45. An obituary will appear in the next magazine.

**Thomas Lambert Morris** died on the 5th of July 2014 at Solihull Warwickshire aged 87. Thomas who originally came from Crail in Fife joined the regiment during the Second World War. On demobilisation he married Maisie and set up home in Warwickshire where they spent many happy years together.

**Jimmy Sinclair** died on 9th November 2014 aged 52. He served in the Anti-Tank Platoon in Werl, Kirknewton and Edinburgh.

**Mr J Wann** who served in the 1st Battalion towards the end of WW2 died in January 2015; he was initially a member of The Fife and Forfar Yeomanry, was commissioned into The Black Watch in April 1944 and posted to the 1st Battalion. He was wounded on the 20th November that year.

If you're a member of the Armed Forces, or the husband, wife or civil partner of someone in the Armed Forces, you can register to vote either as a Service Voter or as an ordinary voter. The way you choose to register to vote is up to you and will depend on your personal circumstances.

If you're based overseas, or expect to be posted abroad in the next year, it makes sense to register as a Service Voter. This allows you to be registered at a fixed address in the UK even if you move around. A Service Voter registration also lasts for five years, so once you're registered, you shouldn't have to worry about it while you're busy overseas.

If you're based in the UK and are unlikely to change address or be posted overseas in the next year, you can register as an ordinary voter.

As you probably know, most people vote in person by going to a polling station in the UK. But don't worry if you're abroad at the time of the election or have another reason why you won't be able to vote in person on the day – you can apply to vote by post or by proxy (someone voting on your behalf).

#### **Want further information on registration or voting?**

Phone the Freephone Helpline on **0800 393783**

e-mail: **ero@highland.gov.uk**

or write to the Electoral Registration Officer,

Moray House, 16-18 Bank Street, Inverness IV1 1QY



## PILGRIMAGES

### The Flooding of the Yser Plain, Nieuwpoort Belgium

*By Lieutenant Colonel Mike Smith*

Leaders and dignitaries from former World War I enemies united on Tuesday 28 October 2014 at Nieuwpoort, Belgium to mark the centenary of the first big battle on the infamous Flanders Fields which helped set the stage for four years of bloodletting on the Western Front. This area was important to the German war plans as the Kaiser needed a port to resupply his Army. Neutral Belgium held the key, as Nieuwpoort was accessible to the advancing Germans. It was here the Belgium army led by the "War King", King Albert 1, held firm, assisted by the flooding of the Yser Plain. This line was held by the Belgian Army for the entire duration of the First World War. The Black Watch Association received an invitation to send representatives to this ceremony; the invitation was accepted and a delegation made up of Mike Smith and John Glen, Standard Bearer of the Angus Branch was dispatched via the Euro Star to attend. The G4 plan was set up by the Association and we were hosted by Erwin Ureel well known to us from Black Watch Corner and Steve Maertens from the Institute Des Veterans in Brussels. The support afforded from them covering the entire trip was exemplary including the hospitality with the overnight stay at Erwin's home. The ceremony was in two parts. The first at the King Albert memorial was hosted by the King of Belgium; of interest was the Honour Guard formed from the Belgian Army Line Battalion which the 1st Battalion had an affiliation with during the Werl tour. Speeches were made by most of the national representatives; particular interest was taken in the German Chancellor's speech who spoke of the "immeasurable sacrifice" the war caused and said all sides "cannot but be grateful for how much has changed since". World War I claimed an estimated 14 million lives, including 5 million civilians and 9 million soldiers. At least 7 million soldiers were left permanently disabled.

After the seaside ceremony, the leaders and all invited Military and Veterans Associations went to nearby Ypres, once a prosperous medieval town which was flattened by relentless fighting during 1914-1918. The traditional Last Post Ceremony was conducted at the Menin Gate while the heads of state, representatives and guests, watched the poppies falling from the rooftop.

This ceremony concluded the day's events which had seen all the parties moved around the Belgium country side in a fleet of escorted cars and buses.



*The centenary ceremony commemorating the flooding of the Yser Plain was held at the King Albert 1 Memorial in Nieuwpoort Belgium. The front of the memorial is flooded to symbolise the action taken during the battle.*



*Standard Bearers who attended the Pilgrimage to the Yser Plain Memorial.*

A welcoming meal and a night's accommodation was had courtesy of Erwin before the journey home the next day. A very enjoyable whistle stop visit that was well worth the effort.

## RETURN TO LA ROCHE

*By Roland Dane*

La Roche-en-Ardenne is where the 51st Highland Division fought during the Battle of The Bulge. As a member of the Black Watch, I was invited to join the people of La Roche for the 70th anniversary celebration of the town's liberation.

The journey to Heathrow airport was in typical January weather. Cold with gale force winds and torrential rain. At the airport the destination boards were showing delays to all flights and just as they were about to display our departure gate, the boards broke down, forcing us to listen intently to announcements over the public address system. When our flight was eventually announced we found ourselves having to traipse to one of the more distant departure gates. The take off was bumpy as was the landing at Brussels.

We were met at the airport by Gilles, one of the organizers of the event who drove us to La Roche and the hotel 'Le Chalet' which was up on a hill overlooking the town. The hotel was old fashioned and quaint with the ground floor full of old paintings. It was very comfortable but because it was January the restaurant was closed so we would have to eat out every evening.



*Roland Dane with Jill Patton (grand-daughter of General Patton) and fellow veteran John Howell of the Northamptonshire Yeomanry.*



We were told to rest and that we would be picked up later. At 7pm a car arrived and took us to a restaurant where we had a very nice meal. There I met my fellow veteran for the first time. He was John Howell, a tank man from the Northamptonshire Yeomanry. With the passing of the years we were the only two veterans able to attend this celebration.

The next day was Sunday and the start of the events. It began with a meeting with the Mayor (Guy Gillotleaux) and other dignitaries in a hotel in the town. We had coffee and many photographs were taken. From there we all walked up to the Kirk for a memorial service during which the minister and others expressed their thanks for the liberation of their town. It was a nice service though I hardly understood a word of it. It was there that I first met Jill Patton, General Patton's grand-daughter.

From the Kirk we all walked down to the town square to watch a display by a military band and troops parading flags of unknown origin. From there we made our way to the Highland Division memorial on the edge of town where I laid a poppy wreath on behalf of The Black Watch.

Then it was on to the museum where wreaths were laid at the replica of the meeting between Patton's Third Army and The Black Watch. More photographs were taken.

On to the town centre where we were thanked once again for the liberation of La Roche, this time by the Mayor. After the official business it became a bit more relaxed as we mingled and chatted with the locals many of whom were keen to take our photograph.

Then we were off again to a marquee in the town centre for the Mayor's Dinner. Many locals had paid to get tickets to this dinner and we were given a warm welcome. There was a band playing Glen Miller tunes which encouraged many of us to get on our feet and start dancing with the ladies. Then we had our dinner followed by more dancing. We were asked to go to the Mayor's table and were presented with gifts. These included beers, chocolates and cooked meats; all produced in or near the town. We were applauded all the way back to our table which brought a lump to my throat. When it was all over we were driven back to the hotel for a rest and then taken out later to dinner.

On the final day of the visit we made a trip to the war cemetery at Hotten which is north of La Roche and laid another poppy wreath. Lunch was at a restaurant in the town and in the afternoon we were taken on a tour of some of the villages which were fought over during the battle. On the final evening we had a quiet dinner with the Mayor and the event organisers.

Next day we made the journey home via Brussels and Heathrow. I was proud to have represented The Black Watch.

**Editor's note:** Roland Dane served with the 7th Battalion The Black Watch during the Battle of the Bulge, when the 51st Highland Division under the



*The 51st Highland Divisional Memorial at La Roche-en-Ardenne.*

command of General Tom Rennie liberated La Roche. The 1st Battalion (Lt Col Hopwood), 5th Battalion (Lt Col Bradford) and 7th Battalion (Lt Col Cathcart) were all involved in the counter offensive that began on 7th January 1945. Roland was in the Carrier Platoon and was attached to A Company. A memorial, dedicated to the men of the 51st Highland Division, who fell in the operation to take La Roche, stands near the town.

## GENNEP

*By Robin Pilcher*

Between the 9th and 14th February 1945, as part of Operation Veritable, the great Allied drive to clear the Rhineland of occupying forces, two small towns in the south-east of the Netherlands, Milsbeek and Gennep, were relieved by soldiers of 152 and 153



*Alice Pilcher and Archie Pilcher at the ceremony to open Highlander Bridge over the river Niers near Gennep.*

Brigade of the 51st Highland Division in what was a hard-fought street battle against 'a fanatical resistance, fighting to defend Hitler's Reich.' Many soldiers lost their lives over the five days; those of the Divisional Engineers who, under concentrated fire from battle-hardened German paratroopers, managed to span the River Niers at the northern entrance to the town were badly affected. They



*Three veterans, of the 51st Highland Division, including Dr Tom Renouf MM made the pilgrimage to Gennep in February 2015.*



built a Baillie bridge which was reputed to be the longest constructed during the war and replaced a bridge blown up by the enemy.

Although this particular encounter would only seem a fleeting moment in the lives of those soldiers who, since D-Day the previous year, had been pushing up through France and Belgium, this act of deliverance has never been forgotten by the townsfolk of these two Dutch towns. Every ten years since, the respective town halls have invited veterans of that campaign over to the Netherlands to thank them personally for what they had done and for them all to honour those who lost their lives during that particular action.

This year, as a major part of the 70th anniversary, saw the reinstated bridge over the River Niers being renamed Highlander Bridge. Sadly, there were only three veterans present to see this take place, one from The Black Watch, one from the Gordon Highlanders and one from the Middlesex Regiment. Nevertheless, staff of the town hall had managed to carry out a magnificent detective job, contacting many of the families of past veterans and inviting them out to attend the dedication, so that now the celebration and remembrance of those few days in February 1945 had all but passed down to the next generation – and even beyond that.

I was very honoured to be one to receive an invitation. My father, Major Graham Pilcher, who served with 5th Battalion The Black

Watch, and had led C company during the relief of Gennepe, had made many of the decennial ‘pilgrimages’ until his death in 2009. I attended with Kirsty, my wife and daughter Alice, who, together with George Renouf, the son of Major Tom Renouf MM, who, approaching his 90th birthday, remained integral to all proceedings during the whole weekend; it was Tom who raised the flag of the 51st Highland Division on the bridge during its renaming ceremony. My brother, Mark, who had accompanied our father at many of the past events, was also there with his 12 year-old son, Archie, who proudly donned his grandfather’s bonnet with its red hackle and carried the cushion that bore the three pairs of scissors used for cutting the ceremonial ribbon on the bridge.

And it was quite apparent to all who attended that the townsfolk of Gennepe and Milsbeek are keen to continue on in the coming years. A young woman from Milsbeek, Inge van Duin, said, “This weekend was important for the memory and celebration. To people who weren’t there it’s hard to explain what it meant and still means for the people who live in this area. We go maybe twice a year to the war cemeteries in Gennepe and Milsbeek to lay roses on all the graves of those who gave their lives for our freedom. There is no such thing here as a forgotten soldier.”

## PULLARS BAND 1881-c1908

*By T Moles*

Pullars Band was formed as a works band, typical of the Victorian period. It was created in 1881 and sponsored by Robert Pullar of ‘Pullars of Perth’, the local family-run dying and dry-cleaning company. To anyone over the age of 50 they were a household name throughout Scotland and the North of England. The band was, essentially, the works band which also doubled as the Town and Volunteer Battalion Band. Mr Robert Pullar subsidised numerous activity clubs in the town and presented a set of musical instruments to their employees for the purpose of forming a band to be called Pullars Band’ in March 1881.

A report in the Perthshire Courier of 19 July 1881 confirms that ‘this excellent band ... was recently organised by the Messrs Pullar’, which ‘gave a promenade concert on the North Inch’, with Mr F C Gorman conducting. One of the musical pieces played that evening was ‘Black Watch’ by Wilson. In February 1887 the band also performed a concert for the Messrs Pullars’ employees in the City Hall.

A number of the Pullar family served in the Perthshire Rifle Volunteers and it is interesting that Captain George D Pullar does not mention the band in his history of the 4th Volunteer Battalion. He does inform us that D Coy (old 8th Coy) Crieff, which was formed in 1859, ‘At one time had the finest brass band in the district.’ It is strange that he praises this band but neglects to give us information on ‘Pullars Band’.

It may be useful to list the changes in title of the 4th Volunteer Battalion:-

1859 1st Perth.

1859 2nd Perth (absorbed by 1st in 1860).

1860 1st Admin Battalion Perthshire Rifle Volunteers (20 November).

1880 1st Perthshire Rifle Volunteers. (13 March).

1887 4th (Perthshire) Volunteer Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) (1 December).

1908 6th (Perthshire) Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) (Territorial Force) (1 April).

The first published source connecting the Band with the Volunteers is a Perth Directory of 1885 where it is listed as the ‘First Perthshire Rifle Volunteer Band, under J M Miller, Battalion Bandmaster. Practice being on Tuesdays and Fridays in the Volunteer Hall.’

This continued until 1887 when the band changed its title to the 4th Volunteer Battalion Royal Highlanders, in keeping with the change to the Battalion’s title. They continued to be so listed until 1897/98 when they disappear from the Directory, being replaced by the ‘First Perthshire Rifle Volunteer Pipe Band (4th Volunteer Battalion Royal Highlanders)’ under Pipe Major Donald Farquarson.

The Pipes and Drums adopted the practice times and location formerly used by Pullars Band, suggesting the latter had a less formal connection with the Battalion. The Pipes and Drums were the only listed ‘band’ of the battalion until at least 1912.



*Pullars Band Badge.*



*The photograph was taken by A F Mackenzie of Birnam, who is known to have destroyed his negatives. The original caption is ‘Pullars Reed Band 1888’. Copyright of Perth Museum & Art Gallery.*



In April 1908 the 4th Volunteer Battalion was re-titled 6th Territorial Force Battalion and Pullars Band appear to have severed their connection with the military, reverting to their previous role as works and town band with a change in their title at some later date.

There is a great deal of confusion and contradictory evidence in the various written records of Perth (brass or silver) Bands and it appears to be the case that one band morphed into another with occasional name changes. At some date prior to 1901 the title of the band apparently changed to Perth Trades Band or Perth Trades Silver Band, depending on the source. It is difficult to reconcile the 1901 change in title when we are informed that Pullars Band severed any connection with the military in 1908.

As Pullars Band was formed primarily as a work and town band, I believe the adoption of a bugle horn cap badge, common to many volunteer battalions, was purely from a musical instrument perspective and not with any preformed idea of being a Volunteer Band.

The uniform worn by Pullars Band bore no resemblance to that worn by the remainder of the battalion and can be seen in one documented photograph. The jacket is similar to an army 'frogged tunic', with Austrian knots on the cuffs, fastening with four white metal buttons bearing the title 'Pullars Band' and the Arms of Perth. The same button shell was soldered to the centre of the bugle horn cap badge. The photograph, reproduced courtesy of Perth Museum & Art Gallery shows the uniform to good effect. The man on the far left has a broad stripe down the outside seam of his trousers and perhaps some of the others have a red welt on theirs.

All but the band master and boy triangle player have black pouch belts and presumably pouches. The latter can be seen on two men where it hangs behind the right arm. Only one of the drummers can be identified by his drum carry over his right shoulder.

The caps have metal rims to the peaks, with a line of bullion braid above and below a contrasting coloured band around the cap. The Band Master J M Millar has a white pouch belt and black pouch; his cap has bullion braid on the peak and around the body of his cap. He is also the only one to have a chin strap. We can deduce from existing cap badges that all buttons are white metal and presumably metal trim on the caps. By contrast many of the instruments are brass. Short of a painting or written record existing, we may never know the exact colours of their uniform.

The bass drum boldly displays the name of the band with a motto, on a narrow scroll below, which reads PRO REGE LEGE ET GREGE

(For the King, the Law and the People), a common motto for Rifle Volunteers of the period. Below this is the double headed eagle from the Arms of Perth.

I have listed the Pullar family members who served in the 1st Perth Rifle Volunteers, the 4th Volunteer Battalion or 6th Territorial Battalion.

I have used the term 2/Lt throughout regardless of date. There may be some duplication of names as some lists occasionally transpose F J and J F Pullar; there may be a similar mistake with W L and W H Pullar. We do not know what relationship they were to one another or if they were directly related to Robert Pullar.

Pullar, James F, 1st Admin Bn; 2/Lt 1862/63.

Pullar, Edmond. Enlisted 1871, 1st Admin Bn 2/Lt 30 July 1873; Lt 1874; resigned 1877; Capt 1st Perthshire, 18 April 1885; 4th Vol Bn; resigned December 1897 as Hon Major.

Pullar, F J, 4th Vol Bn; 2/Lt 10 March 1888; Lt 4 September 1889; Capt 6 December 1890; Major 8 Nov 1899.

Pullar, George D, OBE, 4th Vol Bn; 2/Lt 1906/06; Lt 24 March 1906; 6th (Perthshire) TF, Capt. 17 April 1907; Major 1 June 1916.

Pullar, W L, 4th Vol Bn; 2/Lt 8 December 1897; Lt. 20 July 1898; Capt 8 November 1899; resigned August 1901.

Pullar, W H, 4th Vol Bn Lt 1899/1900.

Any further information as to the uniform, colour and the Pullar family members who served in the Volunteer Battalion would be greatly appreciated.

Sources:

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- Perthshire Courier, various issues.
- Perthshire Advertiser, various issues.
- Perth: A Century of Change by Jeremy Duncan.
- Mr Paul Adair of Perth Museum & Art Gallery.

## THE BLACK WATCH IN AUSTRALIA

*By Ian Meek, Secretary, New South Wales Scottish Regimental Association*

**Editor's note:** *The links between The Black Watch and Australia began in 1810 when after eight months at sea the 73rd Regiment landed in a harbour just north of Botany Bay in New South Wales. The Governor Lachlan Macquarie travelled with the 73rd. A detailed description of those early days is recorded in Victoria Schofield's excellent first volume of our history "The Highland Furies".*

Formal and informal associations with The Black Watch in Australia date back quite a long way in the short history of Australia.

The first military connection was made in 1868 (90 years after the establishment of the first colony) when The Duke of Edinburgh's Highlander Rifle Corps was formed by the Scottish community following the visit to the colony by Queen Victoria's second son Albert. The organising committee chose a uniform of Highland dress with a kilt of Black Watch tartan.

However the Corps was short lived, disbanding in 1878 when a system of land rights granted to volunteers was withdrawn.

As a result of the Crimean War, the colonies of Australia became concerned about the possibility of Russian action against British colonies and several regiments of militia were raised in the mid 1880's.

Foremost of these in New South Wales was the formation of the New South Wales Scottish Rifles in 1885. This too was raised by the Scottish Community. It is interesting to note that as the federation of the colonies did not occur until 1901, the Scottish Rifles were originally part of the army of New South Wales, an army that consisted of several infantry militia units and some permanent coastal artillery batteries.

It was decided that the uniform of the Scottish Rifles would include a kilt of Black Watch tartan but as no formal authority had been obtained from the 42nd in Scotland, the one black line in the sett was replaced with a thin red line.

The new unit thrived and eventually grew with several companies being formed on the north coast of New South Wales.

On the outbreak of the second Boer War, although the Australian colonies pledged support to Great Britain, no infantry units were sent to South Africa. The colonies' support was limited to cavalry units. Despite this, many members of the Scottish Rifles volunteered to serve and most became members of the mounted units. Several members, however, did serve with The Black Watch battalions in South Africa. Lieutenant G J Grieve served with the 2nd Battalion The Black Watch but was killed in action at Paardeburg in February 1900.

When Federation came to Australia in 1901, the units making up the defences of the colonies became units of the new Australian Army.

Although the Rifles did not serve as a unit in South Africa, the large number of Rifles members who did, persuaded the King to grant the Regiment a standard and South Africa became one of the battle honours earned by the Rifles and its successors of the New South Wales Scottish Regiment.

The New South Wales Rifles sought and obtained formal affiliation with The Black Watch in 1909.

Unlike The Black Watch in Canada, none of the units of the New South Wales Scottish Regiment were regular army units nor did they assume the name of The Black Watch. The Scottish Rifles were disbanded in 1912 and most members were transferred to the 25th Infantry Battalion and the Scottish tradition was carried on in some-



*New South Wales Rifles circa 1898.*



*Pipes and Drums of the New South Wales Scottish Rifles 1899.*



*Guard of Honour for the Queen Mother on her visit to Australia 1958.*



*Guard of Honour mounted by 2/17th Battalion (2008) including members of Alpha Company (Scottish).*

what desultory fashion in that battalion until war was declared and the first Australian Imperial Forces were formed to serve in that conflict. Amongst those formed at that time was the 30th Infantry Battalion which served on the Western front. The 30th Battalion was not recognised as having Scottish affiliations in the First World War.

Immediately following the war, Australia did not place much importance on defence. This changed in the mid 1920's and a number of militia units were formed, termed as the Citizen Military Forces. One of the units then formed was the 30th Battalion which was later merged with the 51st Battalion to become the 30/51 Battalion.

In the early 1930's, the Scottish community in Sydney again raised the possibility of supporting the establishment of a Scottish Regiment in New South Wales and eventually this came to pass in 1935 with the 30/51 Battalion being chosen. The NSW Highland Society provided items of Scottish dress including hair sporrans of The Black Watch pattern some of which survive and are worn to this day.

Soon after the Battalion lost the 51st appellation and became the 30th Battalion. Affiliation with the Black Watch was sought and obtained and the unit then paraded in The Black uniform (without the Red Hackle) and became known as the New South Wales Scottish Regiment.

The Regiment remained in this mode until the outbreak of World War 2. When this occurred, the second Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was formed for service outside Australia. Citizen Military Forces (militia) were not permitted to become members of the 2nd AIF and 30th Battalion was reserved for home defence and served in this capacity until 1944 when it was granted AIF status and was sent to New Guinea where it served with distinction. While the Battalion initially preserved the Scottish tradition by retaining its Pipes and Drums, it was not kilted and by the end of the war had lost most of the Scottish influence.

When the 2nd AIF was formed at the outbreak of World War 2, it contained a Battalion named 2/30th and this battalion was sent to Malaya on the entry of the Japanese into the war. A company of the 2/30th battalion fought the Japanese at a bridge near the town of Gemas and was the first Australian unit to meet the Japanese and the first to secure a victory. However the victory was short lived as the Japanese swarmed down the Malayan peninsula and the 2/30th was forced into Singapore with the rest of the allied forces and its members became prisoners of war when Singapore fell.

After World War 2, the Australian Government re-formed the Citizen Military Forces (again as militia) in 1948 and the 30th battalion was one of those reinstated. Once again it became the New South Wales Scottish Regiment and regained its affiliation with The Black Watch. It was also granted the Battle Honours of the New South Wales Scottish Rifles, the 30th Battalion of WW1 and the 30th Battalion and the 2/30th Battalion.

Following a major reorganisation of the Australian Army, the 30th Battalion was disbanded on 1st July 1960. The Scottish tradition and affiliation with The Black Watch was continued in the form of Alpha Company (Scottish) of the 2nd Battalion of the Royal New South Wales Regiment (RNSWR), and later by Alpha Company (Scottish) of the 17th Battalion RNSWR and finally by Alpha Company (Scottish) of the 2/17th Battalion of the RNSWR; and it remains to be carried on by that Company today.

With the Company now being a member of a Royal Regiment, agreement was reached with The Black Watch for the company to wear the Red Hackle and for the pipers to wear Royal Stewart tartan. However the Army later decided to disband pipe bands and the then 17th Battalion Pipes and Drums were disbanded.

Unfortunately, however, the hierarchy of the Army has decreed that the Scottish influence be reduced and the members of the Company are permitted to parade in the kilt on rare occasions. The Army has also decreed that all headwear would be the Australian slouch hat and the members of the Company are not permitted to wear balmorals either.

In this change of direction the Army now does not issue items of Scottish dress. The New South Wales Scottish Regimental Association has stepped in to maintain the Scottish uniform items of the company for the few occasions on which it can be worn. This is funded from the New South Wales Scottish Regiment Support Group Trust Fund created by former members of the 30th Infantry Battalion on its disbandment and from funding efforts of the Association.

The New South Wales Scottish Regimental Association was formed in 1998 to provide comradeship and preserve the esprit de corps of ex-members of the 30th Battalion and serving and ex-members of Alpha Company (Scottish). It participates in such occasions as the ANZAC Day marches in Sydney and Reserve Forces Day celebrations as well more specific occasions such as Gemas Day celebrating the Gemas action of the 2/30th and a church parade representing all the 30th Battalions formed during Australia's history.



# The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

## BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel A F L Steele  
Second-in-Command: Major N G Jordan-Barber  
Adjutant: Captain M P Stanning  
Operations Officer: Captain R J Stewart  
Intelligence Officer: Captain M A Dobson  
Regimental Signals Officer: Captain N J Drapper  
Training Officer: Captain T J H Towler  
Captain M H Rivington  
Regimental Sergeant Major: WO1 (RSM) Marshall

## COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

Over the last six months The Black Watch Battalion has had a change of command; finished one six month operation and started another; changed brigades; changed orbat; and had Red Hackles in Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, France, Austria and Cyprus. It is truly a fantastic time to be in the Army and we have an equally exciting programme looking forward. However, before looking at the past few months in a little more depth there is one further change that I must acknowledge. In March, General Mike Riddell-Webster CBE DSO handed over as our Deputy Colonel to Brigadier Alastair Aitken OBE. We are extremely grateful for all the loyal support and sage advice that General Mike has given us over his tenure and were delighted to be able to mark the occasion with a Dinner Night held for him and Sarah, alongside a few of his former 1 BW command team.

Many readers will know that Operation VOCATE, the ambitious mission to train a new Libyan army, drew to a premature close on 7th November, three weeks early. Towards the end of the course the illegal actions of a very small minority made the project untenable. Notwithstanding some notable training achievements, it was a disappointing



*The Quarter Guard greets Major General Lund as she arrives for Flag Change.*



*Major John Bailey and the Commanding Officer accompany Major General Lund as she inspects soldiers of The Black Watch Battalion.*



*The Blue beret presentation parade.*

end to an operation that had challenged us like no other. In spite of these disappointments the battalion has done an extraordinary job. Our junior leaders have managed to corral, cajole and frequently inspire 240 young Libyan soldiers on a weekly basis, under some truly testing circumstances. Their professionalism has been quite phenomenal, and was rightly recognised in the official inquiry that followed.

Within a week of returning to the Fort George the battalion changed orbat into its new structure before heading off on post tour and Christmas leave. Since the turn of the year our focus has switched onto our current task, Operation TOSCA, the British contribution to the United Nations peacekeeping mission. Predeployment training began in earnest in February only five working weeks after we returned from our last operation. This included a week of force on force public order training in Yorkshire, a week of mission specific briefings and a test exercise in Shropshire at the end of which our bonnets were replaced with light blue berets. During this period the battalion welcomed 51 reservists and ten regular attachments, from 16 different units. It was a period of frenetic activity but the battlegroup has come together well. Returning to the island for the first time as a unit since 1964, Battalion Headquarters, Bravo Company and HQ Company are now based in the Ledra Palace inside the buffer zone in central Nicosia. Once the smartest hotel on the island, very little has been done to maintain it since 1974; the Jocks are nevertheless enjoying the improved living conditions! Delta (Light) Company is eight kilometres away working as the Force Commander's Reserve alongside soldiers from Argentina, Slovakia and Hungary. This leaves half of Support Company and the Grenadiers back in Scotland. Alpha Company Group will not be there long. They deploy to Kenya in May to try and undo the exercising battalion's plan as the opposing force, before moving directly to France to complete a company level test exercise alongside the French in Western Europe's largest urban operations training centre.

It is an ideal programme for the battalion to rebuild its low level skills and junior leadership in preparation for our own training year in 2016. Aside from this my priority is still very much recruiting. I am grateful for the involvement of past and present members of the battalion who have assisted us with these efforts and would ask that you continue to do so. When it comes to officer recruiting please do not hesitate to get in touch with my Adjutant (3SCOTS-Adjt@mod.uk). I must also thank the Association for their support and hope we will be able to repay it with a visit out to Cyprus later in the year.

## BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Until November the Battalion was deployed on Op VOCATE, the training of members of the Libyan Armed Forces in Cambridgeshire. Although this was a unique operation there are lessons to take forward for future training missions as part of Defence Engagement in the Adaptable Force.

The Staff Captains have been supporting a number of other activities across the Army. Captain Mark Dobson has been working in 51st

Infantry Brigade as part of Op FORTIFY, supporting regular and reserve recruiting. A week after finishing Op VOCATE, Captain Tim Towler deployed on Op SHADER in Kuwait to be Major General Bruce's Aide-de-Camp (ADC). On arrival it transpired that there was already an American ADC, as a result Tim found himself a job working in the current operations team. Captain Mike Rivington, the new Training Officer, was deployed to support a Short Term Training Team (STTT) in Malawi. All these deployments have shown that there is still plenty of opportunity for the Army to deploy around the world even though operations in Afghanistan are winding down.

The Army 2020 model sees us working much more closely with the Army Reserve. A number of cadres have taken place and the mortar platoons of both The Black Watch Battalion and The 51st Highland Volunteers, 7 SCOTS recently conducted live firing in Otterburn. The SCOTS Regimental Training Team (SRTT) is proving to be a great success. In the recent Infantry Section 2iC cadre, Pte Marshall was awarded the best at physical training. This is an excellent achievement and he is commended for it. His father, the MTO, is pretty proud too!

At the time of writing, the Battalion has begun its deployment to Cyprus. On 1 April 2015 the Battlegroup will conduct its transfer of authority with the 2nd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment. Op TOSCA is the United Kingdom's contribution to the United Nations peace-keeping mission in Cyprus. The Battlegroup is made up of around 20% reservists, again showing the work that is being done to ensure integration with the Reserves. The Battalion has two roles in Theatre. The first is to monitor and patrol the Buffer Zone in Sector 2, around Nicosia; this falls to Bravo Company. The second is to provide the Mobile Force Reserve (MFR), deployable across the island. The MFR is based around Delta (Light) Company and Argentinean, Hungarian and Slovakian force elements. The training was compressed due to Op VOCATE with only five weeks in work between each deployment. Although the Battalion has limited recent experience of United Nations missions we have been able to draw on the knowledge and skills the Black Watch Battalion developed in Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, Northern Ireland, Afghanistan and contingency operations in the UK. The training has developed the skills we will require for the operation and has consisted of riot control and public order training. The training culminated in a mission rehearsal exercise (MRX) on Nesccliffe Training Area, Shropshire. Those deploying were presented with their blue berets by Major General Lund, Force Commander of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

For those not deploying on Op TOSCA there will be plenty of excellent training opportunities. The Grenadiers and the remainder of the Savages will be deploying to Kenya to form the COEFOR (enemy for the exercising troops) and the range team. This will set them up for a joint urban exercise with the French Army later in the summer at the Centre d'Entrainement aux Actions en Zone Urbaine (CENZUB). CENZUB is regarded as the top urban training area in Europe. It includes an industrial zone and high rise buildings. The Pipe Band has an extensive programme across Europe and will again be featuring at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and Highland Military Tattoo.

Once the Battalion is reunited in the autumn, the focus will turn to training for our new role as a Light Mechanised Infantry Battalion. The Foxhound vehicles should start arriving in early 2016. Prior to this the Battalion will deploy to Kenya for an arduous six week exercise.

### THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee:	Major A J Phillips MC
Mess Secretary:	Captain N J Drapper
Mess Treasurer:	Captain S W Lewis

Returning to Fort George has never been so sweet and the Officers' Mess has enjoyed a flurry of activity and a hectic social program. With Libyans flying home, the buses trudging up the length of the country and the ever important reeling practices under Nick Coles complete, the PMC laid down his plans for the Christmas period and beyond. There was an air of excitement mixed with trepidation as the Mess hosted its first formal ball in nearly two years. The Fort provided a grand backdrop as guests travelled from afar to "Bahookie" the night away. The Fort revealed one of its hidden gems as we were entertained by the Pipe Band and one of its Highland Dancers in the casement. We then retired into the marquee where the red jackets were able to display their masculinity by savaging the chunks of meat that had been so carefully prepared by the chefs. Captain Weir graced us with his presence just in time for grace while Captain McRobbie looked a lot more relieved once it became apparent that he was not getting extras for his band choice.

Christmas week was next on the calendar and though a bug swept through the Mess nothing got in the way of ensuring it was appropriately celebrated. When the Christmas card sweat shop finally ceased production the subbies began their festivities with a bowling competition (we now know what the AGC actually do during the day). This was



*The Fathers' Dinner held in the Officers' Mess.*



before warming up their vocal chords for a night of noise before we welcomed the RSM and his Mess into the fold for a games night like no other. Captain Pete Marshall arranged some fine dining (Pedigree Chum), a first rate juke box (Blair and Garrick Records Ltd) and the inevitable culmination in the competition – the shoot out. If only the RSM was not premature in firing his rounds!

With Op TOSCA on the horizon, the Mess has also been involved in its own bespoke pre-deployment training; the fine art of hosting and socialising with numerous guests. A ladies' dinner night, followed conveniently by Kirk the next morning, then a fathers' dinner night followed by sore heads the next morning. We have hosted the Brigade Commander, dined out Major General Riddell-Webster, hosted a TOSCA dinner night and even managed to maintain normal Blues nights for the livers in. It has been a tough burden that they have carried out selflessly.

Inevitably there has been much coming and going within the Mess as well. We will shortly see the departure of Majors Colin McInroy and Jamie Howe, both of whom have kept many a subaltern on their toes while also demonstrating an uncanny ability to remain relaxed. At the other end of the spectrum sprouting up with vigour we welcome Second Lieutenants Angus Bullen and William Kelly though the latter may require further Miracle Grow.

Looking forward, the Fort will be a quiet place as the Battalion moves to Cyprus and then the rear elements deploy to Kenya and onto France. The ladies may have to carry the Blues Night burden until our return but I doubt it is the worst news they have had about a deployment! Undoubtedly the war stories will vary over the next 6 months but Oktoberfest and a Ball will quickly bring us back together.

## WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

### Mess Committee

Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM):	WO1 (RSM) Marshall
President of the Mess Committee:	WO2 (CSM) Taylor
President of the Entertainments Committee:	Colour Sergeant Carnegie

With the focus now on Op TOSCA our time in Bassingbourn for Op VOCATE is but a distant memory. The Mess, though, has been a hive of activity and there has been a change of committee. The year began in style with the Annual Burns Supper, held in Fort George. WO2 (CSM) Blackley was PMC Burns 2015 and Colour Sergeant Rab McCready was



*Sgt Mortley has been a good boy this year.*

his PEC. The event was an excellent night, topped off with fantastic renditions of the Bard's finest yarns and plenty of food and drink to go around.

Red Hackle Day was a great success with the Warrant Officers and Sergeants hosting the Officers Mess for a games night, which we won.

## Promotions and Postings

As ever people are moving on and others have been promoted. First of all we say farewell to WO2 (ROMS) Mikey Fairweather who will be taking up his new post as RSM 51st Highland/7 SCOTS in Perth. This will be after he deploys for a few weeks with the Battalion on Op TOSCA. In his place we will see the return of WO2 Jimmy Fraser. Jimmy is currently the DSM at the Infantry Battle School for PCD. No doubt he will bamboozle everyone with infantry doctrine and other niff naff and trivia.

With Op TOSCA on the horizon a few new faces have arrived from the Army Reserve; SSgt Connor, Sgt Upston (7 RIFLES) and Sgt McNiven (7 SCOTS). We also welcome SSgt Jase Beddoes who has taken over from SSgt Smudge Smith in the Quartermasters' department. The latter is finishing his military career. We also welcome Sgt Steve Burgess (RAMC) who has taken over from Sgt Brian Scally in the Medical Centre. Sgt Scally is leaving the Army. Finally we welcome Sgt Dave Gibson, LAD, who has been posted in from Brunei.

We will also shortly be saying farewell to Sgts Loon McCarthy and Brian Young. They will be leaving us to be posted to the Support Weapon School and Sandhurst respectively.

Finally we must congratulate Pipe Major Scouse Grisdale and CSgt Rab McCready on their selection for promotion to WO2.

As a Mess we look forward both to the challenges that lie ahead on Op TOSCA and those that await us back in Inverness.

## CORPORALS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee:	Corporal Richardson
President of the Entertainments Committee:	Corporal Thomson
Treasurer:	Corporal Whalley
Property:	Corporal Harris

With Op VOCATE coming to a premature end, Corporals' Mess members were back at Fort George in time for Christmas and it was only fitting for us to hold a function to see out a very demanding and busy year. Up stepped Cpl Richardson along with his sidekick Cpl Fraser to take on the task; with a generous budget they went to town to make the function one to remember. A live band, caricature and Santa's grotto photo room were all in place, along with the chance to win some luxury prizes and extra funds to spend at the bar from the money tree. The evening was a success with each Mess member and guest having a great night. Cpl Richardson had the pleasure of hosting the CO and with thumbs up given from the Big Man, all involved knew it was a job well done.

## Promotions

We congratulate the following members on promotion to Corporal; Gordon, Ward, McFarlane, Poole, Austin, Hart and Mudunavosa. We welcome the following to the Mess on promotion to Lance Corporal; Brown, Sweetin, McDonald, McLaren, Rokoduguni, MacLean, McKenna, Bacogacoga, Knox, Hanlin, Thorn and Leith. We say farewell to LCpl Coates who is posted to 1 YORKS.

After a very well deserved Christmas leave we returned back to work in January, with a Burns Supper to look forward to. This task fell to Cpl Catto with assistance and support from Cpl Richardson (PMC).



*Cpls Simpson and O'Gorman at the Christmas Ball.*



*Corporal Catto leading the evening at the Burns Supper.*



*RSM's 'Address to the Haggis'.*

The event itself was a success with each member and guest having a great evening. Throughout we were entertained by the Chronies and their excellent renditions of Robert Burns poems. The event also gave us a chance to welcome back as guests former Cpls Wallace, Meade and Sloan who have all served 22 years of service. Due to a busy previous year we could not fit in a 22 year dining out and presentation to them, so it was only right and fitting that they were invited back as guests to enjoy their evening at our expense and to receive their 22 year presentations from the RSM.

An exciting period now lies ahead with deployment to Cyprus, Kenya and France. We wish each member well on their journey and a safe return.

The Corporals' Mess grows from strength to strength with each member bringing in different ideas and experience which leads me on to my final piece. As the PMC I have had the privilege to give the Mess members two functions during my tenure and I would like to thank all the Mess Committee members involved in making them happen. I now hand this exciting task over to Cpl Kyle with my best wishes.

## **A (GRENADIER) COMPANY**

Officer Commanding:	Major G K Adamson
Second-in-Command:	Captain C G McRobbie
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 (CSM) Hannah
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Copeland
OC 1 (Senior Highland) Platoon:	Lieutenant J E Fish
OC 2 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant A F H Bullen
Platoon Sergeant 1 and 2 Platoons:	Sergeant McMaster
OC Machine Gun Platoon:	Lieutenant J A Young
Platoon Sergeant:	Corporal King

While those deploying on Op TOSCA have spent the period post Bassingbourn practicing key force protection tasks such as the application of factor 15, the Grenadiers have spent their time preparing for the next war (and lots more besides!). By the time that you are reading this we will be at the British Army Training Unit in Kenya (BATUK), providing the enemy for the 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment. This six week block will be followed by very swift 'reorg' in the south of England before deploying to CENZUB in the Champagne region of France to conduct some combined multi-national training with our French allies.



*Members of A Company stretch off after PT.*



*CSgt Copeland leading an A Company "tab".*



But before we could start preparing ourselves, we had to ensure that the remainder of the Battalion got out the door to Op TOSCA in good order. A band of determined men commanded by 2Lt Angus Bullen, newly arrived from PCD and keen to impress (we will omit any mention of Red Hackle day), deployed to Whinney Hill to provide the rioters for B and D (Light) Company to practice their public order skills against. As is always the case during public order training many of the Jocks took to rioting like ducks to water and they provided the other companies with a stiff test ahead of their deployment. Next was the preparation of the final mission rehearsal exercise and the requirement to make an area of Shropshire, in an unseasonably cold March, look like the middle of Cyprus in the summer – no mean feat!

On our immediate return from Christmas leave, a cadre of JNCO instructors and a section of enemy commanded by Lieutenant James Fish deployed to Redford Barracks in Edinburgh to assist the SCOTS Regimental Training Team develop the next generation of JNCOs. Fresh from Op VOCATE with lots of ideas and enthusiasm, they excelled themselves in the delivery of the training.

Concurrent to training, A (Grenadier) Company now also provides the core of the Battalion recruiting team, support to Army Reserve recruiting with 51st Highland/7 SCOTS and an Outreach Team headed up by Sgt McLaughlin. This is both a difficult and vital task that requires imagination and energy to ensure that the Battalion remains well manned in the future. It is early days yet but I have every confidence that they will produce great results for the future.

The Company has also taken the lead in assisting the development of our future officers by supporting Aberdeen UOTC when opportunities have arisen. LCpls Christie and Frearson assisted with the development of low level skills and drills during a training weekend in Barry Buddon. Reports back were very positive, that the instructors were engaging, thoroughly knowledgeable and remarkably confident; Captain McRobbie had to ensure the Infantry PSI and Officer Cadets were talking about the right JNCOs. The platoon commanders attempted in the same vein to establish some form of relationship to impress their Sandhurst war stories upon the Officer Cadets as part of the process of encouraging them to consider a career in the Regiment. Alas they fell victim to nerves (apparently the Officers Mess bug) and lacked the stomach to make the journey east for AUOTC Winter Ball; it is a better reason than normal for their lack of success with the ladies!



*Captain McRobbie, the Company 2IC trying to make it all fit together.*

With a great deal going on, the Company has also managed to find time for some to escape the clutches of trawls and RAAT tasks to conduct some adventurous training. LCpls Hague and Chamberlain have begun their long journey towards becoming Mountain Leaders; Pte Muir took to the water and started his kayak and canoe progression; as winter loomed Pte Kumar headed for the Welsh hills for a week's introduction to hill walking; and another six Grenadiers attended an introduction to winter mountaineering in Aviemore.

So with everybody else now up to the required standard and the next generation of soldiers off to start training at ITC, it was time to focus on preparing ourselves. Deploying on these two major overseas training exercises clearly requires some significant effort and if we are frank, VOCATE has left us a little rusty on our conventional skills. We have spent as much time as possible on the ranges, which will allow us to conduct live firing attacks in Kenya, as well as a multitude of section and platoon attacks in both rural and urban surroundings.

I have no fear that the Company will give a great account of itself on both of these exercises but the real key to success will be sharing our lessons with the remainder of the Battalion when they return from Cyprus. So in six months you will be able to read once again about the Grenadiers showing the remainder of the Battalion how it should be done!

## BRavo COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major A B Bayne
Second-in-Command:	Captain R C Weir/ Lieutenant Z W Smyth
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 (CSM) Smith
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Lockhart
OC 5 Platoon:	Lieutenant L W Hawke
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant McLaughlin QGM
OC 6 Platoon:	Lieutenant A J N Christie
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Robb
OC 7 Platoon:	Lieutenant A D S Pearson
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Hendry

Fresh from Christmas leave Bravo Company has been back in full swing in 2015. The Company deployed in various groups during the course of the second half of March and between Christmas and then, multiple exercises and some pre-deployment leave have filled the calendar. On Op TOSCA Bravo Company will form the Sector 2 Operations Company and training for this came thick and fast.

The Company has also welcomed a multitude of new names and faces to its ranks among them the Company 2IC, Lieutenant Smyth, a new Platoon Commander, 2Lt Harris (Royal Yeomanry), an Intelligence Officer, 2Lt Herbert and a cohort of support from a number of reservist units including the Fusiliers, Rifles, REME, AGC and our own 6th and 7th Battalions.

Bravo Company's two seasoned young officers Lieutenants Alexander Christie and Alasdair Pearson will give more detailed accounts of the Company's latest work.

## November 2014-February 2015

The beginning of November saw the premature end of Op VOCATE. This was met with a mixture of relief and disappointment; however, it was felt that Bravo Company had performed well on the operation and came away stronger as a result. The final week in Bassingbourn was a scramble to get the camp cleaned up and ready for the handover, allowing the Company to go on two weeks' leave.

On return from leave we were faced with the task of readying the Company for the Battalion 're-orbat'. This saw many familiar faces move to Charlie Company and a new influx of Jocks and JNCOs as well as CSgt Nichol and Sgt Pratt who would accompany us to Cyprus. Once we had everyone settled in (including a company smoker at The British Legion in Inverness) it was straight into navigation and lots of fitness leading us into Christmas week and all the frivolities that accompany it.

After Christmas we spent two weeks in the Fort conducting more navigation and voice procedure training, along with daily fitness. Somewhat later than usual, as a result of the extended Christmas leave, the Battalion celebrated Red Hackle Day which saw a Delta Company subaltern follow in the footsteps of Lts Smyth and Christie in telling the massed Battalion the story of how the Red Hackle was won. It also saw Sgt Pratt forced to hold off until lunchtime his customary annual pastime of kidnapping a young officer (don't ask...)

At the end of January it was off to Barry Buddon for a week of rang- es, MATTs and The Kukri Competition, Bravo Company's section level



*Members of Bravo Company heading out to restore order.*



*Public Order training.*



*Ready for the crash out.*



*QRF ready to move during Public Order training.*

competition. Organised by the CSM the Kukri Competition took place over the middle three days of the week. Day 1 was a speed march from the camp to the ranges won by Cpl Fay's 1 Section of Centre Platoon. He extended his lead further on the second day's test, a log race, but had LCpl Campbell's section from East Platoon close behind in second place. With Military Knowledge tests conducted throughout the week it was too close to call coming to the final day's triathlon; March and Shoot, a log race into a stretcher race, leading to a speed march to the furthest range where the sadistic CSM conducted a shooting competition designed to replicate a section in combat with limited ammunition. When the points were tallied up Cpl Fay pipped LCpl Campbell to first place and won the Kukri for this year. Cpl Bell's section meanwhile pipped all others to the coveted wooden spoon, an accolade which very nearly dampened the spirits of this otherwise irrefutably upbeat NCO.

For the rest of the men deploying to Cyprus the end of the exercise signalled the start of two weeks pre-deployment leave but, for a handful of brave souls, there was the Public Order Instructors Course in Lydd (Kent, 11 hours by car, since you ask) to get through. This bolstered the numbers of instructors in Bravo Company ready to deliver some absolutely textbook training on the exercise which was only a week away.

**Lieutenant A J N Christie**

#### **February-March 2015**

Two weeks leave were enjoyed by Bravo Company during February prior to pre-deployment training. The first instalment of this was public order training at Whinney Hill. This included three days of instruction followed by twelve hours playing opposition against, and providing safety for, Delta Company followed by twelve hours of a testing exercise. While the use of a live, not to mention enthusiastic, enemy is essential for good Public Order training it also provides a welcome opportunity for the Jocks to seek out their 'mates' on the base line and let fly with a combination of expended rubber bullets and wooden blocks (sadly potatoes were off the menu). The training the Company

received was great. Not only was it an opportunity for the Jocks to learn new skills but also to integrate our Reservists. Having the Reservists also gave us a wide level of experience brought to us from their skill sets developed on 'civvy' street. Amongst our orbat we have a policeman, a political assistant and a number of tradesmen, all of whom will benefit the Company and Battalion as a whole in their own way.

The Exercise in Whinney Hill tested and challenged the new and revised skills the Company had learnt over the week. Ultimately low level agitation led to a riot in which the troops deployed in full public order equipment. This was a fast paced exercise which saw the Company deal with protests, peaceful demonstrations (and not so peaceful demonstrations) and improvised explosive device finds amongst the many serials.

#### **All Ranks Brief and Mission Rehearsal Exercise**

The All Ranks Brief (ARB) for Op TOSCA was a weeklong affair including briefings on law, the ground, the job and many practical elements. While not always riveting, those deploying did develop a good level of understanding.

The week following was the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX), designed to test the Battalion on the main types of incidents likely to be encountered in Theatre. Within the Operations Company, the officers and SNCOs drew up the patrols matrix and the four man patrols, commanded by at least a LCpl, settled into a rhythm. The number of serials the patrols encountered were exhausting and enough praise cannot be given to the commanders and Jocks who dealt with all sorts of incidents such as, violent farmers, to curious Greek and Turkish forces and even a helicopter crash. The exercise culminated in a Battalion level serial which saw a demonstration test the buffer zone in many places. All platoons were involved and it gave the entire command element the chance to exercise their conceptual planning over an excellent model (praise must be given to Sgts Pratt, Hendry and Robb and Cpls McTernan, Fay and Crieghton and many Jocks from Operations



Company). The week was a success and the Battalion will now be heading to Cyprus well prepared and ready to build on the reputation that precedes us.

### Personnel

It has been a busy period for all ranks within the Company as we now gather momentum towards Op TOSCA and we have said farewell to those soldiers from C Company that supported us. We have also had an influx of new recruits from ITC Catterick now beginning their careers with an early deployment to Cyprus.

We have also said farewell to the irrepressible Captain Robert Weir. He now finds himself employed as OC SRTT in Edinburgh training the future leaders of the Regiment; he has been replaced by Lieutenant Zach Smyth who has returned from an Arabic Language Course at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham and two weeks in Austria with the Battalion's Telemarking team. No doubt this will be somewhat of a culture shock returning to normal life at regimental duty. Second Lieutenant Richard Harris joins us from the Royal Yeomanry as a platoon commander and attached to the Company is Second Lieutenant Liam Herbert from the Intelligence Corps.

We are also now joined by our new members of the Army Reserve varying in age from nineteen to fifty three but all equally enthused with the prospect of six months in the sun.

Congratulations also go to Cpl John Fay and his fiancée Lesley on their engagement.

### CHARLIE (FIRE SUPPORT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major A J Phillips MC
Second-in-Command:	Captain C M Treasure
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 (CSM) Blackley
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Bright

The Savages are back. Following a Battalion Re-ORBAT, Charlie Company has been regenerated to full strength with a focus on building up conventional war fighting capability following a dormant period while committed to 'other tasks'. Since the last journal entry, the Company has been presented with plenty of challenges and opportunities; these have been grasped by all members of the Company.

The myriad tasks from public duties to field soldiering mean that the Company have been able to build cohesion. There has also been the chance to enjoy the Christmas festivities and take some well-deserved leave. As a Company we have been building on a soldier first principle. Stripping back to basics and building each platoon from the bottom up, using the Military Annual Training Tests as the foundation. Spending time in the Highlands, getting out on the hills has been hugely popular (despite the snow!) and really useful in building Jocks fitness and confidence in navigation, an area that has slipped through lack of practice. Thankfully with Jocks and NCOs leaning in to the task at hand, standards have steadily improved across all platoons in the Company. Range days, first aid training and increased attention to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) training have equally paid dividends and seen the basic level of soldiering improve.

The opportunity for each of the platoons to indulge in specialist training has been a particular highlight since Christmas. This has been made all the more effective by having a fully qualified chain of command overseeing each platoon.

The Anti-Tank Platoon, Pipes and Drums aside, have led the way in public duties providing troops to the Armistice Commemorative Service at the Scottish National War Memorial and Edinburgh Castle guard for the Queen's Coronation commemorations; their performance and diligence was singled out for praise by GOC Scotland. With elements of the Platoon committed to Op TOSCA the remainder have dedicated a lot of time to developing its technical ability in its core business: the use of the Javelin Anti-Tank Missile and re-learning the art and doctrine involved in generating an Anti-Tank plan.

The Mortars, with half their strength on recruiting tasks have focused on getting their drills and procedures up to standard whilst preparing candidates for the Support Weapons School Warminster. The team, under Captain Craig Treasure also delivered the annual 60mm mortar cadre on Salisbury Plain. This was aimed at training soldiers from across the Battalion in the use of the weapon system that is held at platoon level, giving Platoon Sergeants an extra asset in dealing with the enemy. Those in the Mortar Platoon committed to the recruiting effort have been working at full pace. With the Battalion recruiting effort focused on the 'Dundee' AO which covers the traditional Black

Watch recruiting area of old (Perthshire, Fife, Angus and Dundee). The Jocks under WO2 Carlisle have made a huge effort in attracting recruits to the Battalion. If any readers know of any suitable fighting age males we would welcome them into the family.

Having recently returned from the Sniper Platoon Commanders' course at Brecon, Sgt Hunter assisted by Sgt Dunn has been working to re-build the Sniper Platoon. Receiving volunteers from across the Battalion they have spent the first few months of 2015 honing their field craft skills at Barry Buddon, where they will return at the end of March to complete their shooting training.

Of all the platoons in Charlie Company, the Recce has needed the most investment to re-establish themselves following their commitment to Op VOCATE. At the time of writing they have de-camped to Kircudbright, where the arduous terrain, range facilities and training estate make it the ideal place to put the team through their paces. They are already reaping the benefits, with improving fitness and individual navigation skills. The cadre will finish at the end of March when the Platoon will return to Fort George prior to deploying as exercising troops to Kenya where they will form part of the opposition forces pitted against units from another Brigade. This is a challenge they are looking forward to.

The Pipes and Drums have used the past few months, deemed 'the quiet season', where piping commitments drop off, to focus on getting members of the platoon qualified in their Assault Pioneer and Piper/Drumming specialist trades. They held their annual cadre in Weymouth and spent two weeks re-affirming their basic skills. Of course the quiet season is never really that and the Platoon have been busy providing support to public duties across the country, notably at the Scottish Act of Remembrance in Edinburgh and Castle Guard duties. The Platoon has an exciting forecast of events over the coming year; including competing in national competitions as well as supporting both the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and the Highland Tattoo later this year.

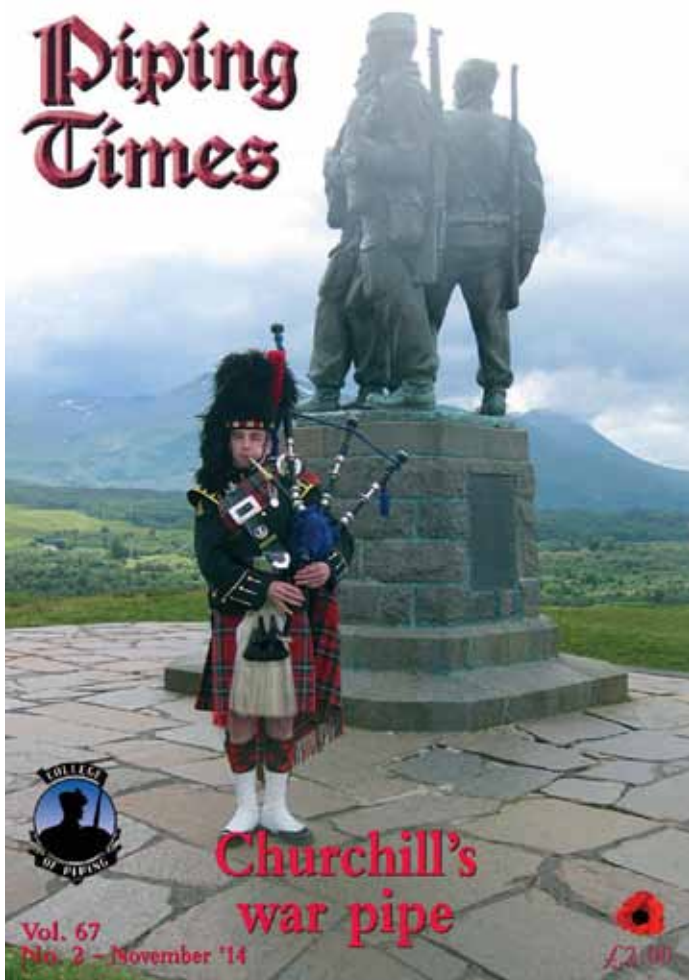
The drive to build up the support platoon competency has been a challenging journey, but it is deliberately so, with an eye to the future. The medium term objective is the projected deployment to Kenya in 2016 where the Battalion will complete its first Battle Group Collective Training Level 4 exercise since 2010. The rest of the year will provide plenty of challenges for the platoons as the Company Headquarters head to Cyprus on Op TOSCA in various roles to support Battalion Headquarters and both Bravo and Delta Company. We look forward to updating you in the next Red Hackle. 'Forward the Savages!'

### PIPES AND DRUMS

Pipe President:	Major A J Phillips MC
Pipe Major:	Colour Sergeant Grisdale
Drum Major:	Sergeant Campbell
Pipe Sergeant:	Corporal Muir

We start this edition on a cold and very wet Saturday afternoon at Murrayfield Stadium in Edinburgh. Scotland versus Argentina was the game and what a game it was too. After the Pipes and Drums played the national anthem it was time to relax and watch the game unfold. Scotland scored five fine tries and topped 40 points to make a successful start to their 2014 Autumn Tests. It goes without saying it was the support of the Pipes and Drums that gave Scotland the edge that day. No late night celebrating for the boys though as we had a very early start the next day. The platoon was on parade once more for the National Act of Remembrance at the City Chambers in Edinburgh. A first parade for the new piper in the Platoon; Pte Bird felt that it was easier to fall himself out before he fell out on parade.

Driving back up to Inverness was very much welcomed knowing that only a week later we would be heading south once more to Weymouth, the location for the Platoon to run its Assault Pioneer cadre. This was under the watchful eye of Sgt Whyte and Cpl Downie as the course instructors, with the Pipe Major and Drum Major in tow to look after the admin of the course. A great opportunity for Pipey and the Drum Major to dust off their bikes which resulted in them clocking up a fair few miles every day while the rest of the Platoon focused on their pioneer skills. For the three Jocks who had not touched the assault soldier kit, or been to Weymouth before, it was a challenge. Cpl Lowe was amused when Pte Bird asked him, "is this valon set up correctly?" He had done so perfectly, except for failing to insert the batteries. Pte Coghlan was on good form too as the Pipe Major had to sit in accident and emergency centre with him because he had cut his finger during one of the more 'hands on' lessons. It was quite embarrassing when



*Private Moir – Piping Times pin-up boy!*

the nurse said it was only a scratch and the little girl in beforehand had a bigger cut with no crying. The culmination of the two weeks in Weymouth was the bridging lesson from Cpl Downie, concluded with an inter-section competition. Cpl Pogo Lowe and LCpl Pete Muir commanded the winning section with all soldiers across to the home bank (and more importantly dry). A special mention must be made of our top student on the course Pte Cordiner; watch out Cpl Downie you might be out of a job soon.

Following the Christmas festivities and after a well-earned leave the Platoon reformed, much reduced in numbers. With members of the Platoon attending a variety of different courses in Edinburgh at The Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming and the Drum Major away on his Assault Pioneer Section Commander's course it fell to the Pipe Major to carry the Platoon for a while. The end of January was marked by the WOs and Sgts' Mess infamous Burns Night. Led by Cpl Watt and newly promoted LCpl Macdonald, with the older more experienced pipers away it was down to Pte Montgomery and Pte Cordiner to step up to the dizzy heights of playing within the quartet in the Sgts Mess. With a mini band in the bar everything went well and a good night was had by all, even Cpl Watt made it to bed after the Pipey this time. Cpl Watt and Pte (Monty) Montgomery had more Burns to go playing the Bagpipes and Dancing at the Wives' Burns Night dinner. At this stage I feel it is my duty to report that 'Monty' is undergoing therapy following his 'wives' Burns' experience. Thankfully he is expected to make a full recovery. We still do not know happened as he still finds it hard to talk about it.

It would not be a good Red Hackle Magazine without an update on the Pipe Major's air miles; he is quids in and is now a member of the National Airport Lounge Association he has been there so often.

Saturday 31 January 2015 was a cold, wet and miserable afternoon in Inverness and as a Platoon we had to endure the Pipe Major's driving skills as the Pipes and Drums played for the big Highland Derby. Inverness CT 1 Ross County 1 was the score. Met by the Welfare Officer, Captain Cunningham, the Platoon got out of the mini bus to a downpour of snow. Captain Cunningham was keen to show the band off. After playing to the thousands of fans entering the stadium the band formed up to play the two teams out of the tunnel. There must have been something amiss that day as the Pipey bought all a pie and a cup of tea. The band wait in anticipation to see what is expected in return for this uncharacteristic generosity!

With another busy year ahead filled with some great opportunities there is just time to congratulate a few members of the Platoon on their promotion to LCpl. Pte Shaun McKenna and Pte (Ted) MacDonald. Celebrating his promotion (still) to WO2 is the Pipe Major.

#### **RECCE PLATOON**

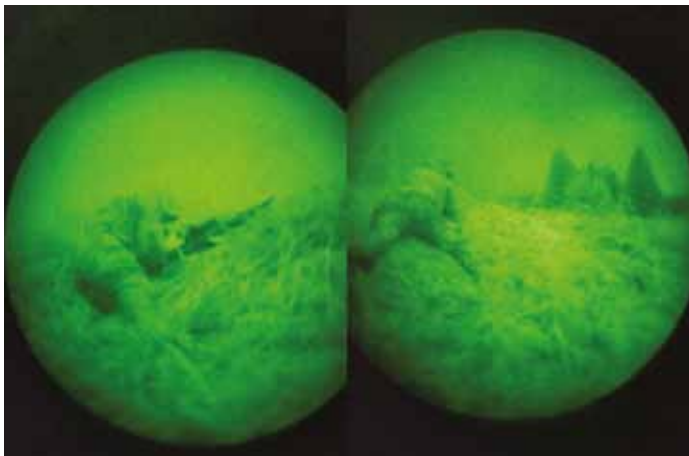
Platoon Commander:	Captain D F Hamilton
Second-in-Command:	Colour Sergeant Sharp MC
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Blake

After returning from Op VOCATE the Reconnaissance Platoon was delighted to return to its rightful place in Charlie Company. Undermanned and under-trained after the activities of the previous year, we have immediately set about rebuilding the Platoon on what little foundation remained. An entirely new command team has formed



*The Reconnaissance Platoon of The Black Watch Battalion – February 2015.*





*Cpl Stewart has eyes on with Pte Marshall sketching whilst on a close target reconnaissance 50 metres from an enemy position.*

with a strong track-record down at the Recce Division and a wealth of experience to pass on to the new Jocks.

In January we began our rebuilding process with a three week pre-cadre in Fort George. This included physical training, shooting, Armoured Fighting Vehicle recognition, battlegroup tactics and navigational training in order to set the conditions for success on the following six week cadre in the Borders. Four weeks teaching and a week of live firing in Kirkcudbright, followed by a final exercise on the RAF Spadeadam Estate should see our new foundations built on rock, leaving us well placed for the transition to the Light Mechanised Infantry role.

There have been a spate of weddings and engagements as the Jocks somehow manage to convince beautiful girls to commit to a lifetime of their poor-chat; congratulations must go to LCpl McWilliams who has married Sammy; to Cpl McFarlane and Sarah, LCpl Cameron and Rachel, and Pte Allan and Pamela who are all recently engaged.

### MORTAR PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Captain C M Treasure

Second-in-Command: Sergeant Grant

Platoon Sergeant: Sergeant Mortley

The last four months has seen almost half of the Mortar Platoon head south to support the Battalion's recruiting effort in our traditional recruiting areas, while the remaining members of the Platoon have been preparing for future deployments.

Cpl Steele and Cpl Kyle have been busy in Dundee and Perth, commanding recruiting teams, looking to identify new recruits to join the Battalion. Working out of Armed Forces Career Offices they have been organising visits to schools, youth clubs and attending local events. Back at Fort George, Sgt Mortley, Sgt Grant and I have been preparing the Platoon for both a live-fire package with 51st Highland/7 SCOTS at Warcop at the end of March and a deployment to Kenya in support of 2 LANCS. Both of these commitments offer fantastic opportunities to



*Privates Turner, Chuma and Dibba practicing their drills for their weapon handling test.*

practise the Platoon in our core business and forge lasting relationships with other units.

Against this busy backdrop we managed to fit in some testing (and very cold) navigation training in the Highlands and have sent Cpl Watson and LCpl Hooper to the Mortar Division to complete their career courses. This period has seen LCpl McKenzie gain a top third finish on his course at the Mortar Division and four of our members join the Corporals' Mess following their promotion to LCpl. They are LCpls Bacogacoga, Sweetin, Leith and Thorn. Furthermore, as I write this article Ptes Dodgson, Salter and Tuilveluka are being prepared for junior command on their Potential Junior Non-Commissioned Officers' course.

### SNIPER PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Sergeant Hunter

Platoon Sergeant: Sergeant Dunn

With Op VOCATE behind us Sergeant Dunn and I have spent the last four months regenerating the Sniper Platoon and preparing our soldiers for courses and future deployments. This has seen us run a Sniper Selection Cadre at Barry Buddon, to put the new potential members through their paces. On this cadre the potential snipers were taught all of the sniper disciplines in order to select and prepare candidates for the Basic Sniper Course at the Infantry Battle School Brecon.

As I write this, we are organising our annual shooting package which will practice our trained snipers in all the marksmanship skills they require to be effective on the battlefield. We have a number of other excellent training opportunities on the horizon including a deployment to Kenya to support 2 LANCS, conducting high angle and helicopter shoots with 45 Commando RM and a force-on-force exercise with 3 RIFLES' Sniper Platoon.



*I Section prior to Ex OVERWATCH – Ptes Browne, Rodgers, Carr (4 SCOTS) and McVitie.*



*LCpl Proctor with Ptes Soutar Rodgers and Davit during their training at Barry Buddon.*





*LCpls Proctor and Dalgleish after a recce patrol.*

Sadly the Platoon will soon say goodbye to Corporal Gary Blane as he moves on to pastures new in “Civvy Street” but only after ensuring we force him to hand on his ample sniper knowledge and skill to the new blood in the Platoon.

### **ANTI-TANK PLATOON**

Platoon Commander: Captain I K Walker  
 Second-in-Command: Colour Sergeant Buist  
 Platoon Sergeant: Corporal Wilson  
 1 Detachment Commander: Corporal Carpenter

Over the last six months the Anti-Tanks have been busy developing the core skills required to operate as a platoon. We have completed a qualification cadre, qualifying 24 soldiers to use the Javelin Anti-Tank Guided Missile System and Heavy Machine Gun. The Platoon has also been getting its command element fully qualified, sending LCpls White, Gracie and Campbell on their Detachment Commanders’ course, CSgt Buist on his 2iC’s course and the OiC on his Platoon Commanders’ course at the Support Weapons School, Warminster. Edinburgh Castle Guard was also mounted by the Anti-Tank Platoon to commemorate the ascension to the throne of Her Majesty The Queen.

The Javelin qualification cadre was successfully conducted by the corporals in the Platoon. This cadre included how to use the weapon system, armoured fighting vehicle recognition, siting positions, digging observation posts and engaging enemy vehicles. It was conducted over some of the most challenging real-estate the military has to offer, simulating the complex environment the Anti-Tanks may have to operate in. The soldiers were definitely grateful to be back in Fort George come the end of the exercise.

Looking ahead the Anti-Tanks have a challenging year; some are heading to Op TOSCA in various roles, some are deploying to Kenya to exercise under BATUK and others will head to France to build relations with the French Army. There will also be the opportunity for some local adventure training planned on the Great Glen Way.



*CSgt Buist looking smart.*



*Anti-Tanks and Mortars having some fun.*



*The Castle Guard practicing at night.*



*Anti-Tanks navigation training on Ben Wyvis.*



## DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major J R P Bailey
Second-in-Command:	Captain T H Blair
	Lieutenant L W Hawke
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 (CSM) Anderson
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Carnegie
OC 13 Platoon:	Lieutenant R L M Crook/ Second Lieutenant W R Kelly
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Young
OC Machine Gun Platoon:	Lieutenant N T J Coles
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant McCarthy
OC 15 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant A E F Atterbury
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Bruce

The weeks following Op VOCATE and preparing for deployment on Op TOSCA have been a busy but rewarding time for Delta (Light) Company. The new year meant new personalities, with a Battalion re-orbat leading to many changes for the Company. 15 Platoon welcomed their new Platoon Sergeant, Sgt Duncy Bruce. 13 Platoon congratulated newly promoted Sgt Alasdair Lavery and he has assumed the role of Platoon Sergeant. He will be working with our newest officer, Second Lieutenant Will Kelly, who upon completion of PCBC, has been posted in as the Platoon Commander. Captain Tommy Blair and his dog Poppy were bid a fond farewell as he prepares to become the Adjutant of 7 SCOTS. Lieutenant Lucas Hawke has assumed the role of Second-in-Command. The role of CQMS has been filled by CSgt William Carnegie, recently posted from his previous position as a Sandhurst instructor. As he was Second Lieutenant Kelly's instructor the OC will hold him responsible for 13 Platoon's performance.

The first weeks back in January focused on the training required for Op TOSCA. We will be deploying as the Mobile Force Reserve and will be based out of the former Nicosia Airport. Our role will be to respond to any incidents across the entire island and assist the other sectors in patrolling the buffer zone if required.



*The Company's patch on Op TOSCA; the abandoned Nicosia Airport.*

An excellent opportunity for us, this will include working directly with other nations. As soon as we arrive in Theatre we will have fifty Argentineans, Slovaks and Hungarians integrated directly into our order of battle. Working as a multinational company will no doubt present challenges but everyone is excited about this opportunity. Our training in recent weeks has needed to reflect this opportunity, with basic language lessons fitted in between military skills lessons. We have also sent twenty Jocks to complete a lifeguard course so they can be the lifeguards at our pool in Cyprus. A tough life.

Second Lieutenant Andrew Atterbury has been able to put his squash skills to good use in recent weeks. In February he became the Army Under 25 champion and represented the Army at the Inter-service championships.

A highlight of the first month back from leave was the Company exercise in Kinloss in February. The exercise focused on developing cohesion with so many new faces posted in. It was an excellent opportunity for the Company to work on basic public order, navigation, battle casualty drills and other essential military skills. During the exercise the Company quickly came to grips with the new order of battle and everyone left with a better understanding of what Op TOSCA would be like.

Following the Kinloss exercise we began to focus on public order training. LCpls Hanlin, Maclean, Hague and Withington completed the Public Order Instructor's Course and have been the leads within the Company on public order. In late February we deployed to Whinney Hill in Catterick as part of the Battalion led public order exercise. This exercise focused on more advanced public order training, allowing us to integrate vehicles and work as a Company on the test phase of the exercise. The test phase of the exercise went well, with the Company first acting as public order troops, swiftly dispersing the Bravo Company civilian population. We then became civilian population for Bravo Company, and the chants of 'Golden Don' echoed through the streets. This chant will not be used in Cyprus to avoid confusion with Golden Dawn, an extreme right wing faction in Greece.

March has seen our final preparations for Op TOSCA completed and the beginnings of our deployment. The first weeks of March included the All Ranks Brief and our final exercise. This exercise was designed to test the Company on all of the skills we require for Op TOSCA.

We will deploy between mid and late March. Everyone is excited to be going to Cyprus, and there is no doubt that it will be a challenging and rewarding opportunity.

## HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major C McInroy
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 (CSM) Taylor
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant McCready

The Company has been busy getting ready for the Battalion's deployment to Op TOSCA. This has served to split the Company with elements deploying to Cyprus and the remainder forming part of the Rear Operations Group back at Fort George. Company Headquarters has been kept very busy and as ever new faces appear and others move on.

WO2 Allan Dunn handed over the Company to WO2 Davie Taylor in October after his spell down on Op VOCATE. The CQMS has had a very busy period getting the Company shipshape for the Equipment Care Inspection, providing G4 support to the JNCO Cadre down in Edinburgh and at the same time, sorting clothing and freight for Op



*Delta Company at the All Ranks Brief.*



*Delta Company training at Whinney Hill.*



*Major McInroy prepares for retirement.*



*The Quartermasters' Department.*

TOSCA. We also congratulate LCpl 'Mud' Mudnavosa on his promotion to Cpl.

Young Private McPhate is on the PJNCO Cadre in Edinburgh and hopefully by the next time the Red Hackle is published he will be a LCpl. His weekly SITREPs have kept us amused, in particular his surprise that he is not sleeping much and is getting the run-around. The QCMS and Cpl Mud are looking forward to getting him into the armoury and finally putting a shift in.

Unfortunately we have to say goodbye to the Company Commander, Major Colin McInroy who is moving on to his new post at the end of March as an assistant to the Defence Attaché in Jerusalem for six months then, after a quick turnaround, he heads out to the Czech Republic as the Chief Of Staff BMATT. Incidentally Major McInroy has recently been awarded The South Atlantic Medal for operations on the Falkland Islands during Op CORPORATE in 1982 with The Queens Own Highlanders. As it stands he is one of three serving soldiers still in service to wear the medal.

Major McInroy's departure brings in Major Brian Cooper, the QM(T) for the Battalion on HERRICK 10. He is currently serving at the Infantry Battle School in Brecon. He is deploying on Op TOSCA and the Company will see him when the Battalion recover from Cyprus.



*The Basingbourn fatigue party.*

### QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster:	Major J Howe
Quartermaster (Technical):	Captain S MacKenzie
Regimental Quarter Master	
Sergeant (Maintenance):	WO2 Stacey
Regimental Quarter Master	
Sergeant (Technical):	WO2 Fairweather

It was very tempting to start these notes with the sentence "It has been another busy period for the QMs Platoon" however this would be an old cliché and due to the current tempo of training and exercises it would be applicable to the whole Battalion.

November saw the call to closedown Op VOCATE and the return of Basingbourn Barracks to the VOCATE Land Training Site (VLTS). A merry band of volunteers remained behind to prepare the camp for the handover and on completion were rewarded with a trip out for a hearty meal! The QM, Major Jamie Howe managed to sneak in a trip to the cinema but was not prepared for watching "Annabelle" a movie he first thought was a "Rom Com" which turned out to be a horror movie. The squeals coming from him will stay with those that accompanied him for some time to come!

On reflection, the Op VOCATE deployment was a real learning experience for all and credit must go to WO2 (RQMS) Kev Stacey and Cpl O'Gorman who produced some excellent results throughout the deployment ensuring that all activities were well supported and in a timely manner.

December saw the preparation for the Equipment Care Inspection (ECI), scheduled for the New Year, and Christmas week was condensed into three days, all prior to the Department taking some well deserved leave.

January started with the recce to Cyprus and then moved straight into the ECI in which the Battalion performed well, achieving a Green on this severe examination of our Equipment Care procedures. The

QM (T), Captain Scott MacKenzie can now concentrate on his real task as OIC tracksuits, t-shirts and shorts!

LCpl Cameron attended and passed both the SRTT and RLC PNCO cadres and is now fully qualified in rank. CSgt Currie (Master Tailor) has successfully attended the Unit Intelligence Officer's course at Chicksands and is using his new found skills in the beaches and bars of Thailand! Joking aside, CSgt Currie was awarded top student of the course which is a real credit to him as he had no previous experience in this field.

The coming months will see the Department split once more with half deploying to Cyprus and the remainder supporting the Fort George contingent on exercises to Kenya and France.

As ever we have to say farewell to some people. Major Jamie Howe, QM is posted to 3 RIFLES as OC HQ Coy (TOS wearing will be permitted), WO2 (RQMS) Fairweather is posted to 51st Highland/7 SCOTS on promotion to RSM and SSgt Smith is leaving on completion of 24 years Colour Service. We wish them well in their next ventures and trust they have cleared all F7767s prior to leaving!

### CIS PLATOON

Regimental Signals Officer:	Captain N J Drapper
Regimental Signals Warrant Officer:	WO2 Tollan
CIS Platoon QCMS:	Sergeant Dowdles
Bowman Systems Manager:	Sergeant Bonnar
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Ross

The CIS Platoon has been split over numerous fronts during the last period with the drawdown of Op VOCATE, the planning for the Light Mechanised Infantry role and training for our future deployment on Op TOSCA. Nonetheless we have still managed to conduct some, much needed, platoon training at Basingbourn Barracks, with the deployment of the whole CIS Platoon to "get back to basics". We used this period to conduct some collective training in the art of Battalion HQ construction. This was a very useful time to blow away the cobwebs



and introduce the fledgling signallers to the complexities of deploying Main Headquarters.

As always we are trying to develop our knowledge base and planning for the future and to that end the following have completed the stated courses:

Pte Pope – Regimental Signals Course

Pte Cameron – All Arms Physical Training Instructor Course

Pte Tudor – Mountain Bike Foundation Course

LCpl Odame – Kayak Foundation Course

LCpl Ahmed – Currently conducting his Regimental Signals Detachment Commanders' Course.

We have continued in our supporting roles with Cpl Hume, replaced by Cpl Murphy so that Cpl Hume can settle with A Company in preparation for deployments to Kenya and France.

On a personal note, congratulations must go to Cpl Munjoma on the birth of Finley.



*The Catering Platoon supporting the Army Reserve.*



*First attempt at hiding Main Headquarters.*



*Ptes Greaves and Olaleye hard at work.*

### **CATERING PLATOON**

Regimental Catering Warrant Officer (SQMS): WO2 Philip  
Platoon Sergeant: Sergeant Leye

On return from Op VOCATE and some well-earned leave it was straight into the Christmas period and as always it was a very busy few weeks for us caterers. With the Platoon working alongside ESS we carried out a number of functions, first being the Corporals' Mess Christmas Ball followed by the Christmas Balls of the Officers' Mess and the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess both held on the same night. With leave lurking around the corner spirits were high. Next up was the Jocks' Christmas lunch, with 400 hungry mouths to feed; the sprouts were steaming and the Quartermaster was armed with the 'pigs in blankets' and 'stuffing balls'; it was all go.

With Op TOSCA fast approaching, the Platoon was busy preparing and packing up the Operational Field Catering System (OFCS) ready for deployment. Sgt Leye and Pte Henderson deployed on Ex LEDRA

HACKLE providing catering support for Delta Company, while the Regimental Catering Warrant Officer (RCWO) was packing his comfy box full of sun tan lotion.

Red Hackle Day was here again and once more the dining room was full; jock pie, chips and beans on the menu this time, all well received. The highlight of the day had to be Sgt Leye in his fancy dress costume, a sight for sore eyes to say the least.

We now look forward to deploying on Op TOSCA and the challenges it will no doubt bring.

### **KIRK OF THE BLACK WATCH**

*By Padre J C Duncan CF, Chaplain*

#### **Padre's Patter!**

Hello there!

In 2014, the Battalion participated in Remembrance Day Services over a wide geographical area. For those members of the Battalion serving in Bassingbourn we were invited to the Remembrance Day Services at Bassingbourn and Royston. I was invited by the Vicar at Bassingbourn, the Reverend Doctor Caroline Yendell, to preach at the church service. Poppy wreaths were laid by the Commanding Officer at Royston and the Officer Commanding A Company, Major G K Adamson, at Bassingbourn. The Battalion also participated in the services at Ardersier, Nairn and Inverness.

On Armistice Day at Bassingbourn Barracks in our Act of Remembrance, we remembered members of the Battalion by planting little wooden poppy crosses for each member of the Battalion who was killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This year as part of our Christmas celebrations, we had a Children's Christmas Carol Service at Fort George Kirk. I think the children enjoyed the service, and especially the chocolate Santa Claus! Thanks must go to Mrs Lizzie Steele for helping to organise the service and decorate the Kirk and Captain Cunningham, Welfare Officer, and his team for organising the child friendly feast after the service.

Our Jocks' Christmas Carol Service was held at Fort George Kirk and I know you all want to know who won the X Factor Carol singing



RAO to the Padre "...I have calculated that if you give up your welfare vehicle for just 60 days a year you would save the taxpayer..."

competition! The judge was Mrs Bridget Black, Fort George Kirk's Deputy Organist, and again the winners were Headquarter Company despite gallant efforts by the other Companies. Major McNroy accepted the prize of a big box of chocolate Heroes. Can Headquarter Company be toppled from their musical throne? All to sing for this Christmas! I introduced a new Christmas Carol to the Battalion, which is always highly risky! Jocks have traditional singing voices i.e. if I don't know it I'm no singing! The carol was "Old McDonald had an inn E-I-E-O to the tune: "Old McDonald had a farm". I'm pleased to report it was well sung and even Mrs Black complimented the Jocks on their singing!

The Officers' Mess celebrated the National Bard – Robert Burns – with a special service on Sunday 25 January 2015. I must compliment Captain McRobbie for his recitation of the poem – "To a mouse" and Lieutenant Coles for the Bible reading in English and Broad Scots, and he read it like a true Scotsman! At this service to assist Captain Drapper, I read his Proclamation of Marriage Banns which is a requirement of the Church of England, but not of the Church of Scotland. I am pleased to report there were no objections! After the service we all enjoyed a hearty Sunday luncheon.

I am due to deploy with the Battalion on Op TOSCA in Cyprus. I visited the Battalion at Catterick for public order training. The Jocks tried to persuade me to join the rioters, but I stuck to throwing sweeties! Now it is time for me to look out my sun tan cream!

With every blessing,

### MT PLATOON

Motor Transport Officer: Captain P Marshall  
Motor Transport Sergeant: Sergeant Harkness

November 2014 saw the Op VOCATE element of the MT Platoon conduct the last moves of the Libyans from Bassingbourn to Brize Norton. The Libyans were never the best behaved passengers which meant each journey had a different challenge. The MT drivers who drove the coaches for the duration of Op VOCATE deserve an enormous amount of praise for their patience and skill in coping with the trainees. With the handover of the VOCATE vehicle fleet completed, the Platoon was straight into a two day road move with all the Green Fleet back to Fort George. This journey went smoothly with only one incident of note which incurred the wrath of the MTO. While travelling in convoy up the A1, Pte Jones decided to have a fly smoke in his Landover. Unfortunately for young Jonesy the MTO just happened to be travelling in the outside lane passing the convoy Jones was part off. It was a classic piece of comedy timing, as the MTO looked left to check on the driver; Pte Jones looked right straight at the MTO with an unlit cigarette hanging from his mouth. As you can imagine a short one way conversation was had at the next stop.

With the Platoon complete back in Fort George it was straight into preparation for the Equipment Care Inspection. This took us up to Christmas leave where the majority of the Platoon took 4 weeks well deserved holiday. On completion of leave the Platoon was straight back into ECI preparation. This was very much a team effort but some members of the Platoon had more responsibility than others. Pte Clunie who holds the post of JAMES Administrator, a post normally held by



Cpl Brown at work in the servicing bay.

a SNCO, bore the majority of the burden and guided the MT through its third successful ECI. It should not be underestimated how great an achievement this is. Those who also had a large role to play were the MT Sgt, Sgt Harkness the new Servicing Bay NCO, Cpl Brown, and Cpl Harris in the G1098 Store. A big well done was passed on to the team from the Commanding Officer who on receipt of the report passed around champagne to all those involved.

With the ECI out of the way the focus immediately switched to Op TOSCA and the deployment to Cyprus. This will see the Platoon split again with nine members of the team under the Platoon Sergeant heading out to Cyprus. For those left behind there are exercises in Kenya and France to look forward to.

Finally the Platoon said farewell to a couple of MT stalwarts and welcomed a couple of new members. Cpl Cruickshanks after many years in the MT has moved across to A (Grenadier) Company as their Technical SNCO. Ptes Coulson and Robertson moved on to Civvy Street where we wish them all the best. The Platoon then saw the arrival of Cpl Brown, LCpls Maclean and McGarvey and Ptes Tay and McGee; all welcome additions to the team.

### RAO'S DEPARTMENT

RAO: Captain N Fidler AGC(SPS)  
Detachment Commander: Captain S W Lewis AGC(SPS)  
RAWO: WO2 (SQMS) Young AGC(SPS)  
FSA: Staff Sergeant Downie AGC(SPS)  
Regimental Accountant: Sergeant Penman AGC(SPS)

### The King is dead, long live the King!

Major Drew Dunford MBE has handed over the reins to Captain Neil Fidler who arrived fresh from his Regimental Administrative Officers' (RAO) course in November 2014. The Adjutant General's Corps (Staff and Personnel Support) Detachment has continued to provide G1 assurance to the Battalion. Op VOCATE seems a distant memory but the G1 train continues to steam on towards Op TOSCA, as well as a G1



SSgt Les Downie armed and ready to battle JPA claims.



Support Inspection and an Operational Readiness Support Inspection.

Providing G1 assurance to the Battalion has been the Detachment's main effort during an exceptionally busy and productive period. Amongst the challenges has been the need to maintain and update G1 readiness while the majority of personnel have been on 7 weeks staggered leave or occupied with pre-deployment training for Op TOSCA.

Cyprus is now in reach and almost half of the Detachment are deploying. The build-up training has seen LCpl Whittall play bodyguard for his OC during Public Order Training and the Detachment take on the Unit Deployment Officer.

The Detachment has continued to train hard with internal training organised by Captain Lewis and individuals have also attended career courses. LCpls Whittall and Taylor attended their Potential Non Commissioned Officer (PNCO) course, Cpl Robb attended his Systems Coordinators' Course, Cpl Buchan attended his Command, Leadership and Management Course and Sgt Baron attended the Imprest Course.

The Detachment said farewell to Major Drew Dunford MBE on assignment to 39 Engineer Regiment, LCpl Bull on assignment to Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) and welcomed Cpls McNeill and Stewart from 7 SCOTS for their mobilisation for Op TOSCA and LCpl Edwards on assignment in from 39 Engineer Regiment. Congratulations to SSgt Downie on his selection to Warrant Rank.

### UNIT WELFARE OFFICE

UWO: Captain A H Cunningham  
AUWO & WIS Manager: Sergeant Trickovic MBE  
Welfare JNCOs: Corporals Simpson and MacInnes

The last few months have seen a myriad of events including the Wives' Christmas Party and children's events with the Wives' Committee pulling out all the stops to entertain all and sundry. The Burns Night as always is a popular annual event and praise must go to Mrs Marshall and her small team in putting the event together.

The main focus of the summer will be Op TOSCA and as I write, the first members of the Battalion have just set off to Cyprus to prepare for the arrival of our soldiers. This is a fantastic opportunity for our soldiers to develop their skills and also for families who wish to visit them in Cyprus can do so and have a fantastic family holiday at the same time.

Back at home the Welfare Office is currently planning a series of events in order to keep everyone busy including a much in demand wives' exercise.



*Santa and his helper Lieutenant Young.*

### MALAWI DEFENCE FORCE SHORT TERM TRAINING TEAM: 28 JANUARY-15 MARCH 2015

*By Captain M H Rivington*

As part of the new Army 2020 plan and the renewed emphasis on Defence Engagement I was not surprised when tasked to deploy to Malawi in late January 2015 as part of a Short Term Training Team (STTT) with D Company, The Royal Scots Borderers (1 SCOTS). The mission in short was to train, advise and assist the Malawi Defence Force (MDF) prior to their deployment into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as part of a multinational brigade. For the country of Malawi, it was another opportunity to prove its standing in Sub-Saharan Africa and for their Defence Force, an opportunity to deploy jointly with Tanzanians and those well-known African 'Big Guns', the South Africans.

Their joint task is part of an unusually aggressive UN Mandate which implies armed action against rebel groups. Needless to say, for the STTT and me (the only Black Watch/3 SCOTS member) the task of preparing the Malawi contingent was significant. We focussed quite naturally on their leadership and conducted a Combined Arms Staff Training cadre for their BG HQ and a Command cadre for company command appointments (Section Commanders to Platoon Commanders). In addition, we also focussed on a previously identified short coming of the Malawi Defence Force (MDF), their only inherent intelligence gathering asset, their Reconnaissance Platoon. It was this latter task that was identified as the STTT Main Effort because of its role in driving an intelligence lead Battlegroup planning process.

My role as the STTT 2iC was to train an MDF Permanent Range Team (PRT) to run the Live Firing Tactical Training (LFTT) packages. Naturally, it is always a nervous experience to be put into a position of training foreign forces with live ammunition! However, I need not have been concerned as the MDF are very similar to our own Army in many respects and quick to assimilate knowledge, so their progression and my trust were thankfully proportional. Encouragingly, by the end of the STTT the MDF PRT were planning and safely conducting Company level Combined Arms Live Firing Exercises (CALFEXs) including their own Battlegroup Mortars and HMG.

Like the Royal Regiment of Scotland, the MDF has a rich antecedent history, theirs deriving from the Kings African Rifles (KAR) spanning to their current guise as the Malawian Rifles. The KAR have notably fought alongside the 2nd Battalion, The Black Watch during the Second World War in Somaliland and indeed their Regimental cemetery hosts a number of British war graves, spanning several campaigns including one belonging to a Gordon Highlander. To that end I was proud to unleash the Red Hackle as part of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland and reunite with the now, 1st and 2nd Battalions Malawian Rifles after some significant years apart.

Needless to say, the current MDF soldiers (as with the rest of their nation) are hugely proud of their British connections.

So now, I wish the MDF every success on their operational tour of the DRC.

### ARMY SQUASH

*By 2Lt A E F Atterbury*

On the 21-23 January 2015 I was fortunate enough to be able to persuade Major Bailey to release me to participate in the Army Squash Championships. Little did he know that he had opened the door to more than just a couple of days of sport! The Championships were held at Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre and consisted of several different



*2Lt Atterbury with the Army Under 25 trophy.*



*Captain Rivington with members of the Malawi Defence Force.*

events including Ladies and Men's Open competitions alongside age restricted ones.

The Championships were a great success with over 180 entrants across the categories ensuring that everyone had matches to play at a good standard. The Men's Open in particular had some excellent players with the Combined Services champion looking to be the early favourite. I quickly realised I might be outmatched here and turned my attention to the U25 event where I felt inroads could be made. Sure enough I reached the final day by booking a place in the semi-finals of the U25, before some indulgence at the dinner night threatened to derail everything. Fortunately my opponent also enjoyed himself with the result that I battled through, eventually winning the U25 category.

On the back of this I was selected for the Army U25 team, set to face the Navy and the RAF on 4-6 February 2015. Major Bailey, realising the Pandora's Box he had opened, released me with only the minimum of comment from the CSM. The Inter-Service Competition was another success with the Army winning across all of the categories for the second year in a row, highlighting the strength of Army squash at the moment.

### ALPINE SKIING: EXERCISE FROSTED HACKLE

*By 2Lt A E F Atterbury*

On 28 November 2014, eleven members of the Battalion started the long journey to Val D'Isere to participate in Ex FROSTED BLADE, the Infantry Ski Championships. The team, led by Lieutenant Robbie Crook consisted of 2Lt Atterbury, Cpl Bell, Cpl Hart and Ptes Keenan, Smith, Watt, Mathew, Mundell, Lee, Meechin, and Murray. While some had taken part the previous year, for four of them it was the first time on skis.



*Left to Right – Pte Matthew, Pte Keenan, Lt Crook and Pte Smith on race day.*



*The Commanding Officer (left) visits the team.*

The team was split into two groups – those who were staying for 6 weeks (A Div), and those who were only doing 3 weeks (B Div). We entered a team into each which allowed for those who had never skied before to gain experience without the pressure of racing at the end. The team performed excellently throughout and had a great time both on and off the slopes. The training was delivered by professional instructors who did a fantastic job of developing the skiers regardless of previous experience.

Highlights ranged from watching the beginners develop from being unable to stay upright on the first day to competing in a timed Grand Slalom run on the last day – a remarkable achievement – to watching the 'A Div' Jocks flying down the mountain at high speed during the downhill event on race week. The A Div team did superbly, placing 4th in the Infantry Ski Championships before putting in more good performances in the Divisional Championships the following week.

Overall Ex FROSTED HACKLE was a huge success, reflecting the hard work put in by everyone who participated. It has provided an excellent platform to go onto next year's Championships and do even better!

### TELEMARKING: 10-22 JANUARY 2015

The Battalion has in past years fielded willing and able ski teams and the 2014/15 season was no different but this year saw the resurgence of The Black Watch Telemarking team. The Tri-Service Championships were hosted in the quiet village of Rauris in Southern Austria and saw teams from all over the Forces come together to compete in a number of events.

The fortnight began with an assessment of every individual's ability and the establishment of separate training groups for the week's instruction. With a four man squad ranging in ability from experienced skier Pte Chi Wan to first-timer-on-the-snow Pte Corey Keltie we were destined to see little of each other throughout the training phase. For the uninitiated Telemarking is the 'art' of downhill skiing but with the aid of many a painful lunge to facilitate the changing of direction. To say that we all took to it naturally would be nothing short of a lie and there was many a moment of frustration when the question was asked why one would not simply alpine ski...? (a question



*The Black Watch/3 SCOTS Telemark Titans 2015.*



best fielded out of earshot of one's instructor or the Commanding Officer, a Telemarking fanatic.) On the one hand we were informed that as long as you can pull off Telemarking to even the most basic of levels you look far more impressive than an alpine skier and on the other we reminded ourselves that at least we were not skiing uphill like other members of the Battalion. Nonetheless, despite these hardships we persevered and by the beginning of week 2 we had 'taken part' (it's not the winning that counts) in the requisite training including gates, jumps and seeding races and felt we were ready for the big leagues. As wrong as it later transpired we were, this did not dent our enthusiasm. Pte Wan was called up to race against some extremely experienced Telemarkers while Lt Smyth and Ptes Keltie and Cormack remained to battle it out in the beginners' category. The week saw all team members compete in a combination of slalom races and finish with a 'mountain race' which, to our horror, involved skiing uphill to such an extent as to require 'skins' in order to grip the near vertical slope (evidence of which can be found on YouTube). Alas the team returned with little by way of silverware but armed with a great deal of experience and looking forward to round two in 2016. Highlights of the trip included unwelcome attempts to butcher the German language, the haute cuisine prepared by, and for, all members of the team, the 80s-mad pop music channel in our apartment and the realisation that all of us can, voluntarily or otherwise, do the splits.

### NORDIC SKIING

*By Lt A D S Pearson*

The Battalion Nordic Ski Team is still a fledgling organisation but much has developed since last season, the first after a 10 year gap. This year's team was eight strong and we trained and competed in the French Alps. The Nordic Ski season went very well. We represented the Battalion at the Infantry Championships in Bessans, France, and finished in the top five. We also competed at the Divisional Championships in Les Contamines, France and although we did not qualify for the Army Championships we still did very well for such a junior team.

The team had two members with previous experience but the rest of the team were put through their paces after a relatively easy initiation; the training soon picked up towards the competitions. Our main competition was the Divisional Ski championships. To prepare us for this we had a week in Bessans, France, with two British Olympic instructors, Ed Nichol and Jason Sklenar. The early morning runs and sprint sessions on skis were a shock to the system but the preparation was well worth it as the team represented the Battalion very well at the Championships.



*Lt Pearson collapsing across the line during the men's 4x 7.5Km Biathlon Relay to ensure 3 SCOTS beat 1 SCOTS.*



*The team left to right: LCpl Stevenson, LCpl Cruickshanks, Lt Pearson, LCpl Wallace, Cpl Everret, Pte MacLeod, Pte Aitken, Pte Currid, LCpl Cruickshanks (4 SCOTS instructor).*





*The expedition group enjoying a bit of flat terrain.*

# **EXERCISE NORTHERN ATLAS HACKLE: 06-19 OCTOBER 2014**

Expedition Leader: Lt N T J Coles  
2iC: WO2 Parker

The Battalion was privileged to be allocated a Level 3 Adventure Training slot in Morocco in October 2014. The trekking expedition, Exercise NORTHERN ATLAS HACKLE, took place in the stunning High Atlas Mountains, two hours south of Marrakesh, offering fantastic adventure training opportunities for all trekking competencies. The British expedition group, led by Lt Coles, consisted of twelve members of the Battalion and two guest Summer Mountain Leaders. We were well hosted and worked alongside eight members of the Moroccan Armed Forces (MAF, 1st Battalion de Chasseurs de l' Atlas) and four members of the Moroccan Gendarmerie which proved extremely entertaining as they were not familiar with Scottish accents let alone 'jockanese'. However, this acted in our favour and instantly broke the

barrier as phrases and gestures were exchanged over endless cups of mint tea. The two armies integrated well over the duration of the week and passed knowledge and tips back and forth.

Having flown to Marrakesh, we spent a day and a half conducting final kit preparations, acclimatising to the warm weather, avoiding snake charmers in Djema El-Fna and buying last minute supplies before embarking on the adventure. The snow capped mountains looked very appealing as we drove through the countryside contemplating what challenges we would face. The group were met by the MAF at the pre arranged RV and after scrutinising the planned route we loaded mules with bottled water and headed uphill through the pine groves. The seven day route took the group through a number of Berber villages and over mixed terrain. The route was very picturesque and the steep climbs up to 3,500m were rewarded with spectacular views looking down the valleys and at the mountain caps. For the majority of the nights we camped and were welcomed into a guest house for one night in Amsourzet where a wedding was taking place on the opposite side of



*Summit of Mt Toubkal 4167m.*





*How do you First Parade a donkey?*



*Practicing drills before the ascent.*

the valley. We carried our bergens up and over numerous passes and were thankful not to be loaded with ammunition or carrying weapons. Our final day was summit day and after an early night we set off by head torch to climb to the highest peak in North Africa. Thirty six torches lit up the mountain like a snake as we zig zaged higher and higher avoiding the large patches of snow and icy rocks. The entire party successfully reached the summit just after 0900 hrs and to our surprise the bustling winds that we had encountered previously had ceased in time for us to take photographs and enjoy the moment. We were standing 4167m above sea level overlooking the High Atlas Mountains with Marrakesh in the distance. Inevitably, having climbed up we had to climb down and we spent the next six hours trekking back to Imlil hand railing streams and rivers through the valley passes.

The group walked a total distance of 76 km over the seven day period so were very grateful to return to Marrakesh for a few cultural days and relaxing in the sun. We explored the dark corners of the souks, had a guided tour of Bahia Palace, endured the horrific stench of the tanneries and visited Koutoubia Mosque. The expedition was a great success, not only as we completed our objectives and climbed Mount Toubkal but it improved our awareness and understanding of Morocco and the Moroccan Armed Forces. It enabled us to conduct training in a demanding and unfamiliar environment while improving our personal skills and navigation. The group are extremely grateful to all that supported and enabled the expedition to happen.

### **SPEAN BRIDGE COMMANDO SPEED MARCH – 7 MARCH 2015**

*By Lt Z W Smyth*

*"A pitiless drizzle was falling as the train finally rumbled down a slight gradient and clanged and clattered to a halt at a picturesque little station. Above the hiss of steam I could hear the sound of pipes and – like a ghostly echo of the '45 – a porter shouting in a high pitched Highland voice: "Spee...ann Bri...dge!"*

(Donald Gilchrist – Castle Commando)

Once again The Black Watch/3 SCOTS had entered a team into the annual Spean Bridge Commando Speed March and once again, due to operational and training commitments, it was not until less than a week before the event itself that we knew we were able to enter a team. Nonetheless, in anticipation of our being allowed to enter, a potential team of willing candidates was assembled.

The aim of the march is to raise money for a number of Service Charities by running the route from Spean Bridge train station to Achnacarry house which, in March 1942, became the Commando Basic Training Centre. The march is done in boots, carrying 16.5kg and it is everyman for himself in an attempt to reach the target time of 1 hour – the time that the recruits once had to reach the gates of the house before they were closed.

With no time for preparation, the team gathered in miserable weather in the early hours of Saturday the 7th of March in a wet and grey Fort George. As we approached the village we drove past the famous Commando Memorial (unveiled in 1952 by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother) and down the long winding hill we would soon be returning up on foot.

Having 'weighed in' and gathered on the line we were dispatched back up the hill praying with each step to catch sight of the imposing statue a mile up the hill from where we would descend gradually down to the Caledonian Canal then sharply back up to the height of the road which runs (for some distance) north of Loch Lochy until we reached the gates of the estate marking a little under a mile until the finish line. In total the team raised an impressive £300 for charity and will return next year to do the same.

'Some say they were met by a pipe band, others that they marched in full kit to Achnacarry, others that they arrived on their own. All are true but none set in stone.'

Our team was as follows:

Capt Garrick – 58:00

+Lt Smyth – 1:00:42

Cpl Ure – 1:08:00

Cpl Smith – 1:07:20

Pte McIlrath – 1:03:19

Pte Lee – 1:00:23



*The Black Watch team that took part in the Spean Bridge Commando Speed March 2015.*



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# 51st Highland, 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel PGB Strudwick
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 1 (RSM) JJ Dickson
Second-in-Command:	Major J Anderson
Training Major:	Major ARW Watson
Reserve Training Major:	Major P Greening
Quartermaster:	Major W Hunter
Regimental Administration Officer:	Major PJ Ward
Adjutant:	Captain CM Grant
Regimental Career Management Officer:	Captain BS Baxter
Operations Officer:	Captain R Coppard
Regimental Operations Support Officer:	Captain A McEwen
Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant:	WO2 (RQMS) S Lawrence
Regimental Operations Support Warrant Officer:	WO2 L McDowall
Officer Commanding Headquarter Company:	Major JS Langdale
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 R Bustard

## BATTALION OVERVIEW

51st Highland, 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS), has continued to benefit from the support provided under Op FORTIFY, the Army's operation to increase the manning and capability of the Army Reserve to meet the Army 2020 plan. With increased advertising, properly resourced marketing budgets, streamlined enlistment processes and streamlined training pipelines, we are really starting to see an increase both in applicants and successful recruits. Of critical success has been the system of enlistment bonuses on offer to ex-regulars to join. With £10,000 on offer to ex-Regulars who left within the last 6 years, we have seen a stream of Jocks, NCOs and officers returning to the Colours across the Battalion. In the last 6 months we have welcomed 17 ex-Black Watch soldiers but we still have some way to go to reach full manning so please get in touch!

As always, our *raison d'être* is to support operations and we have recently mobilised 21 soldiers to support our paired battalion, The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (3 SCOTS) on its forthcoming Op TOSCA deployment to support United Nations peacekeeping in Cyprus. This pairing mechanism is another feature of Op FORTIFY and has seen links between the two battalions deepen from a joint mortar live firing exercise at Warcop, regular G4 mutual support, to Black Watch officers joining the 51st Highland Officers' Mess for a St Andrew's Dinner Night in Elgin. Looking forward, we anticipate providing a platoon of soldiers to join the Black Watch during this summer's Ex GAULISH EAGLE in France.

As a result of Army 2020, we have had a number of basing changes, withdrawing our presence from Wick, Keith and Dunoon. Despite the loss of Keith, our presence in Moray is being maintained by the return of the Elgin Army Reserve Centre to 51st Highland after many years. On the east coast, Aberdeen will now form part of a far larger

A Company which retains its Company Headquarters in Dundee and a platoon in Kirkcaldy. Of course, the Battalion Headquarters and Headquarter Company remain in Queen's Barracks, Perth so our links with the Black Watch family remain strong. As we speak, we are welcoming back our shooting team which has recently competed in South Africa and congratulating the ski team for its performance in the Army in Scotland skiing championships in Aviemore.

In February, the Battalion said farewell to Lieutenant Colonel Pete Little OBE who handed over command to Lieutenant Colonel Piers Strudwick. After 30 months in command which has seen a huge increase in the Battalion's activity levels, profile and recruiting, he leaves the Highlands to attend the US Army's Staff College in Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. He has injected a huge amount of energy, enthusiasm and drive into the Battalion and he leaves with our thanks and best wishes.



*The new Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel PGB Strudwick assumes command of 7 SCOTS. The outgoing Commanding Officer looks on.*

We also bid farewell to our Honorary Colonel Brigadier (Retd) CS Grant OBE. He has been an outstanding advisor to Commanding Officers and the Battalion Staff and maintained the perfect balance of being a dignified Colonel whilst being able to converse and associate with every rank down to the private soldier. He has served us to perfection and will be deeply missed – but he will continue to reside in Perthshire and has promised not to be a stranger! In his place we welcome Brigadier (Retd) The Honourable HBHE Monro CBE. We thoroughly look forward to welcoming him into the battalion on visits to training over the forthcoming year.

## A COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major A Cameron
Second-in-Command:	Captain JA Valentine
CSM:	WO2 S Woods
PSAO:	Captain R Reid MBE
Mortar Platoon Commander:	Captain JA Valentine
Anti-Tank Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant B Anderson
Rifle Platoon Commander Kirkcaldy:	2nd Lieutenant M Orr
SPSI:	Colour Sergeant S Rennie
CQMS:	Colour Sergeant J Twine

A Company has continued to see a number of structural and personal changes over the last six months. The new structure of A Company is now in place with Aberdeen joining the Company, bringing a newly formed Anti-Tank Platoon and a second Rifle Platoon to create a four platoon company with the HQ remaining in Dundee. Despite the end of HERRICK the Company continues to mobilise soldiers most recently



*The Battalion bids farewell to Lieutenant Colonel PM Little OBE as he is carried out of Barry Buddon Camp to mark the end of his tenure as CO.*



*Mortar Platoon live firing on WARCOP ranges.*

to Cyprus on Op TOSCA (8 soldiers) and we are now preparing for Op TORAL later in the year. The continued main effort of recruiting is producing good results with a steady influx of newly trained soldiers swelling the platoons to full strength; if this rate of recruitment continues we will be fully manned within the next 18 months.

Prior to the Christmas stand down, the Company concentrated on MATTs training and range work, as the New Year would be fully utilized for support weapons training. With the majority of the MATTs tests completed the Mortar Platoon and Anti-Tank Platoon commenced training cadres for the first quarter of 2015. The Mortar Platoon completed their cadre with a live firing shoot at Warcop ranges in March; the Mortar shoot was conducted with the participation and support of both The Black Watch/3 SCOTS and 52nd Lowland/6 SCOTS. With The Black Watch being our partner battalion and the requirement to supply a Mortar section during times of mobilization. The exercise demonstrated that we are able to provide a qualified and current Mortar Section if required, at any point in the future. Building on the success of the Support Weapons Cadres, the two platoons will continue to train in their respective specialities and will have the opportunity to develop further during the Annual Deployment this May-June where they will conduct further support weapons training.

The opportunities for soldiers to train overseas have continued with the Company making up half the Battalion Shooting team which has



*Pte Salter of The Black Watch battalion firing Illum.*



*51st Highland/7 SCOTS Mortar live firing on the WARCOP ranges.  
Left to right, LCpl Wallace, Pte Christie and Pte Monaghan.*



*Joint Training. The Mortar Platoons of the 3rd and 7th Battalions during a break in firing.*

just returned from South Africa. They participated in an international shooting competition obtaining good results. They also had the opportunity to visit Rorkes Drift and viewed some of the wonderful wildlife. WO2 Woods participated in the US-UK Exchange Program for two weeks based outside Las Vegas and WO2 Penrice is looking forward to going to New York State later in the year.

It's now time to mention a few farewells and congratulations; farewell to our OC Major R Davies who has moved down south to take up new civilian employment and welcome to Major A Cameron who previously commanded B Company (including Aberdeen). We also say farewell to WO2 Parker who was our CSM for 6 years and had been based out of our Stirling location for his whole Army Reserve career. We welcome the Officers and soldiers of Aberdeen to A Company. Congratulations must go to WO2 Woods on his promotion and his appointment as CSM, WO2 Penrice on his promotion and appointment to 2IC Mortar Platoon and CSgt McKenzie on his promotion and appointment as CQMS.

## **EX SNOW LION – ARMY SKIING IN SCOTLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Team Manager: Captain Mac McKenzie  
Team Captain: Captain Hugo Cannon

51st Highland, 7th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS) sent an Alpine Ski Team and a Snowboarder to Exercise Snow Lion 2015. Ex SNOW LION is the Army's Scotland Ski Championships, which took place in the Cairngorm Mountain Range, over the period 27 February-8 March 2015. The exercise was last run in 2010 and was shelved due to commitments in Afghanistan. Since the operational tempo has lessened it is the intention of 51 Brigade to re-establish Ex SNOW LION and open it up to Snow Boarders and Nordic Skiers. There were 41 Alpine skiing and 20 Snowboarding competitors from Army units across Scotland competing in this year's event. 51 Brigade were in overall charge of the competition with admin support provided by the Battalion. In addition there was a large contingent from the Royal Omani Army who put forward a 4-man team.

Our team, organised by Captain 'Mac' McKenzie, sent seven competitors. Captains Cannon and Bracher and Colour Sergeants Robertson and McKintloch formed the basis of the first team. The competition was broken down into two main parts: Giant Slalom





*A 7 SCOTS skier enjoying the slopes.*



*The team with their haul of silver wear.*

(individual and team) and Slalom (individual and team). The weather was extremely testing with two out of the six days set aside for racing cancelled. The strong winds meant that using the funicular railway up the mountain was too unsafe. The wind and poor visibility meant that competition was not just a test of speed down the slope. Correct equipment, adequate reconnaissance, preparation and general robustness evident in most infantrymen eventually paid off. Despite there being faster skiers and faster teams in the competition, we managed to secure a few important victories. The team clinched the cup in the Reserve Team Slalom Competition. They also won the Reserve Team Giant Slalom Competition and thus secured the overall Reserve Team Trophy, despite tough competition from AUOTC, TUOTC and 32 Signal Regiment. In addition Captain Cannon was the overall Reserve Infantry champion and Captain Bracher was the runner up. In the Snowboarding, CSgt Kennedy managed to secure the Novice Senior Trophy in Giant Slalom.

The overall competition was deemed a success for the Battalion, not least because of the Battalion's medal haul. We also provided admin support under the day-to-day management of RQMS Maestri at Rothiemurchus Lodge where the majority of competitors were staying. The Lodge, about to go through a much needed overhaul, could be described as comfortable at best. All units agreed the conditions were made bearable by the mountains of hot food the chefs prepared each evening after the competitors returned from the hill. The Battalion also sent support to the race committee and the RCMO, Captain Baxter was Race Referee.

## EX SKYNET – US EXCHANGE

*By WO2 (CSM) Woods*

For the last two weeks of September 2014 I was on the UK/US Reserve exchange program attached to The 1st Squadron, 221st Cavalry based in North Las Vegas, Nevada, which is Nevada's only combat arms unit. The Squadron Headquarters is based in Las Vegas with another troop located in Fallon, North Nevada. The squadron has about 550 soldiers split between different locations. The unit's role is armoured recce and support weapons.

After twenty five hours travelling I finally arrived in Vegas with another UK Reserve Officer from 4 Yorks. I had never been to Vegas



*WO2 Woods enjoying the sights between work on his US exchange.*



*WO2 Woods on exercise with members of 1st Squadron, 221st Cavalry based in North Las Vegas, Nevada.*

before and was looking forward to the experience. Our first experience of the city was very impressive with all the neon lights and famous hotels from various movies such as Caesars Palace, New York New York and Bellagio. Unfortunately this view was from the car as we passed them by heading for our hotel. We would get an opportunity later in the exchange to see the hotels and sample the "culture".

On arrival at our hotel we asked about the nearest place to have some food and were advised by our host not to walk about here after dark as it was not the best of neighbourhoods. That said we made our way on foot to the nearest McDonalds, passing some "extras" from the Walking Dead series en route and later returned to our hotel safely.

After all the usual introductions at the Squadron Headquarters we started the Squadron Staff CPX which was a planning exercise for an armoured assault with various support arms. I was attached to the Fire Support Cell for the first few days and then moved to the Intelligence Cell for the remainder of the planning phase. During the week, the Squadron had successfully acquired the services of the Doctrinal Training Team who are a number of ex regular US soldiers from all arms who advise and mentor Battalion staff on class room based exercises. For the final phase of the CPX Captain Dawson and I "commanded" a recce troop of Bradley fighting vehicles which was interesting, especially the voice procedure! Overall the first week was excellent training. We did manage to visit a few of the local "cultural" sites including the Hoover Dam. We also spent a morning with the Las Vegas Police Department on their 25m firing range firing their issue weapons. This was organised by a Squadron member who currently serves with the department.

The second week was spent in National Training Centre, Fort Irwin, California a two and half hour drive from Las Vegas. Fort Irwin is the US equivalent of BATUS in Canada. After being issued my M4 weapon and MILES equipment I was attached to a Javelin Platoon for the week and shadowed the Senior First Sergeant. Lima Troop 1-221 CAV were OPFOR against 11th Armoured Brigade. It was an excellent experience as I had a limited knowledge of Javelin and was able to experience first hand the capability of the weapon system against M1 Abrahams, Bradleys and Apaches. The enemy also possessed surveillance drones which could be heard while in our OPs in over watch locations such as John Wayne Pass. After the drone passed we would normally receive a "visit" from an enemy Apache or F16 and be "killed off" by the observer controller who toured the training area in a helicopter. The final count was 20 x Bradleys, 5 x M1's and 3 x Apaches destroyed by the Javelin platoon.

It was then back to Vegas, hand in the kit and get some proper food. We managed to get down the Vegas Strip and see a few of the sights.

The two weeks were a fantastic opportunity to work with the National Guard and learn how their military works. I would highly recommend this exchange to anyone.

## EX SPRINGBOK – SHOOTING TEAM IN SOUTH AFRICA

*By Major A Cameron*

This year eight marksmen from the Battalion jetted off to a shooting competition in the searing heat of Bloemfontein, South Africa. The soldiers were picked on shooting ability and commitment over the last year. Representing the United Kingdom Reserve Forces (UKRF) in Exercise SPRINGBOK, the team competed against Regular and Reservist teams from a wide variety of other nations' Armed Forces including the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). The squad, comprising of a Manager, Armourer and the





*The Battalion Shooting Team on Ex SPRINGBOK on the Gener al de Wet Range just outside Bloemfontein, South Africa.*

eight firers competed over three days of full bore shooting competitions using the R4 Galil 5.56 mm automatic rifle – the service rifle presently in use with the SANDF. Major Gus Cameron, the team manager remarked:

“This was a unique and once in a lifetime opportunity for most of the team, all of whom are proven marksmen, to compete at the very highest level against some of the most naturally gifted rifle shots in the world. I am very proud of our achievement; given that this was the first time we had handled and fired the R4”.

The team come from a wide and varied employment background ranging from oil workers in Aberdeen, to a Police officer in Dundee, and a member of the Fire and Rescue Service working out of Dounreay, Thurso. After training hard for the event they finished a very respectable 7th out of 37 Reservist teams and 30th overall out of over 90 teams Regular and Reserve.



*The A Company team members on Ex SPRINGBOK. WO2 Sinclair from Ellon; the OC, Major Cameron from Glamis; The CSM, WO2 Woods from Dunfermline and Sgt Paterson from Ellon.*

After their hard work they were able to take some well-earned rest as they managed to cram in a visit to the famous “Rorke’s Drift” battle site and were treated to an enthralling, near blow by blow, account by a local tour guide on the very spot it all took place in 1879. The epic Stanley Baker film “ZULU” will never be the same!

As well as making new friends and acquaintances with many of the SA national teams, they also re-kindled old alliances with the Scottish affiliated regiments: The Transvaal Scottish (Black Watch), The Cape Town Hldrs (The Highlanders) and the Witwatersrand Rifles (The Royal Scots). The jam packed tour ended with a flying visit to the Transvaal Scottish Headquarters which gave a fascinating insight in to their proud and distinguished history.



*The Shooting team on Ex SPRINGBOK enjoying a short battlefield tour break at Rorke’s Drift in South Africa.*





# **The Black Watch** *(Royal Highland Regiment)* **of Canada**

After an intensely cold winter the soldiers of the regiment are looking forward to spring training and temperatures that are above freezing. However looking back at the last six months, it has been an interesting and challenging training year for the Canadian Black Watch that included effective training, increased vigilance, strong community engagements, and some excellent social events. The training year began early this year with individual and section level live fire training during the summer concentration exercise in Valcartier, Quebec. This was also the first opportunity to begin integrating our newly trained recruits into their infantry sections. The summer training was immediately followed by a buildup of individual readiness and collective training from section to company level, which culminated in the validation of the entire company for offensive ops in winter conditions. Our soldiers and leaders performed very well throughout all of the training activities and evaluations and built up a strong and cohesive operational company that focused on mastering their infantry skills at every step.



*St Andrews Ball promotion – Left to Right – Captains David Serapins and Hovig Maghakian.*

The importance of individual and unit readiness really hit home for all of us this past October when two Canadian soldiers were killed on home soil in St Jean, Quebec and Ottawa, Ontario. Following the second incident, we immediately heightened the security measures at the Armoury and also increased the Force Protection Levels for our members, which included a restriction on the wearing of uniforms in public. This was a wakeup call for many of the soldiers as they immediately realized that, while operations in Afghanistan may be over for Canada, there are still very real threats in the world. However our soldiers were not going to be intimidated or start living in fear and we did not allow the horrible events at the end of October to change our lives. We honoured WO Patrice Vincent and Cpl Nathan Cirillo in our own way and sent representatives to both funerals to pay our respects. We continued to be visible to the community and lead the Remembrance Day Parade in Montreal on 11



*Remembrance Day Parade.*



*Scottish Regiments' Dinner.*

November. Even with the increased security measures for the parade, the attendance at this year's parade saw a marked increase in participation from the community as the soldiers and veterans gathered at the Black Watch Armoury and marched proudly through the streets of Montreal to commemorate our fallen comrades.

On a lighter note, the social activities at the regiment continued without pause. We were happy to host Nick Baker, HM Consul General to Montreal, as our Guest of Honour at the Officers' Annual Reunion Dinner. It was a fine event which gave us the opportunity to welcome him to his new position in Montreal and help maintain our connections with British representatives. We would see him again a few weeks later at the St Andrews Ball. This year's Ball continued to have a strong participation from the regiment, led by the Pipes & Drums and including participation from the officers and ceremonial duties by several of the WOs and Sergeants. It also afforded us the opportunity with the assistance of the Honorary Colonel to promote two of our officers to the rank of Captain in front of the entire Montreal Scottish community during the opening ceremonies.

This past February The Black Watch had the honour of hosting the third annual Scottish Regiments' Dinner in Montreal. This event was a "Gathering of the Clans" that saw more than 80 representatives from most of the Scottish Regiments in Canada. It was an outstanding event that also allowed these like-minded regiments from across the country to forge better relationships and build a common approach to address common issues related to continuing the traditions of our unique regiments within the Canadian Army.

Overall it has been a great training year at The Black Watch (RHR) of Canada and an outstanding start to 2015. We are continuing to increase readiness for operations and working diligently to connect with the key communities in and around the city of Montreal. Through the continued support of our Associations and fellow Scottish Regiments, we continue to keep Canadians across the country aware and interested in the history and traditions of our unique military culture within the Canadian Armed Forces.

#### WATERLOO HIGHLANDER STATUETTE, 1815

The silver plated statuette shown here represents a private soldier of the 42nd (Royal Highland) Regiment of Foot at the battle of Waterloo, 18 June 1815. In his official dispatch dated Waterloo, 19 June 1815, the Duke of Wellington complimented the 42nd with: "The troops of the 5th Division, and those of the Brunswick corps, were long and severely engaged, and conducted themselves with the utmost gallantry. I must particularly mention the 28th, 42nd, 79th and 92nd regiments, and the battalion of Hanoverians." But the cost was high – the *Gallant Forty-Two's* suffering 335 casualties including its commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Robert Macara, killed by French Lancers at Quatre Bras on 17 June.

Expertly crafted by the London silversmith, Carrington & Company, the 18 cm tall statuette was presented to The Black Watch of Canada during its centennial year celebrations which had commenced on 31 January 1962. The sterling silver plaque attached to the base tells the story: "1962 – Presented to The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada in this Centenary Year by their Comrades of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of the British Army in token of their high regard for a close and valued affiliation."

On 1 June 1905, the Canadian Regiment (then known as the 5th Regiment, Royal Scots of Canada, Highlanders), became officially allied with the Black Watch of Scotland, the senior Highland regiment of the British Army. This highly regarded token of a long and close relationship between the two Regiments is always prominently displayed on the head table at all formal dinners of the Officers' Mess of the Black Watch of Canada.

[Earl John Chapman, Canada's Black Watch, 1862-2012: *Legacies of Gallantry & Service* (RHC, Montreal, 2012).]



Waterloo Highlander Statuette, 1815.



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The Black Watch**

*Our fine and outstanding Regiment*

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# HMS MONTROSE

## HMS MONTROSE – IN REFIT

*By Lt Cdr A J Coates RN*

We all know from our own cars that every now and again we need to take them in for a service and an annual MOT; and with all their complex systems, warships are certainly no different. Approximately every 5 years, Royal Navy ships are placed into dry dock in order to allow intrusive maintenance to take place, which would not be possible while the vessels are afloat. Duke-class frigate HMS MONTROSE last docked-down in 2008 in Rosyth, but at the end of last year she was handed over and entered 6 Dock in Devonport Royal Dockyard in Plymouth where Babcock International are now conducting a 15 month refit programme including a number of upgrades to the ship's capabilities.

Naval Service personnel do not belong to their unit for more than a few years, so the majority of the 180 crew left the ship last September, leaving a core of around 45 remaining, mainly engineers and technicians, who will oversee the work being conducted. The remaining Ship's Company have been making the most of the additional time in the UK to catch up on their equipment and individual training, taking outstanding leave, competing in representative sport and getting away on Adventurous Training – including one being invited on a 3 SCOTS expedition to Morocco. Individuals have also been away supporting a number of other frigates, both at sea and alongside in Plymouth, bringing their skills and experience to bear in supporting the rest of the Fleet.

On board equipment upgrades include replacing the aging Radar 996 with the Artisan 3D Target Indication radar – able to detect and

track aircraft at over 100 nautical miles; two updated Fire Control radars which provide an additional electro-optic method of directing salvos for our Sea Wolf point defence missile system; a replacement 4.5" Mk 8 Mod 1 Gun for provision of direct and indirect fire; replacement 30mm Automated Small Calibre Guns; and a brand-new, first of class, Combat System based on modern blade computer servers which integrate the various weapons and sensor data to allow the Warfare team to fight the warship. But it's not just the fighting capabilities that will be upgraded; a new 'chloropac' system will reduce marine growth in the pipe systems; the Galley has been entirely removed for updates; and a programme of deep maintenance is being conducted, including rudder inspections, shaft replacement, replacement or overhaul of all hull valves, revalidation of the hull and structures, and a large re-preservation programme including blasting the whole underside of the ship and re-painting.

The Marine Engineer Officer, Lt Cdr F Ochtman-Corfe RN is the Senior Naval Officer on board during the work and is overseeing the progression of maintenance by Ship's Staff and all the preparations needed before the new team arrive in the Summer. HMS MONTROSE's new Commanding Officer, Commander T Kohn RN will join in April 2015 and she will lead the Ship's Company through the move back on board the ship in the Autumn, undergoing extensive Sea Acceptance Trials of all the equipment and rejoining the Fleet for tasking purposes in Spring 2016 before an intensive period of collective training which will ultimately culminate in the ship deploying overseas for 9 months.



*Barely visible, HMS MONTROSE sits securely on the dry dock bottom within the giant sheds of the Babcock Frigate Refit Complex in Devonport Royal Dockyard. Covered in protective scaffolding, none of the features that mark her out as a warship can be seen.*

# Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force

Honorary Colonel:	The Reverend Professor Norman Drummond CBE
Commandant:	Colonel J M K Erskine MBE
Deputy Commandant:	Lieutenant Colonel C Hubbock
Training Officer:	Major D Rae
Adjutant:	Captain M McCluskey
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Regimental Sergeant Major Instructor P Cameron
Permanent Staff	
Cadet Executive Officer:	Major A C M Potter
Quartermaster:	Captain R G Hallum

The notes from the Battalion for the last edition of the Red Hackle were necessarily long because of the varied and extensive level of activity the cadets had done over the reporting period. There is an understandable assumption that the autumn and winter months are the quieter times of the year. However, while true, the following notes which cover these seasons indicate that the cadet world is always busy with a large variety of activities in which the cadets can take part. On top of what is reported below, the routine of Detachment training evenings and Company weekends which are so important to ensure the cadets do the mandatory training also carry on.

The focus in September from a Battalion perspective was the build up to and the taking part in the Brigade Military Skills Competition. Once again Major David Gill pulled a team together. Unfortunately, for various reasons and circumstances, the team selection and training did not go as smoothly as in the past which meant that the team which entered the competition was not as prepared as it could have been. The team acquitted itself well although the mix up in the scoring meant the final results were subject to dispute – a situation that remains unclear even as these notes are being written.

On 8 October the Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, Brigadier Mel Jameson CBE, officially opened the combined Cadet Centre in Crieff. This centre has been very well received and is to be shared by the Battalion's Crieff Detachment and the local Air Cadet Organisation. The evening was very well attended by cadets from both youth organisations and their families. As well as the Lord Lieutenant, the Provost of Perth and Kinross, Mrs Liz Grant, other councillors, a number of members of the various cadet organisations and those involved in the construction of the centre came to the Opening Ceremony. The

Battalion and in particular the Crieff Detachment are very grateful to the Highland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for funding the project. The new centre is a tremendous place and one in which the cadets are justifiably proud and enjoy attending.

Autumn is the time for competitions. The ACFA Swimming Competition took place on 6 September in the Tollcross swimming pool which had recently been used for the Commonwealth Games. There was a good turn out from the Battalion and some notable successes. Cadet Amy Fleming (Perth Viewlands, now Stanley) came 1st in the Junior Females Butterfly and Backstroke races. She followed this up by winning the Junior Relay race with Cadet Lance Corporal Teigan Brown (Perth RLC), Cadet Amy Russell (Dunfermline) and Cadet Olivia Marshall (Kirkcaldy). In the senior female competitions Cadet Ellis Johnston (Military Band) won the Butterfly competition and her sister Cadet Blythe Johnston (also of the Military Band) came second in the Breaststroke and Individual Medley races. As a consequence the Johnston sisters were subsequently selected to be part of the Scottish team in the National competitions where the team came fourth.

The Piping and Drumming Concentration took place at Redford Barracks from 11-18 October. The final day was competition day. The Battalion was well represented in the various events which the Deputy Commandant watched. In the piping competitions the Pipe Major, Isla Stout came second in the Piobaireachd Competition while the Piping Quartet team came third. Three cadets were awarded prizes in the drumming competitions; Cadet Lance Corporal Robbie Mitchell came second in the Intermediate Snare, Cadet Chelsea Nelson came second in the Novice Tenor while Cadet Corporal Scott Coyle came third in the Open Snare. In addition Pipe Major Isla Stout won the Gordons Cup for the best bearing and turn out and Cadet Corporal Amy Paterson was the top student in the Drum Major's course.

On 25 October the Battalion entered teams for the ACFA Cross Country and 5-a-side football competitions. While everyone did well, special mention must be made of Cadet Corporal Findlay Watson from Crieff who came 2nd in the Cross Country Race.

At the end of October Mrs Margaret Dean kindly came to Glenrothes to see the Fife Company's cadets for the last time before she retired as the Lord Lieutenant of Fife. She has been a remarkable supporter of the cadets during her tenure and it was a real honour that she agreed to come for a farewell visit. She was greeted by the Pipes and Drums playing outside before she met the cadets and adults who were there. There



*Colonel Erskine, Mrs Margaret Dean and Pipe Major Isla Stout pictured after the Lord Lieutenant of Fife had been presented with a pipe tune composed for her by Pipe Major Stout. This was to mark her retirement as Lord Lieutenant of Fife.*





*Corporal Jordan Skirving, Pipe Major Isla Stout, Sergeant Alexander Cunningham, Drum Major Amy Paterson and Corporal Scott Coyle all of The Black Watch Battalion ACF Pipes and Drums who took part in the Basel Tattoo in December 2014.*



*Members of the Crieff Detachment marched through Crieff under the command of Staff Sergeant John Douglas on Remembrance Day 2014.*

was a good turnout of adults and amongst the number were four of her ex Lord Lieutenant's Cadets. The Pipe Major had composed a pipe tune specifically for the occasion and there was no doubt Mrs Dean was visibly moved when Isla Stout played it and then presented her with a framed copy of the tune. While the Cadets in Fife are very sad to say goodbye to Mrs Dean, they are looking forward to supporting the new Lord Lieutenant of Fife whenever asked to do so.

Major Sue Truscott once again took a large party of adults and cadets to Belgium over the October half term. This year a party from the Angus and Dundee Battalion Army Cadet Force joined the group along with their Commandant. While this trip is always popular and moving, this year was possibly more poignant than previous ones because of the interest everyone is showing in the centenary of the 1st World War.

The focus for the first two weeks in November is always the lead up to and participation in Remembrance Sunday. It is always a very busy period for the cadets who, in some places, are the only visible uniformed presence. This year on Remembrance Sunday there was a great turn out of the cadets at all locations and in particular in Perth where the City Council decided to use this occasion as the focus to mark the outbreak of the 1st World War.

Fundraising is an ongoing activity within the Army Cadet Force with the intention of either increasing detachment funds, enabling cadets to go on trips or to help raise funds for local or national charities. Some of this fundraising goes unheralded but it is always good when the efforts are recognised. One example of what can be achieved was when the Newburgh and Kinross detachments raised over £590.00 for SSAFA on 27 December. What a great effort to do that between Christmas and New Year.

The beginning of a new calendar year is the chance for the Battalion to take stock and set the scene for the following twelve months. At the end of January there was an adult training day followed by a Burns Supper. While not every adult could turn up, it was a productive day and enjoyable evening, with various members of the Battalion having speaking parts. However, possibly the highlight was SI Dave Swash singing Ae Fond Kiss. The Pipes and Drums and the Military Band entertained everyone to their usual high standard and were very much appreciated.



*Cadets of the Blairgowrie Detachment are pictured before collecting for Poppy Scotland in Blairgowrie.*



*Members of the military band took part in a Remembrance Service at Kincardine Parish Church in Tulliallan.*

# Association News

Royal Patron:	HRH The Prince Charles Duke of Rothesay KG KT GCB OM
President:	Brigadier M S Jameson CBE Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross – until 18 April 2015 and succeeded by Mr Bob Duncan
Vice Presidents:	Mrs Georgiana Osborne Lord Lieutenant of Angus Mr Bob Duncan Lord Lieutenant of the City of Dundee Mr Robert Balfour, FRICS Lord Lieutenant of Fife
Chairman:	Colonel A Murdoch, TD
Vice Chairman and Trustee:	Lieutenant Colonel R M Riddell
Secretary and Trustee:	Major R J W Proctor, MBE
Trustee:	Lieutenant Colonel T A Coles, MBE
Trustee:	Major J M K Erskine, MBE
Trustee:	Major J D Monteith, MBE
Trustee:	Captain B M Osborne
Trustee:	Mr G Hay
Executive Committee:	Lieutenant Colonel F L Beattie, MBE Lieutenant Colonel M Smith, MBE Captain A McEwen Lieutenant Colonel J A Menzies Lieutenant Colonel R I Rose, TD Mr R Scott, JP Mr G Kennedy
Welfare Committee:	Lieutenant Colonel R I Rose, TD – Chairman Major R J W Proctor, MBE – Secretary Mr J Baird Mr J Devlin Major G Grant, MBE, MM Captain T Graham Mr R Scott, JP Mrs I Shivas Mr G Ross Captain A McEwen Mr W Barr Major B Dickson

## ANGUS BRANCH

President:	Lieutenant Colonel Fred Beattie MBE
Vice President:	Major David McMicking LVO
Chairman:	Major Ronnie Proctor MBE
Vice Chairman:	Mr Peter Tindal
Secretary:	Mr Tom McLuskey
Treasurer:	Mr Jim Penny

The past period has again been a busy one and monthly meetings continue to be well attended by members from as far afield as Aberdeenshire, Perthshire, Dundee and North Fife as well as those who live in Angus. We have also been privileged to welcome WO2 Carlisle from The Black Watch Battalion to one of our meetings where he gave a detailed account of what was happening in today's army and The Black Watch in particular. This was well received by all.

The El Alamein dinner was again a great success with RSM Marshall, Sgt Blake, Pte Lyons and Pte Beats from the Black Watch Battalion all attending. Tom McCluskey gave a short dissertation on the Battle of Nonneboschen and cleverly linked this event with the 1st Battalion's achievement nearly 40 years later at El Alamein. RSM Marshall regaled us with the Battalion's involvement in training the Libyan forces during Op Vocate.

The Branch has been involved in several Great War Centennial Services including presentations to numerous schools by Fraser Brown and the Branch Chairman. The involvement of the Chairman and Secretary in the Commemorative Stand Easy Project which supports the rehabilitation of current injured Service personnel through the genre of theatre using the 4th (City Of Dundee) battalion as a base. The most prestigious event however was the attendance at short notice of Lieutenant Colonel Mike Smith and John Glen our Standard Bearer at the 100th anniversary of the Flooding of the Yser Plain which held up the German Advance in 1914. John was tasked to drill the other Standard Bearers both British and Belgian to ensure that they were all in good order in front of King Philippe of Belgium. Well done John.

The Branch was represented at the various Remembrance Services throughout the county where wreaths were laid. The Branch Standard was paraded at the Annual Festival of Remembrance in the Caird Hall Dundee, Powrie Brae, Mill O'Mains and Arbroath and at Balhousie Castle. Bob Mitchell a National Serviceman who served in Kenya and Berlin was asked to go back to his Alma Mater, Brechin High School on the 11th of November and gave an account of how he felt that the



*RSM Marshall, Sergeant Blake and Privates Lyons and Beats attended the Angus Branch El Alamein Dinner and Ruairaidh Proctor carried the new Branch Pipe Banner.*





*The Committee and guests who attended the Angus Branch Burns Supper.*



*Private Beats (left) acted as Posey Nancy and Bob Mitchell addressed the haggis at the Angus Branch Burns Supper.*

Great War had affected the local population including the pupils of the school. This went down well with the pupils and staff alike.

The annual distribution of Christmas Comforts was again organised by John Glen and he was ably assisted by Branch members and members of The Black Watch Battalion to carry out the distribution. The recipients were most appreciative of our efforts.

Our Annual Burns Supper was held on the 17th of January and was most successful. Bob Mitchell is to be congratulated in "shoe horning" seventy six members and their guests into the Royal British Legion Clubrooms in Forfar; he also received a "Mention in Despatches" for the excellent production of the Athol Brose and taking over the Chairman's Role of Addressing "The Haggis". Peter Tindal (Tam o' Shanter), Billy Whytock (Soldier's Return), Mike Mooney (for his musical Toast to the Lassies), Allison Summers for her witty reply, Bob Myles (His Ain Work, Ronnie Proctor (Immortal Memory and chairing the evening), Ruairaidh Proctor (Piping) and Rab Simpson for producing wonderful souvenir programmes, are all to be thanked and congratulated for their sterling effort.

Four members of the Battalion also attended the evening and Pte Beats was volunteered to carry out the duties of Posey Nancy and ably assisted his father Kenny who has taken on the role of caterer for the Branch. The Forfar Legion and Kenny Beats are to be thanked for their hospitality and service respectively.

Sadly we must report on the deaths of the following Branch members whose obituaries appear elsewhere in the magazine; Ian (Nye) Ross, Brian Kane, and Frank Walker; to whose families we send our sympathies and condolences.

On a lighter note, Dougie Cunningham was warmly welcomed back into the fold after a remarkable recovery from serious illness. We also welcome the following new Branch members; Lieutenant Angus Bullen, Sgt Blake, Pte Lyons and Pte Beats all from The Black Watch Battalion and hope that their stay will be long and happy as they and their comrades are the future of the Branch and the Association as a whole.

**R J W Proctor and T McCluskey**

### **DUNDEE BRANCH**

Remembrance Sunday parade was held as usual this year at the 4/5th Battalion statue on Powrie Brae. There was a large turnout by not only Branch members and A Company, but also of politicians of all persuasions and the general public. Wreathes were laid by Colonel Alex Murdoch for the Branch and by A Company. Hospitality was laid on at The Black Watch Club and several members then moved to the bar at Oliver Barracks to join A Company colleagues.

Branch members attended the El Alamein Dinner on 15 November 2014 in the Legion Club in Forfar. Many thanks to Ronnie Proctor and his team for an excellent evening. We also attended the Angus Branch Burns Night on 17 January.

The Branch held its Annual Red Hackle Dinner at The Black Watch Club on Friday 30 January, with a good attendance. We welcomed General Irwin and Deputy Lord Provost Christina Roberts; General Irwin spoke about the Regiment and Major Ronnie Proctor spoke about the Association. Major Tim Carmichael spoke briefly of his experience of entering 'Civvy Street'. We also welcomed, as we do every year, several of our comrades from the Liverpool Scottish, who also joined a large Branch contingent at the A Company Burns Supper the following evening.

The Perth Branch Burns Supper was held in the Salutation Hotel on 7th February. The usual suspects, ie Willie Barr, Dave Ritchie, Joe Barton, and Roland Rose attended from the Branch.

The Branch AGM was held in Arthursstone Terrace on 22rd February 2015.

The office Bearers elected were:-

Honorary President:	Colonel Alex Murdoch
President:	Major Dave Ritchie
Vice President:	Major Mike Lindsay

Chair: Mr Willie Barr  
 Vice Chair: Mr Alan Williamson  
 Secretary: Mr Colin Adam  
 Treasurer: Mr Lennie Mitchell

The Branch continues to hold its monthly meetings in the Black Watch Club in Arthursstone Terrace on the last Sunday of each month at 12.00 Noon. All serving or ex members of the Regiment are welcome to attend.

**D M Ritchie**

### **EDINBURGH, LOTHIANS' AND BORDERS' BRANCH**

President: Lieutenant Colonel Julian McElhinney  
 Chairman: Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies  
 Secretary: Major Alex Stewart BEM  
 Treasurer: Captain Ramsay Macdonald  
 Events Coordinator: Mr Rory McIntyre

To mark the first anniversary of the reforming of the Branch a Ceilidh Night was held in early January 2015. For some members who have settled in the Edinburgh area, this was their first opportunity to socialize with comrades they had not seen or heard of for many years. A number of former members of the Ceilidh Band from the Berlin and Hong Kong days, gathered to provide entertainment for the evening and it was great to see the likes of, Cammy Goodall, Davey McMullan, Jock Menzies and Rory McGuire back on stage. Also a special mention for our guest artist, Ally Alcorn who kept guests entertained with his repertoire of great songs. During the open mic session there was also great solo performances from Julia McGuire, Alex Stewart and Jim Dalrymple.

A number of our members including our Branch President served during the Iraq War in 2003 and were present during the actions in Basrah that resulted in the award of the most recent Black Watch Battle Honour. The annual Branch Dinner is to be called the Al Basrah Dinner.

As a Branch we hope to improve our knowledge of the many connections that exist between The Black Watch and the local area. One of our first challenges is to trace the grave of Private James Davis VC. Private Davis was born in Edinburgh and served with The Royal Highlanders during the Indian Mutiny. He was awarded the VC for his actions at Fort Ruhya and his medals are currently housed in the Lord Ashcroft Gallery, Imperial War Museum, London. Private Davis died in 1893 and is reportedly buried in Merchiston Cemetery Edinburgh. Following further research it is hoped that we will be able to provide a full report for the next edition of The Red Hackle.

For anyone interested in joining our Branch, we meet regularly at the Scots Guards Club, Haymarket. This location is a central point in



*Jim and Tracey Dalrymple.*



*Alan Cammock and Richy (Robbo) Robertson with their ladies.*

the city and is on the main route for buses, trains and the tram service. Our main points of contacts for those wishing to join are Major Alex Stewart and Mr Rory McIntyre. Forthcoming events are: The Al Basrah Dinner which will take place on 9 May 2015, Armed Forces Day Parade 27 June 2015 and Remembrance Day Parade and Lunch on 08 November 2015.

**J A Menzies**

### **THE FIFE BRANCH**

It seems to have been a very quiet reporting period, yet I feel on a personal side I have hardly stopped to draw breath. We started off in Falkland, where the local Residents Association invited us to take part in the dedication of their War Memorial. I am pleased to say, a fair showing of Hackles was on parade that day, with some coming from as far as Aberdeen to join in the celebrations. Supporting us, were our own Cadet Company, the Pipe Band of The Scots Guards Association and the British Legion and the residents of the village. We marched from the Community Hall to the Village Green where the unveiling was to take place. On arrival we formed up in front of the memorial and witnessed a weel kent face, (Mrs Margaret Dean) do the honours. It was then back to the hall where the residents had supplied some food and refreshment for those taking part. I am pleased we were part of this important event.

We then did some globetrotting, firstly to Perth and the Remembrance Service; from there it was east to Dundee for the Red Hackle Dinner and "Willie's steak pie", then back to Perth for their annual Burns Supper. Members from the Branch also decided to support the new Edinburgh Branch at a fund raising Ceilidh. The main event for the Branch was the Rhine Crossing Dinner; it was a bit special this year as it was the 70th Anniversary and to mark the occasion we had as one of our guests Mr Bruce Rollo who is the son of Major Landale Rollo who was the first Company Commander to cross the river. He along with many others were mentioned in our house on many occasions as my own father was 7th Battalion. I tried to find a pipe tune marking the event and hoped it could be played on the night but even with the assistance of Major Steven Small and Pipey Snaddon we could not find one. I then asked Major Small to compose one for us. Major Small had a Kirkcaldy Piper on the Pipe Majors' Course at that time, namely Pipe/Cpl James Muir and he had written a tune



*Captain Ramsay Macdonald and his wife Anne.*





*From Left to Right Rob Scott, Michael Madden, John Campbell, Tom Elder, Arthur Duke, Robert Young, et al who attended the Dedication Service at Falkland on Sunday 2nd November 2014.*



*Hugh Beattie and George Ireland enjoying the hospitality after the Dedication Service of the new war memorial in Falkland.*



*Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies, Jock Gilfillan and Jona Johnston at the Rhine Crossing Dinner.*



*Tom Graham and Kenny Munro at the Rhine Crossing Dinner.*



*Corporal James Muir plays his composition "The 7th Battalion Black Watch Crossing the Rhine".*

for our Branch. I was elated and requested Corporal Muir join us on the evening and play it for us. The tune was to be called the 7th Battalion Black Watch Crossing the Rhine. Not only did he play it for us on the evening but he presented us with a framed copy and its copyright. A Branch treasure. Our other guest was the Reverend Alex Forsyth who was kind enough to say grace before our meal. To mark the occasion I had some Whisky Glasses etched with the Regimental Badge and Fife Branch on one side and "to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Rhine Crossing 23rd March 1945" on the reverse. They were appreciated by everyone. On a sadder note, we have had to attend a lot more funerals, one of which was our oldest soldier Piper Jock McRae who died aged 104. His nephew John has donated a Regimental Badge on polished granite to be used at future functions of the Branch; we thank the McRae family for their thoughts.

**R M Scott**

### **THE HIGHLAND BRANCH**

President:	Major (Retd) John Stevenson
Chairman:	Joe Barbour
Vice chairman:	Donald Etherington
Secretary:	Gordon Kennedy

The Highland Branch have had a quieter period and we have said goodbye to Thomas (Fergie) Ferguson who has recently completed his service and moved to Dundee (Dundee Branch get recruiting). The Branch has welcomed back WO2 (RQMS) Kevin Stacey who returned from Brecon and a spell at Bassingbourn.

Branch members attended the annual Remembrance parade in Inverness where our resident standard bearer John Anderson was substituted by Eric Mills who proved to be a very good replacement; John thought it was time to get back in the rank and file for a wee change.

At the end of November we managed to have a small gathering of members plus wives attend the Legion in Inverness for pre Xmas drinks prior to the party season kicking off.

Our next main priority is our annual Aberfeldy Ladies Dinner Night which this year will take place on Saturday the 9th of May, in Fort George, with the kind permission of the RSM and Mess members. Unfortunately a couple of our serving members will be unable to attend due to the Cyprus tour (we wish them well in the sunshine).

The Branch is still looking for new blood to join, so anyone who wishes to do so please come along to the Community Centre in Wimberley Way, Inverness on the second Tuesday of every month.

**Joe Barbour**

### **LONDON BRANCH**

After 15 years I sit down to write my final Red Hackle notes before handing over as Branch Secretary to Mike Smith.

I have apologised previously for repetition but make no apologies for repeating the photo of the London Branch group at Tyne Cot Cemetery. It is a photograph to evoke memories of a good day and a happy time as since then, sadly, the Branch has lost four outstanding



members who were with us on that day: Peter Watson MC, centre of photo in the wheelchair, Andrew Maitland, behind Peter's chair, Norman Topliss, second from the right, and Colonel Ian Ker, on the far right of the picture. Obituaries for these members appear elsewhere in this edition but suffice to say they will all be greatly missed in the Branch. I served in Ian's platoon in Don Company in Cyprus and it was he who recruited me to the post of Branch Secretary in 2000. His Thanksgiving Service near Warminster was attended by a gathering of more than 300 people, many of course being Black Watch members from all corners of the UK. Ian would, I know, have smiled at my misfortune that day. At the reception following his service my overcoat was one of many hung in the hall. Towards the end of the afternoon I discovered that the only grey overcoat remaining was not my overcoat, with my car keys in the pocket, but a much newer model without my car keys. Thank goodness Bridget Ker and her family and friends gave me food and shelter until one of my daughters was able to bring the spare keys to Wiltshire the

following morning. Bless you all! I was reunited with coat and keys, which had ended up in Cumbria, some 4 days later, so all's well.

November is always a busy month, this being the month for the Remembrance events in London and when we hold the Branch Dinner which is our main social event of the year. Our 2014 Ypres Dinner was a good one, with 88 members and guests sitting down to enjoy an excellent evening at the Victory Services Club. The main guest was Lieutenant Colonel Al Steele, CO of The Black Watch Battalion, who we are pleased to say came mob handed, bringing a group of eleven officers and senior ranks from the battalion with him. It was good to be able to welcome them to the London Branch and we hope that in the future, perhaps when serving at the MOD, some will become Branch members. The Association Chairman, Colonel Alex Murdoch, also attended the Dinner where he kindly presented Jim Keating with a set of Regimental cuff links. The success of the evening was in no small measure due to the hard work of our Dinner Secretary Ian Howarth and his wife Ondree and to the Branch 'QM' Ian Elphick and his wife Dot, who set up their stall of BW Christmas items and other popular regimental goods they had transported to the VSC.

There was a good turnout of Red Hackles at Westminster Abbey for the Field of Remembrance and the member of the Royal Family present in 2014 and reviewing the Plots was HRH Prince Harry. Our 'front men' were; for the BW Plot, Joe Hubble and for the Tyneside Scottish Plot Dan Holbrough. Dan is a serving member of the Tyneside Scottish Regiment who works in London and is a Branch member. For the first time in living memory the Reviewing Officer swept past Joe without stopping to speak to him. One member at the rear of the Plot was heard to remark "Oh my God, Harry's blanked Joe. Unbelievable!"

The London Branch made the arrangements for the Black Watch contingent at the Cenotaph Parade. The BW turnout on Remembrance Sunday was quite good, but small in comparison to that of some of the other Scottish Regimental Associations. We could still do with more Red Hackles on parade to swell the numbers. Hopefully in 2015 this might be you! We are particularly grate-



*Red Hackles muster at Horseguards.*



*The London Branch at Tyne Cot Cemetery May 2014.*





*Jim and General Andy share a joke – Brigadier Donald and Charlie Taylor look on.*

ful to Kevin Murphy and three other members of the Association who travelled from Perth to be on parade.

And finally, (there always has to be an “and finally”) forty five Branch members gathered in the Guards Officers’ Mess at Wellington Barracks in March for the Branch AGM and lunch. This excellent venue was arranged for us by Branch Vice President Tim Coles, whose Soldiers’ Charity The ABF office is housed in the barracks. After the meeting and before a most enjoyable lunch, a presentation was made to the outgoing Honorary Secretary for his long service and good conduct (in lieu of the LS&GC medal he never got) when the London Branch President, General Andy Watson, presented Jim Keating with a Black Watch Marquette, the superb replica of the WW1 Jock at Black Watch Corner. As commented by the Branch Chairman, Brigadier Donald Wilson, it was like stepping back in time some 60 years, when General Andy commanded Don Company (the Golden Don) and Jim was one of his corporals. Oh how time flies! Through the medium of these notes I would like to say a sincere thank you to all who contributed to this wonderful gift. Thank you all very much.

**Jim Keating**

## **NEWCASTLE BRANCH**

### **Branch Dinner**

October saw the culmination of our efforts to organise the 30th Branch Dinner. The death of Bob Chantler in February 2014 had left a huge gap in our organisational know-how and the decision to have a dinner was taken somewhat late in the day. Our new Social Secretary quickly arranged a venue, however, the availability of dates was not determined until training and operational requirements were resolved and invitations and ticket sales suffered from this delay. The Association Chairman Colonel A Murdoch and his wife Ina were our Guests of Honour and we also had John and Mrs King who should have been accompanied by Dr Tom Renouf and Kathleen. Tom, who was to have responded to one of the toasts, had fallen and broken his hip just days prior to the event and his place on the top table was taken by Mr J D Williamson who was accom-

panied by his wife Moira. It turned out that Colonel Murdoch and Ina had attended the same school and been married in the same Church as John and Moira Williamson. Donald had served with the KOSB, in Korea and has been Secretary of the local branch of the Korean Veterans’ Association for some years. Major Alex Lang of the Royal Engineers was our host for the evening and we all had a splendid time.



*The Newcastle Branch 30th annual dinner – Colonel Alex Murdoch in conversation with Donald and Moira Williamson.*

## Remembrance

On Saturday 8th November, the Branch laid a wreath on a World War 2 Black Watch War Grave in Gateshead Cemetery and was represented on Remembrance Day, at the Eldon Square War Memorial, Newcastle, where a wreath was laid by the Vice Chairman, Mr Thomas Dignam.

## Working with other organisations

During the year, links have been strengthened with the Tyneside Scottish Association and established with the newly formed Tyneside Irish Brigade Association. During the First World War, the Tyneside Scottish and the Tyneside Irish Brigades formed part of the Northumberland Fusiliers, whilst the Reformed Tyneside Scottish became Black Watch prior to the opening of hostilities in the Second World War. We took part in a joint parade at Eldon Square on St Patrick's Day and attended a joint parade to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War.

The Branch were invited to attend a Burns Supper hosted by 204 (Tyneside Scottish) Battery RA (V), an invitation which obtained an enthusiastic response. It was an enjoyable evening with some unusual touches.

**Malcolm Dunn**

## PERTH BRANCH

President: Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Roddy Riddell  
Chairman: Captain Alan McEwen  
Secretary: Jim Sandilands  
Treasurer: Fraser Brown  
Social Convener: Ally Alcorn

Over the past few months the Perth Branch has had a significant turn around and has had a successful increase in members attending Branch Meetings and members taking part in our varied social events.

Firstly going back to October we held a very well attended Croix de Guerre Dinner in the Queens Hotel in Perth; Major Jordan – Barber, The Black Watch Battalion Second-in-Command and WO1 (RSM) Jason Dickson from 7 SCOTS were among our guests for this very relaxed evening.

Members of the Perth and District Naval Association also attended and once again representatives from the Dundee and Fife Branches. Christmas time was thrust upon us and as usual the Perth Branch had their Xmas function in the Ex Servicemen's Club Perth and a fine buffet was organised by Roy Brown 41 and entertainment from Ally Alcorn.

After the festive period we as a Branch always look forward into the New Year, working towards our Burns Supper! However before the Burns Night the Branch members attended a ceilidh night with the Edinburgh Branch and also the Dundee Branch Red Hackle Dinner night in January.

On Saturday the 7th of February we held our Annual Burns Supper at the Salutation Hotel in Perth and one hundred and fifty five past and present members attended this event. Five members of Charlie (Fire Support) Company of The Black Watch Battalion, who are now affiliated to the Perth Branch, joined us for the night.

However our thanks must go to Jock Gilfillan as our main speaker on the night; his Immortal Memory was of the highest calibre and the rendition of Tam O Shanter was extremely entertaining! A world class performance without a doubt and may I take this opportunity to thank all the speakers and performers who played their part in a successful evening. The next Burns Night for the Perth Branch will be on Saturday the 6th of February 2016 at the Salutation Hotel Perth.

On the 15th of March we held our AGM with a lovely lunch after and it brought home just how well our Branch is moving forward, however we still need to reach out to the many ex members of the Regiment that are still unaware of our existence. We meet on the third Tuesday of every month in the Ex Servicemen's Club Perth at 7pm.

Looking forward we have coming up as a Branch a trip to the Grouse Experience on the 26th of April at Crieff, with a bit of lunch after!

Our main focus will be on the 15th of August as we prepare for our trip to the Edinburgh Tattoo; 49 members and partners will enjoy a high tea at the Ex-Servicemen's Club in Edinburgh before attending the early performance of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

**Ally Alcorn**



*Some of the members and guests at the Perth Branch Burns' Supper.*



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Established in 1999, RIFT are the UK's leading tax refund experts. RIFT has reclaimed over £14 million for Armed Forces personnel in the last year and in excess of £80 million for a range of sectors including construction, professional sports, oil and gas plus health personnel

### What is the claim actually for?

It's for tax relief on the cost of traveling between your main residence and your workplace. Your main residence is the place you go home to when you're on leave.

### Can I claim for travel whilst I was training?

It will depend on the type of training. HMRC has strict rules about what is classed as an allowable expense around training. If it was an essential part of your contractual duties of employment then we might be able to claim for the traveling expense.

### I already get expenses, can I still claim?

If you receive 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles plus 25p per mile thereafter, and you haven't paid tax on these amounts, great - you're being fully reimbursed. If it's anything less, you're entitled to claim the difference which is where we can help.

### A colleague told me that service personnel can't claim back taxes, is this true?

DIN '2015DIN01-005' has been issued to service personnel to officially confirm that tax refunds for travel are claimable. It also states that you can use an agent to make a claim for you.

RIFT will act as your agent, providing an end to end service if you don't have the time or are not comfortable dealing with the technical legislation set out by HMRC. This supports the previous formal confirmation we received from the Ministry of Defence which can be read here: <http://www.riftrefunds.co.uk/helpand-advice/mod-communications/>

### Can't I do my own claim?

Yes. But please be aware that you will need to comply with the legislation on temporary workplaces and have the time to liaise directly with HMRC. However if you don't apply the rules correctly and claim more than you are entitled to, HMRC may seek to recover some or all of your refund.

### Can HMRC demand the money back?

Yes, HMRC can if you've claimed too much. The difference from doing it yourself is that we assess your claim thoroughly against the legislation and providing you give us full and accurate information, we offer you our RIFT Guarantee. This means that if any money recovered is repayable to HMRC, RIFT will make the repayment at no cost to you. We will also defend any HMRC enquiry free of charge - it's all part of our service

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