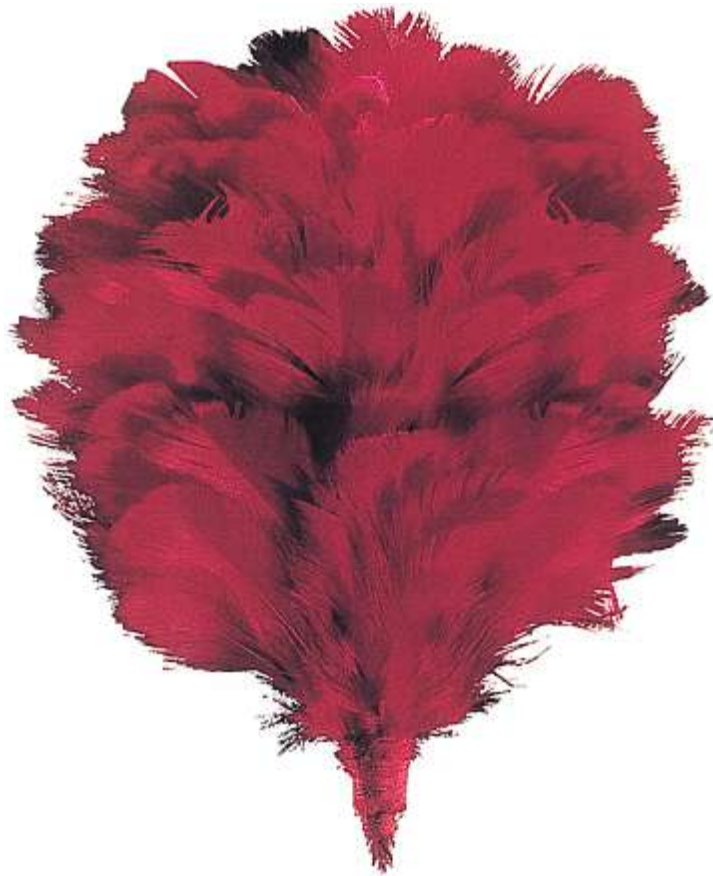


No. 161
May 2016



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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*



*Balhouses Castle will host Poppies: Weeping Window from 30 June to 25 September 2016.
This hugely popular project by artist Paul Cummins was first displayed at The Tower of London in 2015.*

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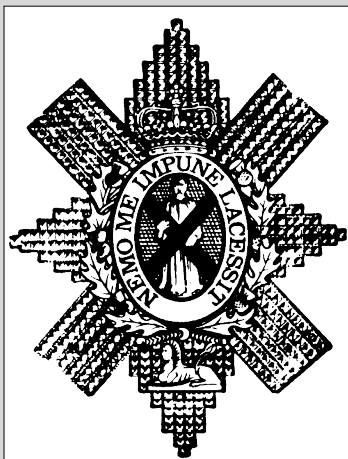
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THE RED HACKLE



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The Black Watch
(Royal Highland Regiment)
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Published for The Black Watch



METHOD PUBLISHING
Sutherland Press House, Golspie,
Sutherland, Scotland KW10 6RA

Telephone (01408) 633871
Fax (01408) 633876

to whom all enquiries regarding
advertising should be addressed.

Editorial Matter and Illustrations
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Design and Typography
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Editorial

The best and most recent news is that Balhousie Castle will host the “Poppies: Weeping Window” by artist Paul Cummins and designer Tom Piper. Weeping Window is a cascade comprising several thousand handmade ceramic poppies which will “pour” from one of the castle turret windows to the ground below. This project is a wonderful opportunity for the Castle and Museum and will run from 30 June-25 September 2016 and I hope that many readers will come and visit this extraordinary display or volunteer to help host the visitors.

The Association has been busy and the many social events show just how vibrant the organisation is. The normal round of Branch Dinners, Burns’ Suppers and the Edinburgh and Lothians Branch ceilidh bring together many old friends. Perhaps the most interesting gatherings were the OP BANNER Dinners that were held in Perth and London. The two dinners celebrated the fact that the 1st Battalion had first deployed to Northern Ireland in 1970 and 45 years had passed since that tour. We also remembered Lance Corporal Edwin Charnley who was killed in Belfast in November 1971 and Private Mark Carnie who was killed serving with 1st Battalion The Queen’s Own Highlanders in July 1978.

The Chairman of the Association, Colonel Alex Murdoch also led a pilgrimage to Auchy Les Mines to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Loos.

The Black Watch Battalion has undergone a period of reorganisation after it reformed in November, having returned from a successful UN tour in Cyprus. Their focus has moved to re-role training, as Light Mechanised Infantry. This has required a period of amongst other things, driver training, as vehicles such as the Husky, RWMIK+ and Foxhound are to be used.

28 March 2016 marked the tenth anniversary of the major reorganisation of the Infantry and Colonel David Arbuthnott has written a thoughtful article called “The Tenth Anniversary”; Tommy Moles has researched the 51st Highland Division tactical flashes and seeks your help in identifying what flash the 1st Battalion The Black Watch wore on their battledress in 1940; he has written another interesting piece on the Glen Orchy Rifle Corps.

Finally, The Friends of the Museum have had an extensive programme of lectures over the winter months and the programme for 2016 looks equally interesting.

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 Regimental Association 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

DATE	FORECAST OF EVENTS 2016/2017 EVENT	LOCATION
2016		
23 April	BW Association AGM	Perth
23 April	WOs and Sgts Dining Club AGM and Dinner	Perth
7 May	Al Basrah Dinner	Edinburgh
14 May	Aberfeldy Dinner	Inverness
20 May	Friends' Cocktail Party	Balhousie Castle
4 June	Officers and Ladies Lunch	Ballathie House Hotel
13 June	Officers and Ladies Lunch	London
14 June	Golf v A&SH	Roxburghe
17 June	Black Watch Association Golf Meeting	Muckhart Golf Club
18 June	Regimental Reunion	Perth
01 July	Somme Vigil	Edinburgh
21 July	Ticonderoga Day	Fort George
25-27 July	LCpl Morrison Interment	Nr Arras
28 July	Somme Memorial Service	Thiepval War Memorial
18 September	Angus Branch Standard Rededication	Newtyle
18 September	Fife Branch Alma Lunch	Kirkcaldy
1 October	Perth Branch Croix de Guerre Dinner	Salutation Hotel Perth
22 October	Angus Branch El Alamein Dinner	RBL Forfar
28 October	Officers Gathering Dinner	Perth
4 November	National Service Dinner	Perth
11 November	Balhousie Castle Remembrance Service	Perth
24 November	London Branch Dinner	Victory Services Club
17 December	Officers' Regimental Ball	London tbc
2017		
7 January	Edinburgh Branch Ceilidh Night	Edinburgh
20 January	Dundee Branch Red Hackle Dinner	Dundee
21 January	51 Highland Burns Supper	Queens Bks Perth
28 January	Angus Branch Burns Supper	RBL Forfar
4 February	Perth Branch Burns Supper	Salutation Hotel, Perth
8 March	London Branch AGM & Lunch	London
17 March	Rhine Crossing Dinner (Fife Branch)	Kirkcaldy
21 April	Melvin VC Ceremony	Kirriemuir
29 April	BW Association AGM	Perth
6 May	Al Basrah Dinner	Edinburgh
19/20 August	3rd Battle of Ypres commemoration	tbc

CONGRATULATIONS

To Major W A Colquhoun on his provisional selection for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in 2016.

To Major R F Sandford on his provisional selection for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel 2016.

To Captain T J Towler on the award of the QCVS in the Operational Awards List. He served from November 2014-May 2015 as the SO3 Current Ops Plans in the Combined Joint Task Force which was responsible for international joint operations in Iraq and Syria.

OFFICERS COMMISSIONED INTO THE BLACK WATCH (ROYAL HIGHLAND REGIMENT) AND STILL SERVING ON 28 MARCH 2016

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 52 officers have retired and as at 28 March 2016 the list consists of 24 names:

Brig A J Aitken
A/Brig J C Roddis
Col R R E Lindsay
Col L R MacDuff
Col B M A Wrench
Lt Col A V Cooper
Lt Col D C Close
Lt Col M J F Ewing
Lt Col R S J Hedderwick
Lt Col A D MacGillivray
Lt Col A M Philp
Lt Col R F Sandford
Lt Col D M Sheldrick
Lt Col N K G Tomlin
Maj J R P Bailey
Maj C M B Broadbent
Maj D W Bruce
Maj W A Colquhoun
Maj N P Colquhoun
Maj B Cooper
Maj A J Colville
Maj S P Dallard
Maj J E Kelmanson
Maj S G Small

Retires 2 July 2017

INSTALLATION OF MAJOR GENERAL M L RIDDELL-WEBSTER CBE DSO AS GOVERNOR OF EDINBURGH CASTLE

The last edition of the Red Hackle Magazine alerted readers to the appointment of Major General Mike Riddell-Webster as the Governor of Edinburgh Castle. Major General Riddell-Webster is the first Black Watch Governor of Edinburgh Castle since General Sir Neil Ritchie was the Governor in 1945.

Major General Riddell-Webster's installation as the Governor was marked by the traditional Installation Parade, which took place on Monday 19th October 2015. The parade followed the normal format, the responsibility for which lies with Lord Lyon King of Arms and which has been followed for as long as memory can recall. Lord Lyon reads out a Warrant from Her Majesty appointing the new Governor and then calling on the Garrison Commander of Edinburgh Castle to produce the key to the Castle. The key is presented to the new Governor and is then entrusted to the parade commander for safe keeping until it is returned to the Garrison Commander.

For this parade, the Parade Commander was Lieutenant Colonel Piers Strudwick, the Commanding Officer of 7 SCOTS. His Regimental Sergeant Major, Warrant Officer Class 1 Fairweather, who was a Corporal in the 1st Battalion The Black Watch when Major General Riddell-Webster was the Commanding Officer, ably marshalled the troops. Guards were provided by the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Number 1 Guard), The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (Numbers 2 & 3 Guards) and the Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (Number 4 Guard). The Highlanders also provided the Pipes and Drums.

The availability of troops and the requirement to conduct the parade when Edinburgh Castle was closed to the public led to a parade that took place in the gloaming and saw a dramatic conclusion as the light faded and the spotlights and braziers at the Castle gates provided much of the lighting.

The evening had a number of personal touches, with Major General Riddell-Webster using his Grandfather's sword, which had been returned by the Cameronians Museum for the occasion. General Sir Thomas Riddell-Webster GCB DSO was the Quartermaster General from 1942 to 1946 and his responsibilities included, amongst other things, the overall logistical arrangements for D Day and the subsequent operations by the British Army both in Europe and around the rest of the world. A second family touch was provided by the key bearer, Second Lieutenant Archie Nicholson, who had been with his regiment (KRH) for a week at the time of the parade and who is a cousin of Major General Riddell-Webster.

The parade and the subsequent reception both went very well and it was a pleasure to see a number of members of The Black Watch Association at the event.



The Governor of Edinburgh Castle talking to soldiers of No 2 Guard, provided by The Black Watch Battalion.



WO1(RSM) Fairweather who is RSM of the 7th Battalion was parade Regimental Sergeant Major at the Installation.

EXTRAORDINARY HEROES AND THE LORD ASHCROFT GALLERY – THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM LANCE SERGEANT MCGAW VC

On page 23 of the November 2015 Edition of the Red Hackle Magazine, an article about the grave of Lance Sergeant McGaw in Kyrenia (Cyprus) also recorded the Remembrance Service held there on 22nd July 2015.

Readers may be interested to know that his VC is on permanent display in the Lord Ashcroft Gallery at the Imperial War Museum along with those of Pte James Davis (Fort Ruhya, 15 April 1858), Colour Sergeant William Gardner (Bareilly, 5 May 1858) and Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Pugh Evans (Zonnebeke, 4 October 1917). A kukri that was taken by Colour Sergeant Gardner from a rebel, whilst defending his Commanding Officer is also on display.

The Gallery is arranged in a very distinctive way to focus attention on the central theme "what is bravery?"

The stories themselves have been grouped into seven broad themes, each one focussed on a distinctive display case stretching across the gallery. The broad themes are based on the citations and are aggression, boldness, endurance, initiative, leadership, sacrifice and skill. All of these are timeless qualities.

At the heart of the display are the medals of nearly 250 Victoria Cross and George Cross winners; men, women and children who all performed extraordinary acts of bravery.



The obverse side of Lance Sergeant McGaw's VC – © IWM Courtesy Lord Ashcroft.



The reverse side of McGaw's VC which records on the bar "Lance Sergeant Samuel McGaw 42nd Regiment" and on the cross "31 January 1874" – © IWM Courtesy Lord Ashcroft.

HMS MONTROSE

HMS Montrose is still undergoing refit and there are no notes in this edition of the Journal.

HIGHLAND FURIES VOLUME 2

Due to production scheduling, publication of Volume 2 of the official history of The Black Watch will now be in 2017. Publication will coincide with the 100th Anniversary of Passchendaele and the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein. It is hoped to provide some pre-publication extracts in the coming issues of the Red Hackle.

BERMUDA REVISITED

In October 2015 the Pipes and Drums of The Black Watch Battalion made a dramatic return to the site of a past good deed by The Black Watch. They were in Bermuda for the Tattoo being held to mark the 50th Anniversary of the amalgamation which formed the, now, Royal Bermuda Regiment; the Band performed at the old Royal Naval Dockyard and on one evening they played in the presence of HRH The Duchess of Gloucester.

At the invitation of Geordie Fergusson, the Governor of Bermuda, and son of Brigadier Bernard Fergusson, formerly of The Black Watch, the Pipes and Drums attended the rededication of a well built by members of the Regiment when they were posted to Bermuda between 1847-51. At the time, there was a drought and an outbreak of yellow fever and members of the Regiment helped save the local community in North Village by establishing a new source of clean water at what is still known as Black Watch Well. (A Depression era works project created a massive road cutting nearby, which is called Black Watch Pass). There are also a number of graves on the island of Black Watch members who died of the same yellow fever epidemic.

The sight and sound of the Pipes and Drums coming through the Pass on a windy day to where the Well had been refurbished, next to a new roundabout (with luck also to be named after the Black Watch), made a great impression on the children of the local West Pembroke Primary School and members of the local community.

It was a reminder of past good works – and perhaps made up for the earlier episode in the Regiment's 1840s tour in Bermuda, recorded by Victoria Schofield's Highland Furies Vol 1, when

the whole battalion was given 6 months back pay in one go and, according to Ensign John Drysdale of the then 2nd Battalion, 'it was nothing but a scene of drunkenness for some days.'



The Pipes and Drums of The Black Watch Battalion march through Black Watch Pass – courtesy of The Royal Gazette, Bermuda.

BATTALION SUB EDITOR

The Battalion Sub Editor for the November 2015 and May 2016 Editions of the Red Hackle Magazine was Captain L W Hawke.

BLACK WATCH ASSOCIATION GOLF MEETING

By Major (Retd) Alex Stewart

The annual all ranks golf meeting will take place on 17 June 2016, on the day before the Regimental Reunion. The competition is played at Muckhart Golf Club over all three of their 9 hole courses. The competition is strongly supported by The Black Watch Association and sponsored by Sidey Ltd and Falcon Catering Services.

This is an excellent day's golf with full catering and can be enjoyed by Black Watch Association members and serving members of 3 SCOTS. Full details are contained at <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.

HIGHLAND BRIGADE GOLFING SOCIETY AND BLACK WATCH GOLF

By Captain Bruce Osborne

The Society Spring Meeting takes place at Panmure Golf Club again this year on the 24th and 25th May.

At the meeting in 2015 the Lowland Brigade antecedent regiments were invited to take part and they formed a strong composite team which swept the board in virtually every competition. This year it is hoped that sufficient players will take part to enable teams from all of the Royal Regiment of Scotland Battalions to be represented in all of the competitions, so increasing the number of participants. The meeting will start at midday with lunch in the clubhouse followed by The Martin Holt Cup and Medal round being played concurrently in four balls in the afternoon. In the evening of the first day, dinner will be held in the clubhouse and the following morning The Fort George Cup is contested as Foursomes. The Society AGM will then be held in the Clubhouse after lunch.

On the 14th June the annual match between The Black Watch and The Argylls will take place at The Roxburghe just outside Kelso. The Argylls hosted this event in 2015 at this new venue and it proved such a success that The Black Watch have chosen to repeat the experience. The course is beautifully laid out with stunning views of Borders countryside and has many testing holes and greens, tightly guarded by deep bunkers.

The Society continues to have a good fixture list with matches at several great courses including the Old Course at St Andrews, Muirfield, Prestwick, Panmure, Nairn, Montrose, The Berkshire and West Sussex. The Club fixture card lists all the matches and although most participants tend to be former officers, serving officers are most welcome and encouraged to take part. There can be few small societies left which can boast such a fixture list and anybody wishing to play in any match is encouraged to contact the respective match managers.

BLACK WATCH ASSOCIATION CURLING

By Major J M K Erskine MBE

The day the Autumn 2015 Red Hackle magazine landed on the doorstep was the day the Regiment played its first match of the season – the annual fixture against the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. This year the Regiment were the guests and the match was played at The Peak Ice Rink in Stirling. Each side fielded two rinks and before the match started things looked ominous because firstly, it transpired the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders had not just had one but two training sessions for this match and secondly, the SATNAV in some of the members of the Black Watch team cars took them to places in Stirling other than the Ice Rink. Despite that, the match started on time but from the outset it became apparent the Black Watch was facing an uphill struggle. Things did not improve and the final score was 23 shots to 6 shots to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders with the 'A' rink losing 3-12 and the 'B' rink losing 3-11. However, the match was followed by a very jovial lunch and the main winner of the day was, quite rightly, the spirit in which the match was played and camaraderie which everyone enjoyed. For the record the rinks were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink
Jamie Montgomery	Selby Macduff-Duncan
Tim Usher	Jamie Erskine
Alex Stewart	Duncan Cameron
Mike Riddell-Webster	Jon Twine

(Note – I am sure the reason the Macrae Cup which is competed for in this match was not brought by the Argyll's skip was due to forgetfulness rather than confidence he would just have to take it home again afterwards).

After a break of two months the next match was against the HIGHLANDERS. The match was hosted by the HIGHLANDERS and held in Perth on 21 January 2016. Each Regiment fielded two rinks and it was intended that each one would play four ends against each of the two opposition rinks. In the first four ends, the Black Watch 'A' rink lost 1-5 against the HIGHLANDERS 'A' rink while the 'B' rink won 7-1. So, at the midway point the Black Watch were winning 8-6. Could they hold onto this lead in the second half? As it was, neither match in the second half went to four ends. They could only manage three ends before the bell went. That was probably just as well for the Black Watch. The 'A' rink lost to HIGHLANDERS 'B' by 0-5 while the 'B' rink beat HIGHLANDERS 'A' rink by 5-2, thanks to a first end win by 5 shots. Thus, the final overall score was 13-13. Having won the trophy last year, the Black Watch retained it. The rinks were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink
James Duncan Millar	Jamie Montgomery
Jamie Erskine	Selby Macduff-Duncan
Roddy Riddell	Alan McEwan
Jon Twine	David Noble

Before the Bonspiel the Regiment provided curlers to play in two matches for the Highland and Lowland Brigade Curling Club. The first match was against the New Club in Kinross on 12 February. The Black Watch curlers were Jamie Montgomery who skipped the 'A' rink, Selby Macduff-Duncan who curled in the 'B' rink and Jamie Erskine was in the 'C' rink. The New Club had won the Orr Ewing Trophy for a number of years but the Highland and Lowland Brigade Club had won it for the first time in 2015. The New Club was determined to win it back but this was not to be. The Highland and Lowland Brigade Curling Club won by 27 shots to 19, with the 'A' rink winning 12-6, the 'B' rink losing 5-6 and the 'C' rink winning 12-7. As an aside leading up to this match there was confusion when the trophy could not be found. A nameless person eventually realised two days before the match that it was sitting in his house. He sheepishly owned up despite having denied he had ever had it.

The second match was against The Royal Company of Archers. This is always a popular event and one which confuses people because so many could curl for either side and sometimes it is not obvious on whose side some curlers are. Seven Black Watch curlers played in this

match. Jamie Erskine, Jamie Montgomery, Roddy Riddell and Selby Macduff Duncan curled for the Highland and Lowland Brigade and James Duncan Millar and Duncan Cameron and David Noble curled for the Royal Company. While the Highland and Lowland Brigade won the overall match by 37 shots to 23, three of the matches were won by two or less shots. It was the score in the fourth match which was won by 13-5 that gave the overall score a rather misleading reflection of the day.

The Highland and Lowland Brigades Club Bonsel is the culmination of the season. Once again the Regiment was able to field three rinks. They were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink	'C' Rink
Jamie Montgomery	James Duncan Millar	Selby Macduff-Duncan
Malcolm Taylor	Jamie Erskine	Roddy Riddell
Alan McEwan	Duncan Cameron	Hugh Rose
David Noble	Malcolm Innes	Mike Riddell-Webster

It was a memorable event because Jamie Montgomery's rink won the competition for the third year in succession. His rink beat SCOTS 'B' 12-0, HIGHLANDERS 'B' 7-2 and then in a very tense match they beat SCOTS 'A' 7-6. The other rinks did not do so well but the 'C' rink did beat the Royal Scots rink 7-4.

It is very gratifying that the number of curlers in the Regiment is still holding up and it is a shame not everyone who offers to do so, can curl in each match. The matches are always fun events with the odd bit of rivalry thrown in. Those who curl are also very grateful to the Association for the support it gives to those who take part in this sport.

Next season will kick off with a match against the Argylls in November but the details will be promulgated in due course. Anyone interested in curling for the Regiment is asked to inform the Secretary, Jamie Erskine. Training can be arranged if you are a complete novice.



The Black Watch curlers who played against the Highlanders included (from left to right) Roddy Riddell, Selby Macduff-Duncan, James Duncan Millar, David Noble, Jamie Erskine, Jamie Montgomery, Alan McEwen and Jon Twine.



Winners of the Highland Brigade Curling Cup (from left to right) David Noble, Mark Strudwick (President of the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Club), Jamie Montgomery (Skip) and Alan McEwen.

SERVICE

On 7 October 2015 a painting entitled "Service" by David Rowlands, was presented by the Army to the Scottish Parliament. It was presented to recognise the place of the Army in society and it documents the Scottish contribution to soldiering and marks the relationship which has existed between the Army and Scottish society across the last 100 years.

Funded by the wider family of units, associated bodies, serving personnel and veterans and their families, it depicts by a series of vignettes both operations and events that Scottish soldiers have participated in over the last 100 years.

David Rowlands the artist has had a keen interest in the history and uniforms of the British Army and has accompanied the Army on a number of operations since 1984. The vignette of the 51st Highland Division (on left, third from top) depicts Lieutenant Colonel Lorne Campbell VC DSO and Bar TD at the Battle of Wadi Akarit and is based on an interview and description of the battle given to the artist in 1990 by Lieutenant Colonel Campbell.

Readers will also be interested to see the vignette of an Orders Group set in Korea which depicts Lieutenant Colonel David Rose DSO and Bar with two of his Company Commanders (Major PG Buchanan MBE TD and Major PS Douglas MC and bar).

The painting has been accepted into the Parliament Art Collection and it is hoped that it will be taken on tour.



*Service – a painting by David Rowlands which marks the relationship which has existed between the Army and Scottish society for 100 years.
'By permission of David Rowlands, the artist.'*

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE TORONTO BLACK WATCH ASSOCIATION

The Toronto Black Watch Association (TBWA) held its first Red Hackle Dinner in 1928 having been started by Alexander McCathy in 1922. Initially the veterans of the Great War would meet in each other's houses and then migrated to Messes in the Toronto Garrison for meetings.

The Association was formally incorporated in 1934 and the first Directors were Hector Alexander Fraser, George Taylor, Alexander Murray, Joseph Gray and Alexander Ferrier. By 1953 the Association operated their own clubrooms at three locations but in 1970 this was reduced to one Clubroom at 44 York Street. The Club was closed in 1982.

The founding fathers were all Other Ranks and officers were not encouraged to join the TBWA and this remained the case until the 1970s. The current Board of Directors comprises a 50:50 split.

In the early part of the Second World War the TBWA were sending reports to the Imperial Black Watch Headquarters in Perth which outlined their achievements:

- \$1500 invested in Government Victory Loan Bonds.
- \$15,000 spent on building a free camp for 28 families. The camp had electric lights, an ice house, a community hall within seven and a half acres of ground with river, bridge, driveway and boats.
- \$50 monthly is sent in the form of parcels to soldiers overseas.
- Funeral expenses, care of sick and needy are included in the Club's activities.
- The Clubrooms are well furnished and there is an excellent miniature rifle range, which is not only used by members but by other patriotic organizations.

- The Club has endowed for \$1000 a bed in The Black Watch Home in Broughty Ferry.
- It devotes all its income to useful patriotic work.

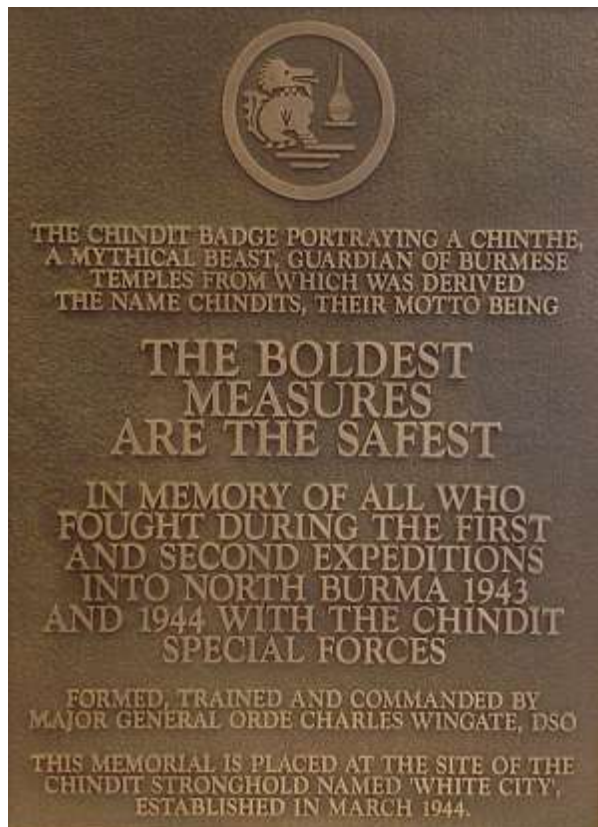
Whilst much may have changed since 1922 when Alexander McCathy formed the Association the spirit of comradeship remains firmly embedded in the in the current generation of members.

CHINDITS MEMORIAL AT WHITE CITY

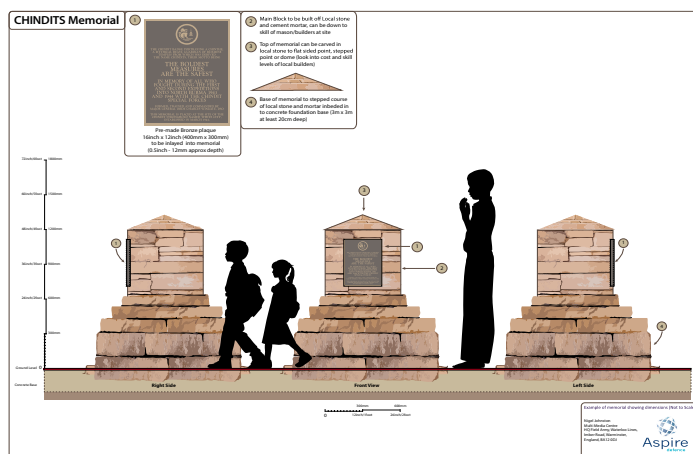
The Black Watch Association was approached about supporting a project to commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of the Chindits and the Association made a grant.

The Mawlu Heritage Trust has agreed to build the Memorial on the summit of "No 5 Hill", a small hill opposite Pagoda Hill.

The 77th Brigade (commanded by Brigadier Alastair Aitken) is planning to hold a brief service of dedication once the memorial has been built. The current 77th Brigade experiment for CGS is titled Project Fergusson and so the exploits of 42 and 73 Columns live on.



Chindits bronze plaque.



A drawing showing the proposed Chindit Memorial.

BALHOUSIE CASTLE REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

The Balhousie Castle Remembrance Service was held on Friday 6 November 2015 and many families who lost loved ones in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as serving and retired members of the Regiment attended.

Before the Service, Mrs Christine Morgan unveiled the signpost she had presented in memory of her son Marc Ferns who was killed in Iraq in 2004. She also presented a generous cheque to the Regimental Association.



Mr and Mrs Morgan look at the sign dedicated in memory of her son Marc Ferns.



Family members at the Balhousie Castle Remembrance Service.

DUNDEE FC SUPPORTS THE ASSOCIATION

The Managing Director of Dundee Football Club, Mr John Nelms along with Director, Mr Bob Hynd visited Balhousie Castle on 30th October where they were given a tour of the Museum by Colonel Alex Murdoch and Major Ronnie Proctor.

Mr Nelms presented a cheque for £3,150 from the proceeds of the special football strip which was worn on the day of the Battle of Loos Commemorative Scottish Premier League match against Ross County which ended in a one all draw. The wearer of the strip which was presented, scored Dundee's goal.



Left to right Mr Bob Hynd, Director Dundee Football Club, Major Ronnie Proctor, Colonel Alex Murdoch and Mr John Nelms Managing Director Dundee Football Club.

OP BANNER DINNER – PERTH

On the 14th of November 2015 just over a hundred veterans who had participated in one or more of the tours undertaken by the 1st Battalion The Black Watch during the 38 years of OP BANNER, met at the Salutation Hotel for dinner. It was 45 years since the first Emergency Tour was undertaken in Belfast in July 1970.

Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin who served in every rank from Platoon Commander to General Officer Commanding gave an amusing

speech using the alphabet to remind the Association members of the many aspects of our service in Northern Ireland.

Lance Corporal Jamie McDonald of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland gave an excellent piping performance and a souvenir Pipe Programme was given to everyone who attended the dinner.

The dinner was a great success and will be repeated on the 50th anniversary in 2020.



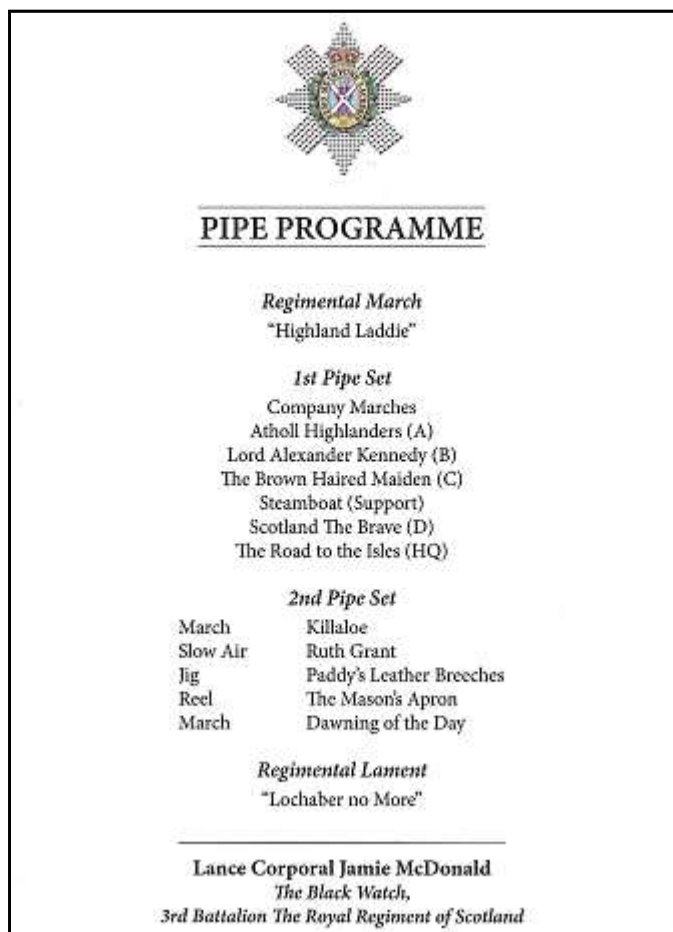
Some members of the Association who attended the OP Banner Dinner who undertook the first tour in 1970.



COs and RSMs. From left to Right – Lieutenant Colonel F L Beattie, Brigadier G C Barnett, Major R J W Proctor, Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin, Brigadier E D Cameron and Lieutenant Colonel J Menzies.



Allan McEwen and Billy Whytock enjoying the evening.



The souvenir Pipe Programme given to the veterans.



The reverse of the Pipe Programme recorded the tours undertaken by the 1st Battalion between 1970 and 2007.

CORRECTIONS

The caption on page 67 of the November 2015 Red Hackle Magazine should have read "Newcastle Branch Member Robert Sinclair on his Claud Butler bicycle raised £145 for Combat Stress".



The Black Watch Ball was held at Errol Park on 19 December 2015 and the Colin Dewar Band played at the Ball for the second year.

1739 CLUB

Readers may have seen reference to the 1739 Club in the Red Hackle Magazine but it has not featured regularly. It was formed about fifteen years ago to allow people of any rank who served in the Regiment to enjoy an annual dinner.

First held in Aberfeldy it has now moved to the Queens Hotel in Dundee and is run by Rob Scott and Charlie Quin.



Thirty five members of the 1739 Club attended the 2015 Dinner.



Rob Scott, Charlie Quin and Brian McGrath at the 1739 Club Dinner.

The Black Watch Museum and Friends of The Black Watch Castle and Museum

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Chairman: Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin KCB CBE
 Trustees: James Watt
 Brigadier (Retd) Garry Barnett OBE
 Colonel A Murdoch TD (from March 2016)
 Angus Ferguson
 Major General Mike Riddell-Webster CBE, DSO
 Sean O'Reilly
 Chief Executive: Anne Kinnes

WINTER 2015 AT THE CASTLE AND MUSEUM

By Anne Kinnes, Chief Executive

It is hard to believe that I have now been here for over a year. Life has been very busy with many changes. I will try to give you some of the highlights!

In April 2015 we welcomed a new team in the kitchen when Alex Summers joined us as Head Chef and then Ray Allan joined a few weeks later as his Sous Chef. We have expanded our menu with new dishes and new names such as the "Company Deal" and "The Major's Favourites". We often have a Sunday Roast and if you want to be guaranteed a table you really need to book. In terms of footfall and income we have had the best year ever in the café.

In the Museum we have welcomed many visitors old and young. In September we had our first every Family Fun day; it was a huge success with over 500 visitors in one day and the Museum was filled with the voices of children. We were so lucky with the weather and we had many locals come in for the first time and learn about the history of The Black Watch. We get many good comments about the Museum and I am delighted to say that at the time of writing we have held the number one place on Trip Advisor of Best Visitor Attraction in Perth.

In the shop we have some new ranges of product and we have re-designed the web shop to feature almost exclusively Black Watch memorabilia. We also held two very successful shopping nights before Christmas.

In November came our most exciting news; the announcement that the Poppies: Weeping Window would be coming to Balhousie Castle. We are all so pleased and almost daily it fills us with both excitement and terror in equal measures.

From 30th June until 25th September 2016, we will host Poppies: Weeping Window by artist Paul Cummins and designer Tom Piper. *Weeping Window* is a cascade comprising several thousand handmade ceramic poppies seen pouring from a high window to the ground below.

The Black Watch Museum is a focal point for remembrance and learning about the Great War and other conflicts and will make a poignant and fitting host venue for this artistic commemoration. The breath-taking installation will flow from the Castle's second floor turret window onto the ground below.

We have a long journey and a lot of work to complete before the 30th June and we are still looking for 'Poppy Partners' to help so if you think you or a member of your family would like to be a part of this unique event then please give us a call or go on the website for information; www.theblackwatch.co.uk we would love to hear from you.

In spite of one of the wettest and windiest winters for many years, which did make the castle leak and rattle at times, we have just come to the end of our financial year. I am delighted to say that we have surpassed all our previous year targets. We of course still would like more people to come in and see us and especially to visit the Museum. We are constantly working on how we can drive up our footfall.

I do hope that you will come and visit us or even help us over the summer.

FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH

By Sarah Riddell-Webster

When I last wrote for the Red Hackle magazine I reported that five years on from forming *The Friends*, our numbers were still growing steadily. I now notice that we are attracting new members because of the lecture series *The Friends* run at Balhousie Castle. There is a lecture every month and details of these events are published up to six months in advance, through the website www.theblackwatch.co.uk and also on a printed calendar available from Balhousie Castle.

The lecture series has been running for nine months. During that time our visiting lecturers have spoken on a wide variety of subjects. The one thing that all the lecturers have had in common is the huge depth of knowledge for their particular subject. In October Professor Alex Danchev of the University of St Andrews spoke about Field Marshall Lord Alanbrooke in a lecture entitled *Alanbrooke – the man and his Diaries*. This fascinating lecture gave us an insight into a man who was not necessarily understood or appreciated for what he did at the heart of Whitehall during the Second World War. I think all the audience, some of whom had come from as far afield as Glasgow, greatly appreciated the opportunity to hear such a high quality speaker.

In November we were delighted to welcome Major General James Cowan to give the third and final lecture in our series commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. Major Colin Innes had opened the series with a lecture on the life of young Wellington. Brigadier Charles Grant had then lectured on the Battle of Waterloo itself. General James, who has taken a keen interest in Waterloo throughout his life, examined *The relevance of the Waterloo campaign to modern war*. The combination of being a history graduate and having recently commanded one of the two remaining Divisions in the British Army allowed him to educate and interest his audience with an incisive analysis of the battle.

We are extremely lucky that we do not need to look far to find an exceptional lecturer. Richard McKenzie, who is the archivist in The Black Watch Museum, is one of the most captivating speakers that I have listened to during the lecture series. Richard delivered a first rate lecture on *The Battle of Kut* to a sellout audience. A much forgotten battle that was fought when the Ottoman Empire troops besieged a British-Indian garrison town between December 1915 and April 1916. Richard is an absolute master of his subject who can deliver a lecture in a spell binding manner.

We were delighted to welcome back the eminent historian Professor Gary Sheffield of Wolverhampton University. Last year Professor Sheffield spoke to us on the subject of *Douglas Haig Reconsidered*. This time the Professor's lecture was on *The Somme: A Centennial Reassessment*. The ground had already been laid for this lecture by Professor Peter Jackson, Chair of Global Security at the University of Glasgow, who had lectured for us the previous month on *The Battle of Verdun*; the battle had lasted almost a year and had resulted in a million casualties, becoming possibly the most costly encounter of the war on the Western front. Professor Jackson had explained how devastating the Battle of Verdun had been to the French Army. "Qui ne fait pas Verdun ne fait pas la Guerre"; the French commentary about the battle sums it up quite succinctly as a remorseless slaughter, which seemed never ending on both sides. The scene was now set for Professor Sheffield to take us through the Battle of the Somme, regarded today as one of the most traumatic battles which the British Army took part in in the First World War. Embarked upon in part to relieve the pressure on the French following Verdun, it was the battle when the volunteers of Kitchener's Army first went into action, sustaining some 60,000 casualties on the first day. By the end of the battle in November 1916, British casualties were over 400,000. Professor Sheffield has offered to return next year to lecture on *the Battle of Passchendaele*, an offer we have willingly accepted and we much look forward to.

In January we broke out from our usual subject matter to listen to Tess Monteith speak about *Cycling the Silk Route*. The lecturer was not totally unrelated as Tess is married to Major John Monteith, late of The Black Watch. Last year Tess and her daughter Francesca spent six months bicycling the 5000 miles of the Silk Route from Shanghai to Venice. They endured huge changes in terrain and temperature, terrifying lorries hurtling down the highways and a dog with sharp teeth. But to counter the horrors there was spectacular scenery, beautiful buildings and welcoming people. Tess illustrated her lecture not only with photographs but also with the most exquisite watercolor paintings that she had done along the way. Tess and Francesca took the opportunity to raise money for the Scottish Charity Air Ambulance so the Friends of The Black Watch Castle and Museum donated half of the proceeds from the evening to SCAA.

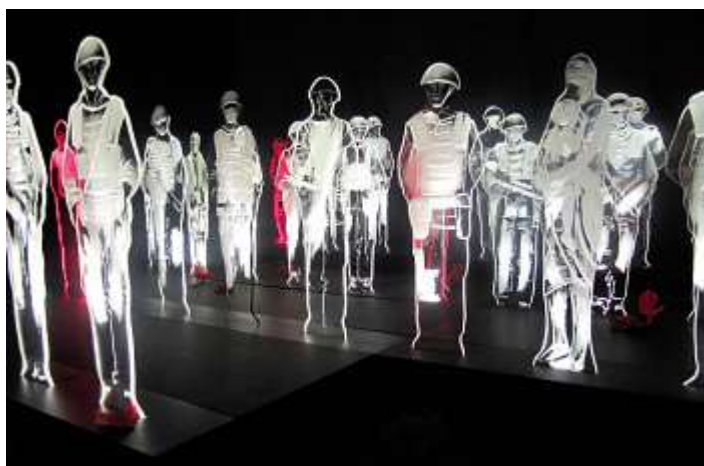
We are developing a loyal following for the lectures and attracting visitors from far afield, many of whom have not visited the museum before. We have also been extremely fortunate to be so well supported by our visiting lecturers. We have a full programme in place for the rest of this year and into next so please do come and join us. There are both evening and lunch time lectures. Details are available on the website at www.theblackwatch.co.uk and tickets are booked through the shop on 01738 638152 extension 1. The current lecture calendar is available to pick up when you visit Balhousie Castle.

MUSEUM NOTES

By Nicola Moss

Unknown Exhibition

On the 4th March 2016, the Museum opened its new temporary exhibition 'Unknown'. Created by Alison Kinnaird, this thought provoking exhibition comprises of an installation of 52 glass figures. The glass army was created as an artist's response to war, the conflict in today's world and the memories of past conflicts. The soldiers are arranged in ranks and appear in uniform but each is uniquely engraved; each is an individual. Within the installation there are a number of civilian figures who can be seen as the 'collateral damage' of warfare and highlights the impact of war on us all. The figures are lit with LEDs, invisibly contained in the base, which trap and transmit the light into each soldier.



The exhibition by Alison Kinnaird depicts soldiers and civilians; each figure is unique and is engraved on glass and lit by LEDs. It focuses on the loss, waste and destruction that results from war, but also remembers and honours those who have fallen in the past.



Lieutenant Colonel Ian Shepherd, who served in The Black Watch whilst undergoing his training, was later commissioned and spent much of his service in The Royal Highland Fusiliers. He has kindly donated to the Museum, a sketch of a wounded Highlander which was executed by WB Wollen prior to the completion of his painting, the Battle of Quatre Bras which hangs in the Copper Beach café.



The Chairman of the Museum Trust Sir Alistair Irwin and Alistair Duthie roll up their sleeves and plant the last four trees of the First World War memorial grove.

One tree was planted for each year of the War and the first had been planted by the Duke of Rothesay in July 2014. The trees are Whitebeams.

SHOP

A number of items have recently been restocked or introduced to the Shop.



New blazer buttons costing £3 for large and £2.50 for small.



Regimental Colours notelet £1.99.



Baseball Cap with Regimental badge £14.50.



Quail with Regimental badge £70.

Correspondence

4 Middleby Street
Edinburgh
EH9 1TD



*Pipe Major Gonzalez and
Colin Wallace at Delhi Ibrahim
Commonwealth War Grave
Cemetery in November 2015.*

Shepherds Bush
London
W12 0PB

Dear Editor

COMMANDING OFFICERS – DÉJÀ VU

Sir, I applaud the success of the current crop of Officers appointed to command (RH Nov 2015). I seem to remember writing a similar letter some years ago. In about 1965 the following were Commanding:

1st Battalion The Black Watch	– Lt Col Tony Lithgow
4th/5th Battalion The Black Watch	– Lt Col Denys Rowan-Hamilton
6th/7th Battalion The Black Watch	– Lt Col Bruce Fortune
1st Battalion The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders	– Lt Col Malcolm Wallace
1st Battalion The Worcesters	– Lt Col Larry Trotter
22 SAS	– Lt Col Mike Wingate-Gray
Junior Tradesmen's Regiment	– Lt Col James Stewart

I wonder if we will have to wait another 50 years for this to happen again?

Robert Gurdon

Dear Editor

DELI IBRAHIM ALGERIA

Whilst visiting Algeria I attended a Remembrance Day Service at the Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery at Deli Ibrahim and was pleasantly surprised to meet Pipe Major Gonzalez.

The Pipe Major served in The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) and then in The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland before being detached to 19 Field Regiment RA as Pipe Major.

The British, German and Serbian war cemeteries are all located next to each other.

Colin Wallace

Alma
6 Old Letham
Letham
Forfar
DD8 2PW

Dear Editor

As 2016 is the 40th Anniversary of a very successful year for the 1st Battalion football team, I feel a timely reminder of their success may be of interest to that generation and also to today's subscribers to the Red Hackle.

In the season 1976-77 the battalion first eleven received many awards with what was undoubtedly our most successful team ever!!

I have listed some of their many achievements during this period namely:

The Infantry Challenge Cup (UK and BAOR) winners
Eastern District Cup winners
Eastern District League Championship winners
Northern Ireland Cup winners
Northern Ireland League Championship winners
Army Six-a-Side Championships. (Both battalion six-a-side teams were the finalists).

The team was also finalists in the Army Challenge Cup in two consecutive seasons (1976/7); not bad for an infantry battalion otherwise engaged in other important commitments in the mid seventies!

I had the privilege to manage this group of dedicated, talented football players from 1974 to 1981, ably assisted by Sgt Bob Bardwell (SI) and team captain Cpl David Stacey.

It should be noted that Cpl David Stacey, Cpl Ian Allan and Pte Derek Meldrum were selected to play for the Army during this time.

Fred Beattie



The Black Watch Football Team 1976.

1st Battalion Football Team. (Seated):
Pte W. Smith, LCpl D. Meldrum, Cpls J. Dackers, D. Stacey (Capt), SI R. Bardwell (Coach), Ptes J. Lynch, N. Birrell, P. Degernier. (Standing) (L to R): Cpl I. Allan, Sgt B. Dickson, Ptes C. Ross, J. Murray, H. Elder, N. Kyle, J. Gilfillan. Trophies: Eastern District Major Unit Cup, Northern Ireland Six-a-Side Statuette, Army Six-a-Side Championship Cup, Infantry Cup (UK).

Carlyle Court
173 Comely Bank Road
Edinburgh
EH4 1DH

FROM THE GRANDFATHER I NEVER MET

Three months had passed since that momentous day,
When guns disturbed the silence of the Somme
The stench of flesh and sweat, the blood mud clay
Assailed my mind and Hell was stoked by man.

Dear Editor

THE SOMME REMEMBERED

My grandfather Lance Corporal Robert Wingate was a member of the 8th Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) who survived the early part of the Battle of the Somme (8BW as part of 26 Brigade took part in a successful attack on Longueval and Delville Wood on 14 July 1916). He was one of Kitchener's New Army recruits.

By 1st September 1916, the battalion greatly reinforced after sustaining many casualties in July, had moved to La Comte to prepare for another attack which was then cancelled due to a shortage of artillery shells. They moved to Gouy Servins and arrived at a time of great activity. The British Line was full of Stokes guns and 60 pound trench mortars which fired night and day.

This activity culminated on the 14th of September in a combined raid of 60 men of the Battalion and 60 of 5th Camerons with the object of securing prisoners. Twenty-four Stokes mortars were said to have fired 4,500 rounds in the 15 minutes the raid took. The Regimental history records that there were five men wounded but it was on this date that Robert Wingate was killed in action.

His body was interred at Caberet-Rouge CWG Cemetery 11 km north of Arras. I am now 80 years old but some years ago visited my grandfather's grave and wrote a poem called;

I know you not but you are my seed.
From son to son my Lion is now in you
In Black Watch cloth I fell with stripe on sleeve,
But look not here 'midst rows in Cab'ret Rouge

Where am I now – a thought by kith and kin?
Your tears, long dry, were never felt by me
The loss stirred doubts of self, there lies your pain,
And death's grave grip holds you and none are free

When in your quiet, and war is no more a thought,
In dreams we'll meet, how peace was dearly bought!

Robert was from Stirling and his wife Annie was suddenly a widow with four young children to support. This was not the only tragedy she had to bear as her eldest son, a sergeant in the 77th Assault Brigade was killed on a ship just off Sword Beach on D Day.

Robert Wingate

Book Review

AFTERSHOCK – The Untold Story of Surviving Peace

By Matthew Green

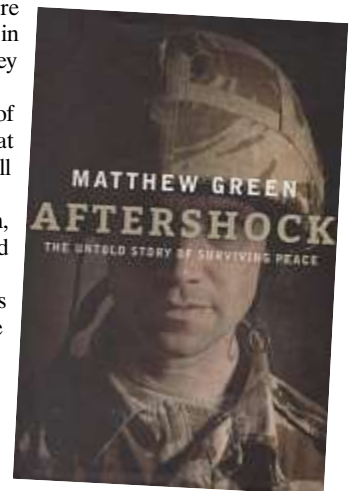
Matthew Green is a journalist who has worked for the Financial Times and Reuters and has reported from more than 30 countries. He has spent time as an embedded journalist with the US Marines in Iraq (2003) and again in Afghanistan. In this book he sets out to answer the question, how does war break people and how best might they be healed?

It is a very well researched book and he has made considerable effort to find and interview a large number of veterans who have been affected by operations and war. He has also worked hard to understand the effect that trauma and PTSD has on the families and friends. He has asked uncomfortable questions of commanders at all levels, the MOD, the NHS and the military charities that care for the soldiers who are affected by their service.

Uncomfortably close to home is the case of Aaron Black of Blairgowrie, who served in The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland in Afghanistan in 2009 (OP HERRICK 10) and who committed suicide after leaving the Army.

Any of us who have served in the Army will find this book of interest. It is not always easy to read but it asks searching questions of how we support and care for those who have served in the Armed Forces and who are affected by that service.

Portobellobooks.com: ISBN 978-1-84627-329-2: £20 hardback.



Obituaries

SIR DAVID LANDALE

Sir David Landale died aged 81 on 25 March 2016. He carried out his National Service in The Black Watch from 1952-54. He was the son and grandson of taipans of the "Princely Hong", the Scots-Chinese trading house of Jardine Matheson. On his return from the Far East he had a second career as a business brain behind influential charities; most recently he worked as Vice President of The Black Watch Appeal. A fuller obituary will appear in the next edition of the Red Hackle Magazine.

R M Riddell

PETER SIMPSON

Peter Simpson died on 3 January 2016 aged 90. He was granted an Emergency Commission in May 1945 and served with the 2nd Battalion in India at the time of Partition. He left the Army as a Captain in 1948.

His son David served as a Regular Officer in The Royal Scots and with the TA in the 3rd (Volunteer) Battalion The Black Watch. A fuller obituary will be published in the November 2016 edition of the journal.

R M Riddell

JUDGE RONALD ANGUS ROPNER STROYAN QC

Angus Stroyan died on 9th March 2016 aged 91 and his funeral was held in Killin, close to his family home.

He was educated at Harrow and was commissioned on 15 January 1944 and took part in the Rhine crossing and all the operations up until the end of the war in Europe, serving with the 5th Battalion. He appears in the Officers photograph on page 189 of the "Spirit of Angus". He held both an Emergency Commission and TA Commission.

After the war he served with the 1st Battalion The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in Palestine and was Mentioned in Dispatches. He served in the TA until 1951, reaching the rank of Captain.

In 1950 he went up to Trinity College Cambridge where he read Law. He was called to the Bar Inner Temple and took Silk in 1972. He became a Circuit Judge in 1975 sitting mainly in Teeside. He then moved to sitting in Newcastle and became both a Senior Circuit Judge and first Hon Recorder of Newcastle in 1993.

He retired from the Bench in 1995 but went on to become a member of the Parole Board.

He was a great countryman and enjoyed fishing, shooting and stalking. He played the pipes in his younger days and maintained an interest in pipe music throughout his life.

R M Riddell

NICHOLAS TATTON-BROWN

Nick Tatton-Brown recently died aged 79. He was a National Service Platoon Commander (1957-1958) and served with the 1st Battalion in Berlin and Edinburgh. He died unexpectedly whilst gardening at his home in Hampshire.

Nick was one of those unusual recruits into the Regiment with which he had no prior connection and had not a drop of Scottish blood. Whilst there had been at least two Generals in his ancestry, they were Royal Engineers. His own father served in General Slim's 14th Army in Burma. Nick was educated at Winchester and after National Service read Economics at King's College Cambridge.

He arrived at Queens' Barracks in the same intake as Philip Howard, another unusual Black Watch soldier (later Literary Editor of the Times) and was soon licked into shape by Colin Innes' training Platoon. Both recruits later became stalwarts of the victorious Black Watch 1958 athletics team taking part in the 880 yds relay. He enjoyed Bridge and whenever possible had a Bridge four going after lunch in the Redford Mess.

On coming down from Cambridge, Nick followed a career in the Insurance Industry with two well-known broking Companies in the City

and after retirement indulged in his two favorite hobbies – gardening and dry fly fishing on the river Test. He is survived by his wife Jo and their three children.

Mervyn Blakeney

THOMAS HENRY BASTYAN

Thomas Bastyan who was known as Tony died on the 22 December 2015 aged 93. He was a Devonshire man who was born and died in Ottery St Mary.

Tony enlisted into The Black Watch at Exeter in May 1939.

After completing his basic training he was posted to the 1st Battalion at Dover but was not deployed to France in September 1939 due to his age. The following three years were spent in the UK. He joined the reformed 1st Battalion in June 1940.

By June 1942 after a period of intensive training, he moved with the 1st Battalion to North Africa. He served there and in Sicily where he sustained a serious leg wound which required extensive surgery. During a visit to Cairo, Tony managed to meet up with his older brother Len who was a Sergeant in The Royal Marines; the brothers had not met for a number of years.

Tony returned to UK with the Battalion at the end of 1943 and, due to his injury, remained there until he was demobbed in August 1946.

On leaving the Regiment he returned to Devon and married Anne who came from Torquay. They set up home together in Ottery St Mary where they lived for over sixty five years. Tony was a contented man and he is sadly missed by all his family and friends.

R J W Proctor

ROLAND DANE

Roland Dane died on the 2nd February 2016 in his 91st year. He was a member of the 7th Battalion during WW2 and took part in all the major actions in North West Europe from the D Day landings to the Rhine Crossing in March 1945.

I met Roland in 2000 on the cruise liner, The Black Watch after I had given a presentation on the history of The Black Watch. He approached me after my talk and intimated that he had served in the 7th Battalion during WW2 and that what I said in my lecture was accurate. He had an unassuming nature but had a lively and quick sense of humour and he and I became good friends.

After completing his basic training at Queens' Barracks he was posted to the 4th Battalion but was subsequently transferred to the 7th Battalion as a Bren Gun Carrier Driver. An account of Roland's wartime experiences may be found in Victoria Schofield's Second Volume of The Highland Furies which will be published shortly.

On leaving the forces Roland settled back into civilian life and worked for a local firm as an electrician. Later when he was made redundant he started to work on his own and ran his own business. He married Joan in 1949 and they had three children Laura, Malcolm and Joan. Sadly Joan died in 1996 after 47 happy years of marriage. His children, grandchildren and great grandchildren were his pride and joy and he could be relied upon to give help when needed.

Scottish Country dancing was one of Roland's hobbies which he participated in, until quite recently. He also loved dogs and working in his garden. Roland joined the Stoke Branch of the Association in 2000 and he was an active member. He attended annual Reunions and events in Perth on a regular basis. He also made frequent visits to Balhousie Castle and was well liked by the Association staff. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

R J W Proctor

KEVIN (THE DUCK) HAY

Kev was born on the 15th of July 1964 and was educated at Craigie High school in Dundee where he achieved five 'O' Levels prior to leaving school and starting work as a heating engineer. After a short period he then worked at Stanley Mills Perth before deciding to join the Army. On his enlistment into The Black Watch his father Stan was very proud, as his brother Sidney, also Black Watch, was killed in WW2 and is buried in France.



Kev joined The Black Watch on the 30th of July 1983 and joined A (Grenadier) Company and very soon became a very welcome and popular member of 3 Platoon. Shortly after joining, the platoon it was noticed that when he walked or marched, he had a very distinctive waddle; his backside stuck out a mile and his feet were at ten to two and also his gait was slightly forward. This was noticed by a few of us in the platoon and every now and then when he was walking past you could hear the obvious call of a duck by the other members of the Company, hence the nickname The Duck.

Kev had a very likable personality and everyone who met him thought he was fun to be with and enjoyed his company immensely. He could get a little bit boisterous and get into situations that were just hilarious. He never took himself too seriously and was always there for others and was a very kind hearted guy and generous to a fault.

Kevin served in Werl, Kirknewton/Redford, Berlin, Ballykinler, Hong Kong, Pirbright and Fort George. He also took part in two emergency tours of Northern Ireland (South Armagh 85/86 and West Belfast 95). He loved the time he spent in Florida with Bravo Company and enjoyed the time spent in Canada and Berlin.

He had a short period as a Recruiting Sergeant at the Perth ACIO 98/99 with WO2 Kenny Munro and I can tell you he kept Kenny on his toes. He was discharged through illness on the 4th of February 2000.

Kevin was always a happy go lucky type of person and he would speak to anyone and you would think he had known that person all his life when in fact he had just met them that day.

He had his struggles over the years after discharge however never lost the great sense of humour that he had; he was diagnosed with diabetes and died on 6th of January 2016.

During his time in the Regiment, Kev gave all who knew him many wonderful, funny and crazy memories however above all he was a good soldier and a loyal friend and will be sadly missed.

Kevin is survived by his son Steven who is a Sergeant in the RLC and his daughter Zoe and grandson Lewis. Finally his Dad Stan would like to thank all who attended his funeral to pay their last respects.

Ally Alcorn

JACK LAMB

Jack Lamb who was known as Jake or Jacky by his friends in the regiment died on the 8th of September 2015 aged 77, in Ninewells Hospital after a long period of illness.

He was raised in Arbroath and was employed as a motor mechanic before joining the Army in March 1960. On arriving at Queens' Barracks, he joined number 148 Squad which was a mixed squad of eight National Servicemen and seven Regular soldiers. After passing out in October 1960 he was posted to the 1st Battalion in Cyprus.

After a period in a Rifle Company, Jack was transferred to the MT Platoon where his previous skills as a motor mechanic came to the fore. He was employed as a driver for the remainder of his service in Cyprus, Warminster, and Minden including a 6 month unaccompanied UN Tour of Cyprus. He was demobbed in February 1969 after completing nine years' service. He was a most reliable and professional four ton truck driver who would drive through the most difficult terrain and conditions to ensure that his passengers, stores or welcome hot food on exercises or operations were conveyed safely and in one piece.

Jack was a quiet and mild mannered man who was liked and respected by all those who knew him; his dry sense of humour was enjoyed by his peers and seniors alike. He married Margaret, an Edzel girl in November 1962 and they spent 53 happy years together.

After leaving the Army, Jack and Margaret returned to Arbroath where he was employed as a plant operator for twenty two years with Tayside Regional Council, then latterly as a driver working in the Oil Industry until ill health forced his early retirement.



One of the founder members of the Angus Branch, he regularly attended monthly meetings and functions. Unfortunately successive bouts of ill health stopped him from moving far from his front door but he always kept a keen interest in the Branch and was always proud to have been a member of the Regiment.

The large turnout at his funeral indicated just how well respected and liked he was within his local community and by Angus Branch members. He will be missed by everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him.

R J W Proctor

MORRIS LOCKE

Morris Locke who was nicknamed "Joe" by his Black Watch friends (after the famous Irish singer), died on the 21st January 2016. He was in his early eighties.

He joined the Regiment in 1953 and after carrying out his basic training at the Queens' Barracks, Perth, was posted to the 1st Battalion who were then serving in Kenya. Whilst serving up country in a Rifle Company, Morris contracted a tropical infection which could not be treated by the Battalion Medical Officer. He was then sent to the British Military Hospital in Nairobi and subsequently shipped home to the Military Hospital in Cowglen, outside Glasgow. By the time he was given a clean bill of health the Battalion had returned from Kenya to Crail and Morris was posted to the Depot as a squad training NCO where he remained until he completed his service.

He then returned to Longtown in Cumbria and resumed working on farms in the area. Later he took up landscape gardening and moved to Newcastle where he ran his own very successful landscape gardening business for a number of years.

He met and married Irene in the early 1960s and they had over 50 years happy married life together.

He was a long-time member of the Angus Branch of The Black Watch Association and although he could not attend regular meetings or functions he kept in touch with his long-time friend Jock Paton from Forfar and the Secretary and the Chairman through phone calls and correspondence; he also made generous donations to the Branch funds annually.

Morris will be sadly missed by all those who knew him.

R J W Proctor



VINCE MCDONOUGH

Vince McDonough died suddenly at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee on 22nd January 2016 just a couple of months short of his 60th birthday.

In 1971, Vince joined The Black Watch as a Junior Soldier at Bridge of Don Barracks, Aberdeen. In 1973 he joined the 1st Battalion where he stayed until his demob in March 1977 just after his 21st birthday.

During these years he served in Hong Kong, Colchester and Northern Ireland where in 1974 and 1975 he took part in the operational tours of West Belfast and then served for 9 months at Ballykinler from 1976-1977. The vast majority of Vince's service was spent in A (Grenadier) Company. His last few months were spent as a steward in the Officers' Mess.

He was a well liked and respected soldier who made many friends in the Battalion. This was evident from the large number of friends who came to his funeral.

C S Gray



ALAN MELVILLE

Alan Melville died in the Cornhill Hospice in Perth on 10 January 2016 after suffering from cancer for a short period. He was a most popular and well respected man and the large attendance at his funeral bore testimony to his popularity.

Born in Kirkcaldy in 1952, he left school aged 15 to work as a tyre fitter but joined the Army, enlisting in The Black Watch and arriving with the 1st Battalion at Ritchie Camp,



Kirknewton in 1971. He served the full 22 years of his career with the Battalion in the UK (Edinburgh, Colchester, Catterick and Ternhill), Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Fiji, Italy, Belize, Canada, BAOR and Berlin and he also completed six operational tours in Northern Ireland. He had an exciting and fulfilling life in the Army.

In his early days in the Battalion he was a mainstay in 14 Platoon Delta Company and then moved to the Mortar Platoon. He served as a search team commander in Northern Ireland in 1982/83 and then joined the Provost Staff. In Berlin he was the CO's Dispatch Rider and towards the end of his career he was promoted to Corporal and he ran the Regimental Post Office. He put his heart and soul into the job and he made sure that he ran an efficient and effective mail office. Alan was a well-known character in the Battalion who had a ready smile.

He left the Army in 1992 and went to work for Brigadier Angus Irwin in Comrie. He also worked for the Military Guard Force at Cultybraggan and later at Craigiehall and Stirling.

Alan was a proud man; he was a character and a popular member of the Regiment and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Pete Pendlebury

GAVIN MILLS

Gavin Mills died after a long fight against serious illness on Sunday the 17th of January 2016 two months short of his 54th birthday.

Gavin was born at Maryfield hospital Dundee and grew up and was educated in Kirriemuir.

Gavin was a member of the local Boys Brigade Company and then the Kirriemuir Army Cadets, whilst at school. On leaving school he trained as a saw miller at a local saw mill near Kirriemuir and remained there until illness prevented him from doing so.

On leaving the Army Cadets, Gavin joined the TA where he served for over 30 years. Initially he served with A (Black Watch) Company 1/51 Highland in Dundee and trained as an HGV Driver and gained other qualifications such as a HAZMAT Driver and Operators Certificate. He remained in A Company during the various TA reorganisations which took place with 1/51 Highland becoming the 3rd (Volunteer) Battalion The Black Watch in 1995 and then 51st Highland Regiment in 2000. Gavin had gained promotion to Corporal and was appointed A Company Motor Transport NCO.

Qualified HAZMAT Drivers and Operators were required to take part in the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and Gavin was selected from numerous volunteers to take part in this historic event. After in theatre training he was attached to 26 Armoured Engineers and on one occasion he bumped in to his brother Eric who was serving with 1BW. A subsequent tour of Iraq followed a year later.

Like most other TA soldiers Gavin looked forward to the Annual Camp and attended camps in Cyprus, Germany, France, Poland and numerous places in the UK. He joined the Angus Branch and attended when work and TA commitments permitted.

Gavin was a quiet man who enjoyed visiting his brother and sister and their families when he was not attending TA weekends and was a great support to his mother with whom he lived. He was a well-respected and much liked member of the TA and local community and will be sadly missed by all those who had the privilege of knowing him.

R J W Proctor

HAROLD MUDGE

Harold Mudge served in the 1st Battalion in Korea and took part in the First Battle of the Hook as a member of the Mortar Platoon. He also served in Kenya. After he left the Army he lived in Devon. He died on 11st December 2015.

R M Riddell



WILLIAM OUGHTON

Bill was born in December 1921 in South Yorkshire and began work in the local colliery aged 14. On the outbreak of War he joined the Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry in June 1940. He transferred to The Black Watch in 1942 and served in North Africa and Sicily, sustaining an injury to his head. After convalescing, he served in France, Holland and Germany, transferring to the RASC in April 1945.

On discharge he returned to colliery work until finding employment at a local glass works. He died on 7th October 2015 aged 94.

R M Riddell



WILLIAM ARTHUR RATTRAY

Bill Ratray died on the 21st December 2015 aged 77.

Bill enlisted into The Black Watch in May 1957 at Dundee and after Basic Training at Queens' Barracks was posted to the 1st Battalion in Berlin for a short period of time before the battalion moved to Redford Barracks, Edinburgh in November. He then moved with the battalion to Cyprus where he served until he completed his three year engagement in May 1960.

He was employed as a Regimental Signaller both as a Radio Operator and as Linesman and his Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Angus Irwin described him as being a thoroughly competent, reliable and well turned out soldier. There is no doubt that had Bill stayed in the Army he had the potential to gain promotion. He was also a keen sportsman who enjoyed playing football.

Two years after leaving the Regiment, Bill married Mary and they set up home in Kirriemuir where he worked. Later they moved to Perth as Bill had been promoted within the Hydro Electric Board where he was employed for thirty two years. Although he retired he continued working on a part time basis and enjoyed playing golf and outdoor bowls, the latter with his wife Mary. Bill was smart and he could be relied upon as a friend. He will be missed by his family and those who had the privilege of knowing him.

R J W Proctor



KENNETH STEWART

Kenny Stewart served with the 1st Battalion in Korea and at the 2nd Battle of The Hook but was originally a Seaforth Highlander. He died aged 83 at his home in Blairninch, Strathpeffer in Ross-shire on 26th February 2016 just days before a special ceremony that he had helped plan, to remember his fallen comrades.

Born and bred in the Heights of Achterneed, he joined the Army aged 18 and underwent his basic training at Fort George. He was marked down as a potential sniper because of his superior observation skills and later in Korea, he was one of the first generation of snipers to use infra-red night scopes on their weapons.

After his Army service he went back to working in the woods as a timber contractor. He started out using Clydesdale horses, then on to bulldozers and other heavy plant. As he acquired more plant he moved from timber to road construction eventually setting up Kenneth Stewart (Strathpeffer) Ltd in 1968. The firm became well known in the Highlands, building many roads for Highland Region.

The memorial has been erected by Loch Kinellan and consists of a seven tonne block of stone that displays the names of over 60 of his comrades who were killed during the Korean War. An officer and piper of The Black Watch Battalion attended the service on 12 March 2016.

R M Riddell

EDWIN WALKER

Edwin (always known as Eddie) was born in Fleetwood, Lancashire. On leaving school aged 14 he took the job of assistant golf professional at Fleetwood Golf Club under Eddie Musty, the renowned golf-club maker. He remained at Fleetwood until he was called up to join the army on 15th August 1944. He initially served with The Royal Scots Fusiliers



until April 1945 and then with the The King's Own Scottish Borderers and as part of 1st Airborne Division was flown in gliders to Norway. This was an experience he did not care to repeat as the flying conditions were "touch and go". They were there for just over three months and were responsible for maintaining law and order in the areas they occupied and making sure that German units followed the terms of their surrender. On his return to the UK he was transferred to The Black Watch. On the 7th December 1945 he set sail with the 4th Battalion to the Middle East arriving on the 16th December.



The Battalion was placed in suspended animation on 25 May 1946 but on 16th August 1946, aged just twenty, he was promoted to Staff Sergeant CQMS and carried out his duties in both Egypt and Palestine. He certainly made good use of his downtime and visited as many sights as he could including, Mersa Matruh, Bethlehem and The Mount of Olives. Beirut was a particular favourite as it was so very cosmopolitan with cinemas, restaurants and it's wonderful corniche. Eddie often recalled that they always took oranges to the cinema and as the lights went out and the adverts came on, all hell would break loose as orange peel fights broke out between various regiments. It was of course always in a friendly way! He remained in this region until November 1947 and was asked to extend his military service and encouraged to apply for a Commission. He was very honoured to be asked but had already made up his mind to go into business which he did on his return.

Due to tensions in Europe after the end of the war some soldiers were called back for "Z" Training. Eddie got his call on the 14th July 1951 and spent the next two weeks at Dallachy Camp near Fochabers with The Black Watch. Again Eddie was proud to be re-called just in case!

Eddie went on to become a distinguished businessman and leading light in the Fleetwood fishing industry, both as a fish merchant and then a fish box manufacturer.

During the late 1970's and early to mid 1980's Eddie was asked to become Chairman of Fleetwood Fisheries Development Committee, a roll which he relished as he was "sick to death" of the Trade Union fish lumpers doing "Go Slows" and forbidding the crews of the trawlers to unload their own catches but they met their match in ex CQMS Walker.

Business always came before his love of golf but golf led him to the love of his life, his wife Mavis. They met at Fleetwood Golf Club where they remained stalwarts of the club, building a reputation as two of the best golfers in the district. Mavis went on to become Lady Captain of Royal Lytham St Annes and also Lady Captain of Lancashire, two achievements that made both Eddie and his son Jeff extremely proud.

Throughout the 70's, 80's and 90's he took enormous pleasure in attending many regimental re-unions often taking WW1 veteran "Old" Bill Goode with him. He was proud to parade and be inspected at Balhousie Castle by The Queen Mother and also enjoyed his conversations with Lt Col Freddy Burnaby-Atkins with whom he remained in contact until Freddy's death in June 2012.

His lasting testimony to the game of golf was his definitive book, "The History of Golf at Fleetwood 1893-1993". It was whilst researching for his book that he discovered golf had been played

in Fleetwood from 1860 onwards therefore pre dating the widely accepted fact that Westward Ho! In Devon was the first.

Eddie was a devoted family man and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Jeff Walker

BRUCE LESLIE WILSON

Bruce Wilson died on 3rd March aged 88. He was born in Crieff and, except during his military service, spent all his life there. He joined the Crieff Cadet Company in January 1943 and was enlisted into The Black Watch in July 1945. After training at Fort George he was posted to the 2nd Battalion in India – initially with D Company and latterly as a driver with the Motor Transport. He remained with the Battalion throughout the time of the Partition of India and the final period in the newly formed Pakistan, returning home in March 1948. On his discharge he worked for many years with the Post Office – for much of it in Stirling. For some reason he was transferred as a Reservist to the Gordon Highlanders and did his annual training with one of their Territorial units. Bruce was a proficient boxer, winning his weight in the Scottish Command Competitions in 1945. He also had a very fine bass voice. He had been a choir boy in the Crieff Scottish Episcopal Church and he sang there beautifully to the very end of his life – but also made use of his vocal talent on many another occasion. Widowed some time earlier Bruce remained remarkably active for his age until he had a fall and a mercifully short period in hospital before his death.



S J Lindsay

JEREMY WORMWELL

Jeremy was wounded in Korea whilst serving with the 1st Battalion and did not return to Korea after being sent for treatment in Japan. His brother held on Emergency Commission in the Regiment at the end of the 2nd World War. He died on 2nd November 2015 in Devon.

R M Riddell



The following deaths have also been recorded:

Sandy Caird, died on 1st April aged 59. He served with the 1st Battalion from 1974-77. He was a member of the Angus Branch of the Association.

Peter Platt, died on 13th March 2016 aged 71. He was a Junior Soldier at the Highland Brigade Training Unit at Fort George in the early 1960s where he trained as a Drummer and Highland Dancer. He served in the Pipes and Drums in the 1st Battalion and was promoted to Corporal before he left the Army.

William Rungay, died in 2015 aged 94. He served with the 4th Battalion in France as part of the BEF. He was taken prisoner and was incarcerated for a time in Stalag XXA.

John Salmon Paterson died on 10 September 2015.

John Edward Lawler died in Auckland New Zealand on 3 October 2015.

THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY

By Colonel The Honourable WD Arbuthnott MBE

This article was originally envisaged as an account of where The Black Watch stood ten years after it was removed from the Order of Battle on 28 March 2006. Not long into the process of research it became obvious that the article should equally become a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Royal Regiment of Scotland. Both are inextricably linked and it readily became obvious that considering only the demise of The Black Watch was a very negative objective. While the interpretations are mine, as are the opinions, I have gleaned comments and views from a number of distinguished Black Watch and Royal Regiment of Scotland officers.

There is no doubt that The Black Watch continues to thrive in many forms; in the Association, the Cadet Battalions and the Museum and Castle. However the commemoration of this must in no way detract from the efforts of the new regiment and its members to form new traditions and look to the future. The name of The Black Watch has continued to appear in the press because of the activities of the new battalion. Over the last ten years The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (3 SCOTS) has proved itself on operations of a kind that few of the post Korea generations of BW soldiers ever came close to experiencing. 3 SCOTS have frequently and deservedly been in the news and we should pay tribute to the operational achievements of our successors. Happily all these activities are still attributed locally to The Black Watch.

However to what extent has The Black Watch continued to exist since 2006? There is no doubt that the Association has played a major part in this. Branches within Scotland and in London have flourished with increased membership and increased activity. The sight of a host of blue bonnets and red hackles is a stirring sight for old codgers and civilian bystanders alike. However over insistence of red hackles for serving soldiers (which means combats) deprives the young men of 3 SCOTS of the chance to show themselves off in full Highland panoply, medals and all! So there is a sense in which efforts to preserve The Black Watch can hinder the development of and recruiting for 3 SCOTS.

It goes without saying that appearances in the old Regimental area are good for recruiting and here the affiliation between companies of 3 SCOTS and Branches of the Association can only be good for both. The Colonel of The Royal Regiment of Scotland (Major General J M Cowan) has made plain his view that there is no contradiction between embracing the future while being proud of the past; linking The Black Watch and its traditional area with the present regiment. It also goes with the grain of public opinion which recognises the famous names of the old regiments.

The Association were lucky to have been in a strong financial position in 2006. Continuity in people who moved from Regimental

HQ to Association Head Office has also been a great boon. There is no doubt that the lead from the Association hierarchy has been a tremendous help to the Branches. But it is in the Branches that the strength is shown; all have their recognised 'feast days' which continue year after year, all Branches mutually supporting each other. Some, particularly in England were based on wartime or National Service affiliations and are having difficulty in sustaining themselves. This is only to be expected as time marches on and we have to pay tribute to the loyal souls who have kept these Branches going for so long. London is the exception where a gallant contingent continues to represent The Black Watch at the Remembrance Day parade. Against this trend the Edinburgh and Lothians Branch was recently formed and the Highland Branch in Inverness has made a great start and is thriving, based on its proximity to Fort George.

The central events have also had a good effect in drawing the Branches together, several of them reinforcing the idea of Balhousie Castle as the natural place to meet. However it was the idea of the memorial at Black Watch Corner that pulled the Association together at a critical time. The designing and installation of the memorial brought all together in a common cause with no conflict with the Royal Regiment of Scotland. Supporting and actively promoting Branch events as part of the Great War Centenary has also helped to keep the membership active and together.

The Association was in a strong financial position in 2006 but after the 28th of March the One Day's Pay Scheme funds were then redirected to the Royal Regiment of Scotland. Consequently the Association has relied upon funds from other Service Charities such as ABF The Soldiers' Charity to help part fund welfare cases. There has also been a readjustment of Regimental finances. The residue of the Regimental Trust Fund has been transferred to the Association, allowing the Association Trustees to make grants to The Black Watch Battalion. The Wavell Appeal Fund which in the past was used to support the Regimental Museum is being transferred to the Museum Trust.

The Reserve Army and the Cadets are two other important parts of the regimental family that have continued to strive to maintain links with each other and the rest of the family. The Cadets ensure that the Red Hackle is seen in Perthshire, Angus, Dundee and Fife. The Black Watch Battalion, based in Perth, feels that its link with Balhousie Castle is strong and cadets join in ceremonies and parades there as appropriate. The Reserve Army in the form of 51st Highland, 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland or 7 SCOTS is anxious to form closer links with the Association Branches but opportunities are limited and closer liaison seems hard to achieve.

The threatened demise of The Black Watch was a considerable impetus towards the setting up of a dedicated and self-owned home.



LCpl Robert Randall (3 SCOTS), Pte Gairoch (7 SCOTS), Sgt Scott Douglas (Adult Instructor Perth Viewlands Detachment ACF) and Scott Dalton (Black Watch Association) represent the Regimental family.



The Black Watch Battalion celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the formation of The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

Out of the trauma came the will to raise the necessary funds to establish The Castle and Museum and the present staff make great efforts to promote the Castle and Museum and, through that, promote The Black Watch itself. However members of the Association have yet to feel that the Castle is truly the home of The Black Watch. That will come. Meanwhile the Museum is rightly concentrating on becoming a world class visitor attraction and thereby making enough money to keep itself in existence. The shop and restaurant are fast becoming places of note in Perth, enhancing the reputation of the Castle and Museum.

On 28 March 2006 the sadness and anger felt by many at the loss of the Regiment we knew and loved was understandable but ten years on, the Regiment has had to face the reality of the situation. The Association is the beating heart of the old Regiment but it has held out a hand of friendship to the new, by encouraging the young men of

The Royal Regiment of Scotland (Regular and Reservists) to join The Black Watch Association and by creating links with the Companies of 3 SCOTS. MOD support to antecedent Regimental Museums will cease after 25 years and the Castle and Museum is making great strides to maintain the heritage and history of the Regiment. The confidence of the new Regiment has visibly increased over the last ten years. The operations and battles in Iraq and Afghanistan were an extraordinary proving ground for The Royal Regiment of Scotland and one hopes that they can take pride in the feeling of continuity that exists in the battalion but they can also take pride in the history that they have themselves created.

Finally, I hope that in another ten years, the name of The Black Watch will be remembered and talked about with pride by a new generation of soldiers, both Regular and Reserve as well as Army Cadets.

COMMEMORATION OF THE BATTLE OF LOOS, HOHENZOLLERN REDOUBT, AUCHY LES MINES

By Major R J W Proctor MBE

Madame Joelle Fontaine the Mayor of Auchy Les Mines and the local council invited Members of The Black Watch Association to attend the commemorative events to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Loos and the action which took place at the "Hohenzollern Redoubt" which is on the outskirts of the town. The event was masterminded by Monsieur Jean Luc Gloriant who had battled over the years to save the Redoubt from being turned into a landfill and to have a memorial installed to commemorate the men of The Black Watch, Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders and those of other regiments who fought there in September 1915 during the Battle of Loos. Many of those who were killed, including Captain The Hon Fergus Bowes-Lyon, The Queen Mother's brother, were killed in action on the 25th of September 1915, on the opening day of the battle.

A battlefield tour to various Commonwealth War Cemeteries was organised to tie in with the commemorative events and also a visit to Black Watch Corner where a short ceremony was held and Colonel Alex Murdoch laid a wreath and presented Mr Erwin Ureel our Belgian Liaison Officer with a statuette of the memorial. Two members of the Earl Haig Pipes and Drums were also present and played their composition "Lament for The Black Watch in Flanders" for the first time in public and one of their buglers sounded the Last Post.

A wreath laying ceremony was held at the French National War Memorial in Auchy Les Mines on Friday the 9th of October and a further ceremony took place at Quarry Cemetery where wreaths were laid by Colonel Alex Murdoch, Chairman of the

Black Watch Association and the grandson and great grandson of Fergus Bowes-Lyon, at his grave.

The Pipes and Drums of The Black Watch Battalion, Colour Party and a Guard of Honour also took part in the ceremony and the subsequent parade which followed including a march through Auchy Les Mines to the Hohenzollern Redoubt which went on for nearly two miles. All veterans completed the march as did our guests including the two descendents of Fergus Bowes Lyon, as well as Dr Billy Kennifick and Dr Derek Patrick of Dundee University.

Visits to the final resting place of Lieutenant Colonel Harry Walker Commanding Officer of the 4th Battalion who was mortally wounded on the 27th of September and fellow officer Major Tosh who was killed in action on the 25th of September were also made, with crosses being laid by our Association Chairman.

Crosses were also laid at the graves of local men including sixteen year old Alexander Wallace from Kirriemuir who died of wounds on the 9th of May after the Battle of Aubers Ridge. This was a poignant occasion for Major Ronnie Proctor as he recalled that he knew Robert (Bert) Wallace who was Alexander's brother and who served in The Royal Scots during the war and was awarded the Military Medal for gallantry.

All those who attended commented favourably on how the whole community was involved in the commemoration at Auchy Les Mines with local Junior and Secondary Schools taking part as well as French Veterans Organisations and members of the community. The hospitality given by our hosts was second to none and although in the initial planning stages communication had proved to be difficult, the whole event went off well and will be fondly remembered by all who attended.



The Black Watch Association party at Dud Corner Cemetery.

List of Association members who attended the ceremony at Auchy Les Mines.

Col and Mrs Murdoch, Maj and Mrs Proctor, Brian Smith, Kevin Murphy, Jim Colquhoun, Kenny Forbes, Jock Torrie, Jim Baird, John Glen, Ewan Smith, Douglas Cunningham, Chris Ottoway.



The French War Memorial in Auchy Les Mines. Lieutenant Colonel A F L Steele is standing beside the Association Chairman.



At the grave of Fergus Bowes-Lyon, Quarry Cemetery. From left to right: Pipe Major Grisdale, Mr Kenny Forbes, Mr Brian Smith, Mr John Glen and Drum Major Campbell.



The Association Chairman presents Erwin Ureel with a statuette of The Black Watch Corner statue to thank him for his extraordinary support during the project.

51st (HIGHLAND) DIVISION FORMATION SIGNS, 1940

By T Moles

Although some elements of the 51st Highland Division had taken the famous HD sign into wear during the Great War, both the Territorial and Regular Highland battalions did not adopt it until later.

Even though the TA battalions had been given official permission to wear the sign via a War Office letter dated 18 August 1924, photographic evidence places the date of adoption slightly earlier. The WO letter concluded with a very familiar warning that no costs should fall on Army funds and 'that the expense can be met from surplus Association funds without causing a deficit, or from regimental funds.'

The 51st Divisional signs of the Great War and early post-war period were slightly different from those worn in the mid 1920s and during the Second World War. From c.1918 they were constructed from cut-out red cloth letters sewn to blue cloth discs. Also available during the Great War were examples of embroidered red on white, but these appear to have been used exclusively on brassards. Those worn from the mid 1920s were embroidered red on blue. Printed examples came into use a little later in the Second World War, as did a number of embroidered blue on red examples.

Fourteen of the fifteen divisions within the BEF had divisional signs which had been worn during the Great War and would therefore have

been recognisable to the Germans. In the interest of security all units were ordered to adopt new signs. The very fact that the pipes and drums of the Highland Division had played in many villages and towns since they landed in France appears to have escaped officialdom's security reasoning.

The 51st pleaded to retain their beloved HD sign but their pleas were rejected. We are informed by Mike Chappell, an authority, that the Division chose, as a new sign, a stag's head on a green and purple background. This pattern was not worn and may only have reached the design stage.

The 51st landed at Le Havre in January 1940 and by about February the new divisional system was adopted and flashes were worn and displayed by all ranks on the upper arms of their newly issued battledress blouses. The 1st Gordons did not join the Division until 7 March and were not issued battledress until December.

What was chosen were St Andrew's crosses and bars to designate brigade and unit. Roderick Grant, a historian of the Division, quotes an unnamed Territorial officer who described the system as being in three colours; each representing a particular brigade with one, two or three bars in the same colour beneath the cross, signifying the battalions in the brigade.

Photographic evidence indicates that this was not the case for all three brigades. 152 Brigade adhered to the system described. On the other hand, 153 and 154 Brigades did not, and instead adopted a system of vertical and horizontal bars.

Recorded examples:

Divisional HQ

The cross was made up from one diagonal green bar and one of purple. The remnants of, or a very thinly constructed example of one of these crosses can be seen on the sleeve of Major General Victor Fortune when he was photographed standing beside Erwin Rommel.

152 Brigade – Red cross and bar(s)

2 Seaforths – Presumed to be one horizontal bar

4 Seaforths – Two horizontal bars under X. Oil painting of Sgt Donald McLeod DCM, (IWM ART LD2132)

4 Camerons – Three horizontal bars under X. Photograph taken at Bailleul, (IWM F3456)

153 Brigade – Colour unrecorded. A photograph does record that one of the Gordon battalions had one short thick horizontal bar under X.

4 BW – Possibly had one long thick vertical bar below X.

1 Gordons – Not recorded

5 Gordons – Not recorded

One photograph purporting to be of 4 BW, used in ‘Churchill’s Sacrifice of the Highland Division’, acknowledged as coming from the IWM, is also recorded in the IWM’s archive as 8 A&SH.

154 Brigade – Brown cross and bar(s)

1 BW – Not recorded

7 A&SH – One horizontal bar under X. Well known photograph taken near Abbeville early June (IWM F 4736)

8 A&SH – One thick vertical bar under X on the battledress blouse of Capt H D Malcolm. (SUSM/SNWM Acc. No. 1955-723).

In some way this short article is a plea for help in identifying exactly what the 1st and 4th Battalions The Black Watch wore as a divisional sign when they were with the British Expeditionary Force in 1940. Photographic evidence would give us the orientation and number of the bars but only an eyewitness or written record could give us the colour used by 1 and 4 BW. Unfortunately there appears to be no information in the Regimental Museum and the archives of the Imperial War Museum have actually added a little confusion – if any more were required – regarding this short lived and temporary divisional flash.

The red and blue HD sign was readopted when the Highland Division was reformed in the UK in August 1940.

“Sources:-”

WO Letter of 18 August 1924

The Highland Division, by Eric Linklater, 1942

The History of The Highland 51st Division, by J B Salmond, 1953

The Highland Division at War, by Roderick Grant, 1977.

Military Illustrated No. 28, September 1990.

British Battle Insignia (2), 1939-45, by Mike Chappell, 1991.

Churchill’s Sacrifice of the Highland Division, by Saul David, 1994

Imperial War Museum photographic archive.



A group photograph taken in an unknown location, possibly in 1940, as only the officer is wearing his kilt. It is thought to be a mixed group of 1st and 4th Battalion men.



A close up of the group photograph showing the Divisional/Brigade tactical flashes on the left sleeves of the battledress jackets.

LOUIS FLOOD – ARCHIVE PHOTOGRAPHS

On page 29 and 30 of the November 2015 Red Hackle Magazine we published some photographs which had been taken by Louis Flood. The selection of photographs in this magazine focuses on life at the Depot.



Driver training at Queens’ Barracks April 1959.



Maj A D Rowan-Hamilton MC is “pulled out” of the Barracks in March 1959.



RSM Kyle Shepherd – the last RSM of the Depot Queens' Barracks.



*The Depot Shooting Team April 1960.
Front Row – from left to right. Cpl Shivas, Lt C B Innes, Maj F J Burnaby-Atkins,
Sgt Hopkinson, Cpl R Ritchie
Back Row – from left to right. Pte Bill McGill, LCpl Jim Beadie, Pte Russell, Pte
Hunter, Cpl Jock Robb.*



RSM Wharton (left) and RSM John Walker August 1956.



Jim Baxter of Glasgow Rangers and Scotland arrives at the Depot in July 1960 and is briefed by Corporal "Big Ug" Anderson.

GLENORCHY RIFLE CORPS, PERTHSHIRE RIFLE VOLUNTEERS 1860-1865

By Thomas Moles

The 9th Glenorchy Company, Perthshire Rifle Volunteers, was raised on 12 April 1860 from the Breadalbane estates in Perthshire and Argyllshire. From that year the 9th is understood to have been attached to the 3rd Perthshire (Breadalbane) Rifle Volunteers, and then on 12 November 1861 the 2nd Administrative Battalion Perthshire Rifle Volunteers was formed, comprising of the 3rd and 10th Perth and the 9th Glenorchy.

The 2nd Administrative Battalion had its HQ at Taymouth Castle with the 9th Company having its own local HQ at Glenorchy. The original officers; Captain Archibald Burns Macdonald, Lieutenant John Mackay and Ensign Duncan Turner Campbell were commissioned on 12 April 1860.

When Captain Macdonald resigned, his place was taken by Francis Place on 29 April 1861; all were listed under 9th Argyllshire Rifle Volunteers in the Gazette.

Presumably the complete compliment of men was raised shortly after the officers were commissioned, yet remarkably the officers, and we assume the men, did not attend the first Royal Volunteer Review at Holyrood Park on 7 August 1860.

The Glenorchy Company was transferred to the 1st Administrative Battalion Argyllshire Rifle Volunteers in 1865 with a change of headquarters to Dalmally in 1869; it was disbanded the following year. (The 1st Administrative Battalion Argyllshire Rifle Volunteers later became the 4th (Stirlingshire) Volunteer Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders).

The uniform is well recorded by Major General Grierson as, grey doublets with green facing and kilts and belted plaids of Breadalbane Campbell tartan. Although the 1st Administrative Battalion Argyllshire Volunteers had its own uniform the 9th Company retained the dress adopted in

1860. The Glengarry badge is also recorded as a bugle with a boar's head on the centre surmounted by a crown.

We do not know what the sporran was like or if the cantle had a badge. Officers and senior NCOs would have had a pouch and pouch belt, both of which usually had a badge, however, without photographic evidence we may never know what these were like, although a boar's head was always popular in Argyllshire.

"Sources"

A Record of the Scottish Volunteer Force 1859-1908, by Major General J. M. Grierson C.V.O., C.B., C.M.G. William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1909. pp.321-324, 252.

A Narrative of The Royal Scottish Volunteer Review in Holyrood Park on the Seventh of August 1860, by Ernest Ralph Vernon. Edinburgh, 1860.

The London Gazette, 17 April 1860, p.1478.

The Edinburgh Gazette, 20 April 1860, p.547, and 14 May 1861, p.622.



Oval silver medal. Obverse engraved 'GLENORCHY Rifle CORPS'. Reverse engraved 'WON BY JOHN McDOUGALL March 1865.' (Private collection).

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 T J H Towler
Operations Officer:	Captain R J Stewart
Intelligence Officer:	Captain M A Dobson
Regimental Sergeant Major:	WO1 P (RSM) Marshall

COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

The last six months have been dominated by the battalion's conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry (LMI). It is an exciting new role that has considerable utility in Land operations; it gives the battalion more protection, firepower, mobility and reach relative to our light counterparts, and greater strategic agility in comparison to medium and heavy forces. Whether plugging the gap between early entry forces and armour in a major conflict, or being the unit of choice for less benign capacity building tasks, LMI is likely to be in high demand.

The battalion reorganised for the task in November with Rifle Companies formed around Alpha Company and Bravo Company. Charlie Company are now Manoeuvre Support Company made up of Mortars, Machine Guns and Assault Pioneers; and Delta (Light) have taken on the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) role with the Recce Platoon, Javelin, Int Section and Signals. Since the reorganisation, the Companies have been balancing their time between driver, command and crew training on their new vehicles, and regenerating their collective conventional capability; something that has waned in recent years due to consecutive six month deployments.

Now well into our stride, A Company have completed their vehicle conversion and started to exercise as a company, with the other companies not far behind. Fort George is proving to be an excellent location to develop the concept and the team have been busy developing driver training locations at Fort George and Lossiemouth and mounted ranges at Tain. The surrounding hills continue to be outstanding resources, free from the training area congestion felt further south. Battalion HQ has started to build up its staff planning procedures and we have had really useful visits to 1 R IRISH and 2 YORKS; two units ahead of us in the conversion process. Training gathers pace over the next three months alongside a programme of conceptual work (TEWTS, ROC drills, Command Posts exercises etc) to get us ready for a series of test exercises in the summer.

Having deployed to Kenya and France last year, Alpha Company will take the lead, battlegrouped to the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards for an exercise on Salisbury Plain in late June. They rejoin the rest of the battalion back on the Plain after summer leave, along with a squadron from the SCOTS DG, for a six week exercise that marks the end of our formal conversion to LMI and certifies our readiness for operations. Commitments for 2017 include company training exercises to Kenya and Jordan, and deployment on a United Nations operation in South Sudan towards the back end of the year. It is the nature of the job that this could of course change and we are keeping a close eye on events in North Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe!

Despite the demands of conversion, the battalion has managed to reinvest in sport and adventurous training, with some notable successes. The rugby team narrowly missed out on an Army Cup final spot and the football team are currently undefeated at the top of their league. Alpine and Nordic teams competed in the Divisional Championships in France finishing strongly against other battalions in the Regiment. We hosted a hard fought inter-company boxing night in Fort George in preparation for the Regimental boxing night at Meadowbank this summer and four members of the team went on to represent the Army in Scotland in their victory over the Navy at HMS Neptune in March. Finally, seventeen soldiers and officers entered this year's Spean Bridge Commando March, finishing fourth overall out of a large field, the best team in 1(UK) Division.

Conscious that we have so little time in the Fort over the last few years we are keen to make the most of it this summer and plan to host a number of events for our families, those serving away from battalion, the Association and our many supporters in Inverness, Fife, Dundee, Angus and Perth and Kinross. Details will follow separately, but I sincerely hope that you will be able to join us and see what we have been up to first hand.

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Having spent the past twelve months split across the Battalion's different commitments, the return of the Op TOSCA contingent in November 2015 allowed the CO to gather all his staff in one location for the first time. As you would expect, considerable time and effort has been spent on understanding the complexity of converting to the Light Mechanised Infantry role. Although 1 R IRISH and 2 YORKS have already done sterling work in this field, there is still considerable opportunity for the Battalion to have input in this new capability. In particular the efforts of the Training Officer and RSO have been immense, as we seek to balance training priorities against a backdrop of tight conversion timelines and a need to refocus the staff on Battle Group planning in order to be ready for Ex WESSEX STORM later on this year.

The return of the IO from his seven month attachment to Recruiting Group has enabled a greater emphasis on Defence Engagement. Defence Engagement provides a number of opportunities across all ranks for exciting short term deployments. 3 SCOTS soldiers have deployed in support of: EX NASAR (Qatari Bde Ex), Op ADDITION (Short Term Training Team (STTT) in Saudi Arabia) and a (Corps of Army Music) Piping Training Team in Jordan. This has all been in addition to a number of visits by both the Bahrain Defence Force and Qatar Military College to Fort George, and reciprocal visits to both by the CO.

Perhaps our biggest challenge though will be maintaining the momentum generated by the inevitable staff churn. First to depart will be Major Nigel Jordan-Barber. He has brought the depth of conceptual knowledge and understanding that only a former ICSC (L) instructor can. This has been critical in maintaining staff output over a number of challenging and disparate deployments. Having been selected for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel his next job is in Northwood. The other major move will be that of the Regimental Sergeant Major; having been selected for a commission RSM Marshall will move in April to take command of the Battalion Recruiting Team, where it is certain his relentless pursuit of excellence and promotion of the Army Leadership Code will add real value. The IO and Ops Officer will also hand over to Captains Voce Russell and Treasure who will assume the respective roles.



The Battalion Spean Bridge Speed March team.



The Officers and SNCOs serve lunch to the Jocks.

THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee: Major M Stanning
Mess Secretary: Captain C G McRobbie

The Mess has learned a lot about itself in the last few months. We now know that even the biggest, scariest looking LE Officer has an inner soft spot for some 80s tunes (and the Travolta dance moves to suit). We now know who the secret sci fi geeks are among us as they struggled to stay awake the day after seeing the new Star Wars film at midnight. Finally, we now know that some of us can't even go to Raigmore A&E without meeting an old acquaintance.

The period started with our James Bond themed Ball. At first it appeared as if there was a higher power trying to curtail our attempts to have fun (though the Padre assures us it was not the one that he talks to) as flights were adversely affected by events that unfolded at Gatwick airport. Following 007's example nothing got in the way of the mission and the party delivered everything that people had hoped for.

From there the Mess moved onto Christmas week starting with the age old tradition of carolling. Next up was the annual visit to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess which resulted in the unforeseen victory of the host Mess. Of note however was OC Alpha (Grenadier) Company who managed to out cook his Sergeant Major, a former chef, in the omelette competition.

As Red Hackle Day arrived the tone for the night's activity was set early as the RSM arranged Bubble football. This proved to be more entertaining that could have ever been believed but it was also a lot more physically demanding than originally anticipated. As the Mess licked its wounds, the new Mess Games Master, Capt Loudon, prepared for gaming in the Mess. The subbies were primed, the Adjutant had taken his acting lessons and we were set for the showdown. The result was that honour was restored for the Officers' Mess.

We must say goodbye to Padre John Duncan who retires from the Army. Major Glen Hogg moves to the Army Reserves following a distinguished career and the Battalion Second-in-Command leaves us on promotion. We wish them all the best of luck.

As we are out with the old we must welcome in the new. 2Lt Nick Hannay joins us on commissioning as does Lt Liddell from the Royal Marines on attachment for a year. The Marines are obviously wanting him to learn some best practice to take back to their organisation.



An Officers' Mess families lunch.

We also welcome the pitter patter of tiny feet in both the O'Neill and Treasure households.

There has clearly been some very proud dads strutting around the Fort, though on occasion they also appear a little sleep deprived!

WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Regimental Sergeant Major: WO1 (RSM) P Marshall
President of the Mess Committee: WO2 (CSM) I Carlisle
President of the Entertainments' Committee: CSgt E Nicole

The Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess has been reunited after being split for nearly two years. With the end of Op VOCATE and Op TOSCA we are now enjoying having all the Mess members home again. The pace of life in the Battalion remains busy however we have managed to fit in some entertaining nights. WO2 Hannah and his Burns Night Committee delivered an enjoyable night supported by seamless performances from all of the Mess Staff.

Mrs Binnie presented a memorial bench in memory of her son, Sergeant Sean Binnie who died on operations whilst serving with the Battalion. The bench sits proudly outside the Mess for all to use. The Officers were invited to a Games Night held in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. Once the games started it was clear to see that there could only be one winner. Although there were claims that the judges had some bias, we proved our sportsmanship, including Sgt Sean Pratt who won Peg Puss with an impressive 67 pegs to the face.

We held a Ladies Dinner Night which was soon followed with the Christmas Sweater Night, which was witness to some world class dance moves by some of the members. The Mess is starting to undergo some improvements which includes a new lounge, an upgrade to the main bar and the recent edition of a new table tennis table in the sports bar.

The Mess welcomes on promotion Sergeants Kyle, Wilson, Lewaki and Mackie, as well as Sergeants Lees and Barron, SSgt Gordan and Sgt Tripney who had been posted in. We also bid farewell to CSgt Copeland, Sgt Murray and CSgt Grant.

Our congratulations go to Sgt Campbell and CSgt Lockhart on the birth of their children and to WO2 Taylor for receiving the Charley Hankins award for his enduring hard work in the Rear Operations Group. The RSM is leaving the Mess on Commissioning and we will be sad to see him leave but WO2(RQMS) Kevin Stacy has been selected for promotion and will take over as RSM in early May.



Sgt Pratt, CSgt Hunter and Sgt Blake enjoying being in the Officers' Mess.

CORPORALS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee: Cpl McTernan
President of the Entertainments Committee: Cpl Gilmour
Treasurer: Cpl Browne
Property: Cpl Harris

With the end of OP TOSCA and Exercises in Kenya and France, the Corporals' Mess has been reunited. The Mess members have been busy instructing within their relevant sections/platoons, to help the Battalion in the re-rolling to Light Mechanised Infantry. As we are all back at Fort George we have also been able to have a few functions.

Cpl Taylor was the PMC for the Christmas Ball held at the Drumossie Hotel Inverness. The event was an excellent night with loads of prizes to

be won. Cpl Fay stepped up to be the PMC at the Burns Night Supper. There were excellent renditions of poems, plenty of food and even more drink to go around.

The Mess would like to say farewell to Corporals Mudunavosa (RMAS), King (4 SCOTS), Walstow (SCOTS DG) Paterson (51 X), Ahmed and Uluilakeba. We also bid farewell to Lance Corporals Adu, Fyfe, Oliver, Wilding and Sweetin. We have to say congratulations but farewell to the recently promoted Sergeants Arnold, Bellshaw, Lavery, Lawaci, Smith and Steele.

We would like to welcome back Cpl Nicholson and LCpl Brown from civilian life as they realised that the grass wasn't greener on the other side. We also welcome Cpl Reay, Cpl Neil, LCpl Gabriel and LCpl Thompkins. The following have been promoted and have joined the Mess; LCpls Wilson, Cunningham, Meechan, Finlayson, Dibba, Lee, Kah, Wallace, Keenan, McCallum, Tudor, Lyon, Wilson, MacDonald, Kennedy, Vunibobo, Lockley and Murray.

We would like to congratulate Corporals Jamieson, Stott, Methven, Cameron and Cooper on their promotion. We also congratulate Cpls Holliday, Koro and Qalobulaiwasaikabara who have been awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. With the RSM coming to the end of his tenure the Mess will be sad to see him leave. On the 6 May 2016 we will hold his dining out and then we will welcome the new RSM WO2(RQMS) Stacey who has been selected for promotion.

TRAINING WING

Training Officer:	Captain C M Treasure
Training Warrant Officer:	WO2 R McCready
Training Colour Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Sgt A Bowe
Royal Army Physical Training	
Corps Instructor:	Staff Sergeant Murray
Training Wing DMI:	Corporal K Wishart

The Training Wing has been at the forefront of the Battalion's conversion training. Firstly, we have been given responsibility for the full spectrum of preparation, as we seek to balance training priorities against a backdrop of tight conversion timelines and a need to refocus on our infantry skills. Secondly, thanks to the hard work from the Quartermaster's Department, the Training Wing and gym have moved into Fort George. This makes us much more accessible for day to day advice and assistance and makes the gym much more reachable.

On the Battalion's return from Op TOSCA, the Training Wing team began a programme of education on 'how to train smart' aimed at re-educating our commanders on policy and best practice as we started our journey to readiness. This training included visits to our local military training areas and privately owned land to remind the team of the fantastic opportunities the Highlands offer to design demanding and imaginative training. We also delivered presentations and debates concerning training design, safety and practices.

Perhaps our biggest challenge has been designing the Battalion's conversion plan. To convert to Light Mechanised Infantry the Battalion must first train a large number of drivers and commanders, able to control the armoured vehicles safely. We must then learn how to use them tactically. All of this lengthy training must be balanced alongside the need to retain our dismounted infantry skills. There are three main vehicle platforms in our fleet. Firstly, the Foxhound vehicle that will be used by our strike companies. Secondly, the RWIMK+ vehicle that will be used by our Recce, Anti-Tank and Machine Gun Platoons. Thirdly, the Husky vehicle that will be used by our Mortar Platoon and Light Aid Detachment. To drive or command one of these vehicles you need to have completed a two or three week course under the tuition of one of the Battalion's Driver Maintenance Instructors (DMIs).

Our DMIs have all been educated at the Armour Centre in Bovington, and are qualified to train soldiers to drive and command the platforms. The training that our soldiers undertake is completed across a variety of local training areas including Fort George, Kinloss and Lossiemouth. The students learn how to complete basic maintenance and how to control the vehicles across an assortment of terrain.

The Driver and Commander Courses prepare the students to undertake tactical activity with the vehicles. This will take place with their respective sub units with the assistance of DMIs. Alpha (Grenadier) Company will be the first Company to complete their collective training up to platoon level, using Tain Air Weapons Range and local private land.

Elsewhere, the Training Wing has been asked by the Commanding Officer to create a Junior Leadership Development Programme (JLDP). The aim of this training is to continue a junior commander's

professional development post their Section 2IC Course. This will prepare and select them for either the Section Commanders' Battle Course or a Support Weapons Course. The training will be conducted every Friday for those in barracks and will include physical development training and instructional periods. These periods will cover topics across all of the components of fighting power and will be led by a wide variety of commanders in the Battalion.



Husky driver and commander training in the local area.

ALPHA (GRENADEIER) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major B O'Neill
Second-in-Command:	Lieutenant A Pearson
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 G Hannah
Officer Commanding 1	
(Senior Highland) Platoon:	2nd Lieutenant A Gibson
Platoon Sergeant 1	
(Senior Highland) Platoon:	Sergeant Bellshaw
Officer Commanding 2 Platoon:	Lieutenant A Bullen
Platoon Sergeant 2 Platoon:	Sergeant McMaster
Officer Commanding 3 Platoon:	Lieutenant A Atterbury
Platoon Sergeant 3 Platoon:	Sergeant Mackie

Alpha (Grenadier) Company has had a highly productive and stimulating few months. The Jocks' programme has been focused on conventional training for Ex WESSEX STORM over summer 2016 (two of them!). Consequently, the training has led them through a programme of regular physical training, an array of battle lessons and live fire ranges. A key focus has been training to drive and command the Foxhound vehicles which will soon be integral to the Company's operating capability for the challenges they face on exercises later in the year.

Life in Fort George has been interesting and varied for Alpha (Grenadier) Company. Physical training, including sports and adventurous training, has been at the core of the Company's training programme, with the Jocks' fitness improving at an impressive rate. Undertaking regular runs, circuit sessions and weighted marches as part of normal company training has prepared the Grenadiers to face a variety of physical challenges. Indeed, confidence is running so high that several Grenadiers have entered the Spean Bridge March – a gruelling seven-mile Commando speed

march to be completed in under an hour. On 12 March 2016, Pte Clarke, Pte Ross, LCpl Black, Sgt Bellshaw and 2Lt Gibson completed this daunting challenge.

The Grenadiers have also been eager participants in the Battalion's sporting life. Pte Osanya, LCpl Christie, and 2Lt Gibson helped the rugby team reach the semi-final of the Army Championship. Similarly, Ptes Donoghue and Matthew have played for the Battalion football team. Boxing has also attracted a strong cohort from the Grenadiers; through the instruction of Cpl Wells and other coaches Ptes Allan, Hewitson, Knox and Carr, and LCpl Wilson competed in the Battalion Boxing Competition.

Adventurous training has been an important pillar of development. On 27 November 2015, six soldiers from across the Battalion deployed on Ex FROSTED HACKLE, an eight week exercise encompassing the Army Winter Sports calendar. The team was drawn from all ranks, with Lt Atterbury as OIC and Cpl Bell as 2IC. The remainder of the team consisted of Ptes Matthew, Watt (both A Coy), Mundell (B Coy) and Wilkinson (C Coy).

Ex FROSTED HACKLE is the Infantry Alpine Skiing training camp and championship held in Val D'Isere, France. Ptes Matthew and Watt had competed previously, whilst the remainder were new to the racing scene. Results were mixed due to some unfortunate falls at crucial stages; however Pte Matthew raced extremely well as an individual, winning junior golds and ultimately being selected for the Infantry Team to compete on Ex SPARTAN HIKE and Ex LION'S CHALLENGE.

Ex SPARTAN HIKE is the Army Semi-Finals, held in Serre Chevalier. This competition sees a marked increase in skill as teams from across the Army compete to qualify for the Army Championships. The team performed well overall and a result of 6th in the Team Slalom highlighted the gains made. It was superb to see Pte Mundell, competing at this level for the first time, repeatedly beating his seed number – eventually finishing 30 places above his starting position.

Ex LION'S CHALLENGE brings the tops skiers from across the Army together. Pte Matthew qualified for this, which was an excellent achievement considering he had never skied before deploying on Ex FROSTED BLADE. Unfortunately, a bad fall meant he was ruled out of the last three races but he is determined to compete again next year.

The remainder of the Company enjoyed a highly formative live firing package at Kirkcudbright in November 2015. Building from a foundation of individual fire and manoeuvre, the Company progressed to a live platoon attack, with the Jocks revising and honing their battlefield skills throughout. Challenged by the weather and the arduous terrain, the Grenadiers proved their readiness to fight. Sgt Mackie, 3 Platoon's newly appointed Platoon Sergeant, displayed his skill in command during the platoon attack.

Since returning from Christmas leave, we have focused on conversion to a Light Mechanised Infantry company. This has involved individual soldiers training to drive the Foxhound vehicles, whilst the officers and NCOs have learnt to command the vehicles. Both challenges have proved highly stimulating and rewarding.

The Jocks have been put through their paces gaining Cat C driving licences and then immediately learning to use the advanced technology which the vehicles provide, and the methods by which it

is maintained in the field. A particular highlight has been testing the Foxhounds to their limits on off-road tracks. As Pte Donoghue will no doubt tell you, these sessions have tested the Jocks' own mettle on occasion, too!

Operating from vehicles is a new challenge. Whilst the Jocks have embraced this wholeheartedly, adapting to the constraints inside the vehicles has felt somewhat alien to soldiers used to living out of a bergen in a woodblock. The vehicles can carry six men and their equipment but it is quite tight. As such, everything from dismounting from the vehicles, to evacuating a casualty from them, must be learned and rehearsed meticulously. Thoroughly invigorated by its conversion to a Light Mechanised Infantry company, Alpha (Grenadier) Company is eagerly anticipating the summer of 2016 as they become masters of their new role.



The Alpha Company Biathlon team was led by Lieutenant Pearson.



LCpl Vueteroy makes an impact on the rugby pitch.



A Company carried out field training in Kirkcudbright.



Major O'Neill takes aim.

BRAVO COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major A Bayne
Second-in-Command:	Captain Z Smyth
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 M Gray
Officer Commanding 5 Platoon:	2nd Lieutenant N Hannay
5 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant S Hendry
Officer Commanding 6 Platoon:	Lieutenant T Liddell RM
6 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant B Smith
Officer Commanding 7 Platoon:	Lieutenant W Kelly
7 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant S Pratt

Bravo Company has gone through a period of change since returning from Op TOSCA. We have bid farewell to Lt Harris, Royal Yeomanry, Lt Pearson who has turned to the dark side that is Alpha (second best Rifle) Company and Lt Christie who will be heading to Catterick. Amongst the Company there are a number of new faces from both the other companies and the Depot. With the Christmas week out of the way Bravo Company has started the year as it means to go on, with an abundance of training, ranges and PT.

Whilst maintaining continuity in the form of all three Platoon Sergeants we have also welcomed three new Platoon Commanders: Will Kelly from Delta Company (only to see him leave and take command of a Machine Gun Platoon), Nick Hannay from PCBC and Tom Liddell on loan from the Royal Marines. With Major Bayne still at the helm and CSM Gray and Capt Zach Smyth (both ably assisted by the clerks LCpl Taylor and Pte Ritchie) in support and now bolstered by the addition of a REME detachment, Bravo Company is set for an impressive 2016.

Bravo Company has been sending a steady stream of soldiers to get trained on the latest bit of kit that's arrived at Battalion, the Foxhound. Soon the Battalion will have fully converted to a Light Mechanised role, using the Foxhound to improve its mobility and strike capability.

The conversion to the Light Mechanised Infantry role has been a fascinating challenge and the Company has had to be flexible in working around the commitments made to getting individuals trained on the Foxhound. Not only that, but the change in role itself has meant the Company is adapting how it is training to utilise the strengths of the vehicle. The Foxhound capability will allow the Company to cover long distances and drop off troops a safe distance from the enemy, which would be covered by foot. This has meant that physical training has focused on being able to move across these short distances at pace and be ready to fight at the end of it.

So how does a seven and a half tonne armoured vehicle compare to a normal road car? "It's surprisingly agile" says Cpl Palmer, who has been training as a Foxhound commander, "but it'll get cosy in the back when we're fully loaded". Bravo Company has been conducting numerous exercises aimed at bringing the Jocks up to a high fighting standard. Starting from the basics of navigation and camouflage, moving on to contact drills and section attacks, training in 2016 has started at a rapid pace.

The first exercise tested the soldiers camouflage and concealment, as well as their navigation skills. Tasked with acquiring information on several locations, the Jocks led fireteam strength patrols to covertly observe enemy positions, avoiding detection, before moving on to their next target. With the corporals taking a back seat as markers, the Jocks were able to build confidence with their navigation and personal skills.

From observation, Bravo Company moved onto a day of section attacks, over varied terrain from grassland, woodland and undulating scrubland. Starting with demonstrations and slow time walkthroughs, all were put through their paces with the 2ICs stepping up to act as Section Commanders, monitored by the corporals and Platoon Commanders. Acting one up is a crucial part of training and many of the Lance Corporals are capable of stepping up to the IC role, a good sign at the start of the training year.

Bravo Company is looking forward to a three week live fire package before moving on to platoon level exercises where we can really stretch the skills of the Company's soldiers and commanders.

In addition to working hard and in the interests of cohesion, Bravo Company let off some steam at the British Legion Club in Inverness in February. The evening started off with some games, courtesy of Lt Kelly. Leading by example Company 2IC Capt Smyth stepped up to the first challenge of blowing flour out of a pint glass, beating LCpl Lyon; he then spent the rest of the evening coughing up flour.

Despite the strain caused by external courses, sport, leave, and Foxhound training, Bravo Company is working hard to remain fit, cohesive and, above all, able to fight. With Ex WESSEX STORM only a

few months away we have a focus and a task ahead and after a turbulent couple of years will be re-established as a Rifle Company ready to deploy anywhere, anytime.



Soldiers from Bravo Company practice their casualty evacuation drills.



Bravo Company physical training – the stretcher race.



Bravo Company Boxing team who won the inter-company competition.

CHARLIE (MS) COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

Officer Commanding:	Major MP Stanning
Second-in-Command:	Captain DF Hamilton
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 K Blackley
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant W Carnegie

With a new Light Mechanised Infantry role came a new order of battle, and dramatic changes were afoot which saw Charlie (Fire Support) Company change fundamentally and become Charlie (Manoeuvre Support) Company. The Recce and Sniper Platoons were shipped out to ply their trade with Delta Company, and the Machine Gun Platoons were brought back into the Company to join the Mortar and Assault Pioneer Platoons.

The Company bid a fond farewell to Maj Al Phillips as he headed off to Staff College after topping up his tan as Chief Military Liaison Officer for Op TOSCA in Cyprus. Maj Martin Stanning has taken up the reins, delighted to have escaped from his previous role of Adjutant. Along with the new OC, has been the appointment as Second-in-Command of Capt David Hamilton; he was not quite so delighted to be free of his previous role as OC Recce! Continuity has been provided throughout by Company Sergeant Major Kevin Blackley, another Cyprus veteran, happy to be back with soldiers after six months wooing civilians with his charm. The Company has also been fortunate to inherit a strong G4 team headed up by CSgt Billy Carnegie and the ferocious Bonnie.

With the Company complete, we have everything we require to forge what will become the backbone of the Battalion over the next six months. Ex WESSEX STORM in August is the objective for the near future and will see the full power of the Savages unleashed for the first time in their new role.



C Company ready to "manoeuvre".

MORTAR PLATOON

Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant NJT Coles
Second-in-Command:	Sergeant E Mortley
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant J Steele

In October the majority of the Platoon was involved in the Installation of the new Governor of Edinburgh Castle. This meant spending a few days in Edinburgh, which the Jocks took full advantage of, and it is fair to say enjoyed. The next few weeks were spent brushing up on our mortar drills in preparation of Ex SWALE RAPTOR, an artillery exercise. This then led into Christmas week before we went into a very well deserved period of leave.

We returned to a very busy programme. The Platoon deployed to Salisbury Plain Training Area to support 5 Regiment Royal Artillery on Ex SWALE RAPTOR. Our support to them was greatly appreciated as without us they would have not been able to carry out their CT1 training. The main focus for the Platoon in the New Year was to get the necessary members fully trained up as Husky drivers and commanders to aid our transition to the Light Mechanised Infantry role. The Platoon also enjoyed a period of live firing at Fort George before deploying to Barry Buddon for one week to carry out LFTT. In April we spent a weekend live firing with 7 SCOTS at Warcop.

Congratulations to Sgt Kyle and LCpl Dibba on their recent promotions as well as to Capt Treasure, Pte Kachimanga and Pte Jones whose partners have all recently given birth. We would also like to congratulate Cpl McKenzie for passing the Mortar Advanced Course and LCpls Leith and Salter for passing the Mortar Standards Course. LCpl Salter received an instructor's recommendation. LCpl Peebles and LCpl Scott have also been successful on passing the Husky DMI Course and will now be very valuable to the Battalion in the running of courses.

Finally we would like to say farewell to Capt Treasure and thank him for all the hard work that he has put in over the last 18 months. We would like to welcome Lt Coles who follows in his father's footsteps as OC Mortars, no pressure! Also we were delighted to see LCpl Brown re-join the battalion from civilian life and Ptes Lorenzo and Jeans-Bawden who have recently joined us from other companies.



Sgt Kyle on the slopes.



A Mortar Platoon Husky during driver training.



The Mortar Platoon learn about the new Husky vehicle.

MACHINE GUN PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Lieutenant J Young and Lieutenant W Kelly
Platoon Sergeants: Sergeant D Bruce and Sergeant A Lavery

The Machine Gun Platoon has been undergoing a transition since the Battalion's reorbat in November. Platoon Commanders have come and gone with Lt John Young forming the Platoon before moving to ITC Catterick. Lt Will Kelly has moved in to carry on the good work. We have been lucky enough to retain a wealth of experience at Section Commander level and we have gained a number of enthusiastic young JNCOs and Ptes, keen to learn their trade in a Support Weapon Platoon.

This mixture of experience has resulted in training being stripped right back to the basics. The Jocks were introduced to the workings of the Fire Support Weapons and the effects that they have on the battlefield. Despite having hands on the weapons throughout their training at ITC Catterick, the soldiers had to begin to understand how a gun line works and how to use different techniques to calibrate aiming, when the target could not be seen.

The Platoon has already undergone two cadres in 2016. January 2016 formed the GPMG Light Role Cadre, which allows the soldiers to seek familiarity with the GPMG, aiming with the iron sights and firing from the shoulder. Instruction begins at basic weapon handling level and ends in the passing of the Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (ACMT). It also familiarises the user with the tripod to increase stability when firing. This increases weapon handling comfort and acts as a gateway to the SF Cadre.

Due to the dedication of the soldiers, the cadre was a great success, allowing the Platoon to push through the SF Cadre in February. This forms the basis of when the Platoon are used in the Fire Support role, and can fix and suppress the enemy from long distance with devastating effect, whilst rifle companies manoeuvre for the strike. The soldiers are taught to work as a pair, with one firer and another working to ensure the weapon is still calibrated onto the target. Communication and cohesion must be at a maximum within the pair and the gun-line in order to reach full effect. The first week consisted of instruction within Fort George and the second week on the ranges in Tain finishing with the GPMG SF ACMT.

The equipment that is necessary for the Machine Gun Platoon to operate is heavy in comparison to a Rifle Platoon; therefore the

physical training has been focussed around bringing the equipment from the armoury and using it as part of a weighted build-up training package.

The Platoon has also had an impressive performance at Battalion sporting events. LCpl Spears, and Ptes MacLennan, Adamson and Grant have represented the Battalion at football, while Lt Kelly and LCpls Rokoduguni and Vunibobo have represented the Battalion on the rugby pitch. Lt Kelly and LCpl Rokoduguni were then selected for a trial with the Corps of Infantry team and LCpl Rokoduguni is now in the running to be selected for the Army Team.

Most importantly, our thoughts go out to Pte Millar and his family, who are recovering from a serious car crash. We all wish him a successful recovery and hope that one day he will serve alongside us once more.

PIPES AND DRUMS/ASSAULT PIONEER PLATOON

Pipe President: Major M Stanning
Pipe Major: WO2 R K Grisdale
Drum Major: Sergeant A L Campbell

This period for the Pipes and Drums started after some well-deserved leave, following the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Within a few weeks of returning we travelled to France, with other members of the Battalion to attend commemorations for the Battle of Loos. This included a wreath laying ceremony at the grave of Captain Fergus Bowes-Lyon at Quarry Cemetery.

Upon returning, the Pipes and Drums then, grabbed their factor 50, shades and flip flops and travelled to the other side of the Atlantic, the Caribbean to more precise, to attend the highlight of the 2015 calendar, the Bermuda Tattoo 2015. It was such a tough life for the first few days, rehearsing next to the 8th best beach in the world. We did however manage to fit in some sunbathing amidst the hectic schedule. One of the most prominent events the band attended was at the High Commissioners residence. This saw the Pipes and Drums feature on Bermuda Television marching through Black Watch Pass, a pass dug out by our predecessors over a hundred years ago. It wasn't all sunshine and Bermuda Venoms (the local cocktail); the middle night of performances saw torrential rain hit the show during the finale. This left bagpipes bubbling, rain bouncing into the drummers faces from rain hitting their drums and feather bonnets looking like a dog just climbed out of a canal. An admin nightmare.

After the band came back from the Caribbean, the pace did not let up. Performances including Remembrance events in Dundee and the Cenotaph in London, as well as a Freedom Parade in Forfar saw the ceremonial calendar gradually wind down before Christmas leave.

Amongst this busy ceremonial time, the Pipes and Drums has had to fit in some vital Assault Pioneer training. This has included members of the Platoon attending Assault Pioneer Basic and Section Commanders courses, as well as some job specific training such as chainsaw training. The Platoon has also spent the first part of 2016 getting ready for the new role of Light Mechanised Infantry along with the rest of the Battalion. This will also see them completing their own Platoon level training, culminating with their own exercise in Barry Buddon just before Easter leave, fully preparing them for the busy military training year ahead.

We also welcomed Sgt Alastair Tripney to the Band in September. He was returning to the SCOTS after a two year posting as Pipe Major with 1 R Irish. We have said farewell to Pte Montgomery as he left for civilian life. We also finish with a fond farewell to WO2 Pipe Major Grisdale (Scouse). After a five year appointment as Pipe Major with the Band starting in 2011, he leaves the Battalion to take up his new role with the RHF, 2 SCOTS. He will be sadly missed by many and we thank him for all his work in raising the profile of the Platoon. He found the quality in the Pipes and Drums and also raised the morale of the Platoon by getting out on the civilian pipe band circuit and achieving world class positions, something that has not been achieved by any other military pipe band in a very long time. We wish him and his wife Kelly all the best for the future.

The Pipes and Drums would like to congratulate Drum Major Campbell and his wife Kirstin on the birth of Rosie May Campbell, who chose to arrive on Christmas Eve, making this Christmas one to remember.

The Pipes and Drums/Assault Pioneer Platoon now look forward to another busy few months with more exercises, as well as conducting more ceremonial tasks for the Royal Family at Holyrood in June.



The Pipe Major and Drum Major at the grave of Capt Fergus Bowes-Lyon.



Pipes and Drums keeping up to date with their demolition training.



The Bermuda Tattoo was held in October 2015.

DELTA (ISR) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major R Smith
Second-in-Command:	Captain L Hawke
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 I Carlisle
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant D Buist

The past six months has seen many changes for Delta Company. As part of the Light Mechanised Infantry orbat the Company has been chosen to become the newly formed Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Company. After returning from Op TOSCA in October the Company began this process of conversion. First we said goodbye to 13 and 15 Platoons, who were sent complete to Bravo and Alpha (Grenadier) Companies respectively. We also said goodbye to CSM Anderson who has now been posted out of the Battalion and CSgt Carnegie who has moved to Charlie (Manoeuvre Support) Company. In return we inherited the Recce Platoon, Sniper Platoon, Anti-Tank Platoon and CIS Platoon.

The new year started with a range package, a company level exercise and then prior to Easter leave, a live fire exercise in Barry Buddon. Concurrent to all of this the platoons have been qualifying their soldiers on Driver and Commander Courses for the new vehicles.

This new role will provide us with many challenges. In early March we welcomed Major Rob Smith to the Company. He has assumed the post of Officer Commanding and we look forward to continuing the conversion to ISR Company under his command.



Cpl Jamieson of D Company teaches during training.

ANTI-TANK PLATOON

Officer Commanding:	Captain Walker
Second-in-Command:	Colour Sergeant Buist
Platoon Sergeant:	Acting Sergeant Wilson
1 Det Commander:	Corporal Campbell
2 Det Commander:	Corporal Gracie
3 Det Commander:	Corporal Morecroft
4 Det Commander:	Corporal Morrison

The Anti-Tank Platoon has gone from strength to strength. They have recovered in good order from Op TOSCA and re-qualified as Javelin Operators as well as Heavy Machine Gun Gunners. Additionally the Platoon has been training with the RWIMIK + vehicle which will be ours as a part of the new Light Mechanised Infantry role. We have also undergone a re-orbat to Delta (ISR) Company, linking us closely to the Recce and Sniper Platoons.

The Javelin Operator and HMG gunner Cadre was held in Kirkcudbright and aimed to re-train the Jocks on the Javelin missile system as well as the HMG. The Platoon conducted a series of demanding phases to ensure they were fully competent before deploying on their final test exercise. During this they battled storm Frank, as well as the enemy and successfully demonstrated their competence. The Cadre finished with a live fire package with the HMGs. It was remarked by one of the Jocks that the sight of four HMGs firing simultaneously, was akin to a scene from Star Wars with the volume of tracer flying down range!

Training with the RWIMK+ continues and we will shortly be integrating the new found driving skills with our tactical acumen to prove that the Platoon once again are at the top of their game before being tested on Ex WESSEX STORM in the Summer.

Congratulations must be passed to CSgt Buist as he has been selected for promotion to WO2; not only has he been the Anti-Tank 2IC but also Delta (ISR) Company's CQMS; LCpl Kah must also be congratulated for finishing the Cadre as top student.



Private Edgar looking happy to be deploying on the final exercise.



Captain Walker and some of his platoon on the RWIMIK+ Commanders' Course.



Private Brown teaches a HMG lesson.

RECCE PLATOON

Platoon Commander:	Captain J Fish
Second-in-Command:	Colour Sergeant C Sharp MC
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant D Blake

Since last appearing in the Red Hackle, the Reconnaissance Platoon has undergone a significant amount of change. Indeed it continues and will do so for the foreseeable future as the Battalion transitions to the Light Mechanised Infantry role.

Capt Hamilton has left the Platoon to assume the role of Charlie (Manoeuvre Support) Company 2IC and we wish him well with his new job. The Platoon now welcomes Capt James Fish back from ITC Catterick to assume the role of OC. Congratulations must go to Cpl McFarlane for completing the Light Role Reconnaissance Commanders' Course, along with Cpl Jones for completing the Jungle Warfare Instructors' Course. Congratulations must also be extended to Ptes Muir and Newall for successfully passing their PJNCO Cadre. LCpl Cunningham and Pte McGinn were selected to represent Delta Company at the intercompany boxing championships. LCpl Cunningham was selected to fight at the Army versus Navy Boxing where he was victorious in his bout. It is with sadness that we prepare to say a fond farewell to both CSgt Sharp MC and LCpl McWilliams. LCpl McWilliams is not moving too far, as he is due to transfer and become a RAPTCI after successfully passing RAPTC selection. CSgt Sharp MC is leaving the Army after 14 years of service, of which 11 were in the Recce. We wish both of them all the very best with their future endeavours.

The Platoon entered a section into the infamous Cambrian Patrol Competition. The team of Capt Hamilton, Cpl Methven, LCpls Gascaulayawa and Kah (from the Anti-Tanks), Ptes Muir, Braes, Marshall and Newall excelled themselves achieving a silver medal. Credit for the achievement must also be given to the rest of the Platoon for helping to prepare the team. Following this, the Platoon went on leave.

After Christmas, the Platoon began dusting off its low level skills and drills, resulting in a visit to the ITC Catterick's final exercise. Despite the testing conditions of Garelochhead (always lovely, no matter the time of year!) the Recce showed the next generation of Jocks exactly what we can do, culminating in us carrying out a close target reconnaissance of the objective for their final attack. In the small hours, the Recce then led the company of recruits into position for its final assault. Hopefully it will have provided the new Jocks with a memorable final attack and also inspire the next batch of recce soldiers as well.



Some members of the Recce Platoon enjoy a night out over Christmas.



The Recce Platoon Cambrian Patrol team.

CIS PLATOON

Regimental Signals Officer:	Captain C McRobbie
Regimental Signals Warrant Officer:	WO2 R Tollan
CIS Platoon CQMS:	Colour Sergeant A Hastings
Bowman Systems Manager:	Colour Sergeant K Dowdles
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant C Ross

We have a split callsign! The whole of the CIS Platoon has eventually come back together, after deployments to Op TOSCA, in Cyprus and exercises in Kenya and France. The CIS Platoon is as one for the first time in approximately two years! With an influx of new and aspiring signallers the future is looking up and our focus is firmly on the Battalion's conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry.

Currently we are running in camp training for individuals from each of the companies to improve the communications capability in preparation for Ex WESSEX STORM. We also have two Cpls on their CIS SNCO course in Warminster with one LCpl on his Detachment Commanders' Course. Waiting in the wings are three thrusting LCpls with the desire to complete their Detachment Commanders' Course.

The CIS team has developed over the past six months with Capt McRobbie now firmly established. CSgt Dowdles is now BSM and CSgt Hastings the CQMS and the new arrivals of Sgt Milne and Cpl Raey from 4 SCOTS. Within the rest of the Platoon we have had six new arrivals to bolster our numbers and we are well into our training period to bring everyone up to speed in preparation for our first major exercise.

Congratulations must go to newly promoted, LCpl Tudor who was promoted at the Jock's' Christmas Dinner.



LCpl Drinkwater during field training.



LCpl Gurung delivers first aid to a simulated casualty.

SNIPER PLATOON

Platoon Commander:	Colour Sergeant R Hunter
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant D Sims

From mid-November to mid-December the Sniper Platoon deployed on a Sniper Selection Cadre. This was run in Barry Buddon in the midst of some horrific weather and strong winds that hit at the tail end of 2015,



Sgt Dunn instructing during sniper training.

testing the boys with their wind deflection and longer range firing. Hosting our colleagues from 1 SCOTS, 4 SCOTS and the SCOTS DG, we were able to share our skills and form best practise. We partnered the new trainee Snipers with already badged Snipers to great success. LCpl Proctor returned from his Basic Sniper Course with not only the famous Sniper Badge but a top student award as well.

The Platoon sadly says farewell to Sgt Gary Dunn and welcomes Sgt Sims back as Platoon Sergeant. Looking ahead to taking on our new vehicle mounted role, the Sections have been working hard under Cpls Smith and Jamieson to hone their sniper section level skills, enabling us to rapidly deploy with the two strike companies and provide sniper support. We have some interesting joint exercises with the Anti-Tank and Recce Platoons planned, when we will be practising and fine tuning our find, fix and strike capabilities on the build up to Ex WESSEX STORM.

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding: Major B Cooper
Company Sergeant Major: WO2 D J Taylor
Company Quartermaster Sergeant: Colour Sergeant C Lockhart

Since November 2015 we have seen much change within the Company, with the CIS Platoon moving to Delta (ISR) Company but some familiar faces returned.

The LAD working alongside the Quartermaster's Department have ensured that all the new vehicles are collected, maintained and serviced to help facilitate the conversion.

CSgt Lockhart joined us as the new CQMS and we have said farewell to CSgt Robb who has been selected to be an instructor at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

Pte (soon to be LCpl) Ironside has recently joined the Company as Company Clerk. We welcome him and his wife Fiona to the Black Watch family. The Company would also like to say farewell to the former Quartermaster Maj Hogg.



CSgt Robb hands over to CSgt Lockhart as HQ Company CQMS.

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster: Major S MacKenzie
RQMS (M): WO2 K Stacey
RQMS (T): WO2 J Fraser

The relentless pace of supporting the conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry, company exercises and external inspections has once again highlighted the department's versatility. In October the Battalion return from Op TOSCA, with those deployed taking some well deserved leave while the home team under the guidance of the QM prepared for and delivered an excellent result on the Logistical Supply Inspection.

November and December was a busy period; the conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry gained significant momentum with the arrival of the Basic Unit Fleet, well some of it anyway! Credit must



Major Glenn Hogg hands over the Quartermaster's department to Major Scott MacKenzie.

go to the RQMS(T) for his relentless pursuit of vehicles and the first rate collection process he put in place. We would not be where we are today in assisting the Training Wing deliver driver, commander and crew training had it not been for his diligence and attention to detail.

After Christmas leave we began the preparation for the Equipment Care Inspection (ECI) and in early February the hard work paid off in delivering another excellent result. No sooner was the ECI over, than the handover of the QM appointment began; Maj Glenn Hogg had decided to join the Army Reserve and Maj Scott MacKenzie stepped up as QM, leaving the QM(T) appointment gapped for over six months.

We continue to try and improve the living conditions in the Fort for the Jocks; new carpets, furniture and improved Wi-Fi has been installed with improved gym equipment en route.

It is with great regret that we had to say farewell to CSgt Hastings and Cpl Catto who have both moved to the CIS Platoon, however we are delighted to welcome the arrival of CSgt Bright and Cpl Harris.

It would only be fitting to end these notes wishing Maj Glenn Hogg all the very best on his future endeavours. Having served for over 30 years, his contribution to both 1 RHF and the Royal Regiment of Scotland has been considerable. Whether his future employer (205 Field Hospital) can cope with his stories is another matter!

MOTOR TRANSPORT PLATOON

Motor Transport Officer: Captain Pete Marshall
Motor Transport 2IC: Sgt Roy
Motor Transport Sergeant: Sgt Harkness
Driver Training Cell: Cpl Gilmour, Cpl Stevenson
Fuel NCO: Cpl Thomson, LCpl McGarvey
White Fleet NCO: Cpl Aitken
Servicing Bay NCO: Cpl Brown

Like other departments, the MT Platoon has undergone much change. From November 2015 the first of the Light Mechanised Infantry vehicles started to arrive in Fort George. The older Green Fleet vehicles have been greatly reduced in number, with the replacements arriving in the shape of Foxhounds, RWIMIK+ and Huskys. This has put a truly 21st Century feel to the Battalion's vehicle fleet. With the new vehicles comes a large training bill. This has seen members of the Platoon training to become Driver Maintenance Instructors (DMIs). Cpl Thomson and Cpl Wishart are now Foxhound DMIs and they have been working flat out delivering Driver and Commander Courses. With the introduction of the new vehicles the MT has become one of the busiest places within Fort George. There has regularly been up to seven vehicle courses running at any one time. The interest and enthusiasm around the vehicles has been fantastic to see.

The MT Platoon has said farewell to a number of old stalwarts; Ptes Berry and Tullis both left the Army straight into driving jobs. Cpl Blair has also departed heading off to join 1 SCOTS in Belfast.

Congratulations must go to LCpl Laidlaw, Ptes McGhie and Jones who all became fathers for the first time. There must obviously be something in the water as all three became parents within a couple of months of each other.

Back at the coal face Cpls Gilmour and Aitken run the office with an iron rod. Cpl Aitken is a real live wire who just can't find enough to do in any one day. Cpl Gilmour is the steadying influence in the office, ensuring everyone is doing what they are supposed to be doing including the MTO. Sgt Harkness is particularly popular with the team, or possibly his wife who regularly bakes some fantastic cakes for the platoon to enjoy. LCpl McGarvey has taken on most of the responsibility for the Fuel Account much to relief of Cpl Thomson. When not stuck in the office wading through fuel receipts, LCpl McGarvey is away training the Battalion Boxing Team. He deserves special praise for all the hard work he put in training the boxers for the boxing night.

The rest of the team all deserve a mention. Cpl Brown the Servicing Bay NCO works tirelessly keeping the fleet on the road. Cpl Stevenson tackles the practical driver training usually training soldiers who the civilian contractors refuse to teach. Then there is Sgt Roy who is one of two Defence Driving Examiners. Sgt Roy has the best pass examination rate within the Brigade, much to the relief of the many Jocks he tests. However it's the Jocks who put in the real graft; Pte's Kamdaya, Butao, Tay and Mike Philip provide the back bone to the platoon, never complaining and always willing to help out. Finally there is Pte Wood who is the Commanding Officer's Driver. Quite a daunting job but one which "Woody" tackles with professionalism while maintaining a great sense of humour.

2016 so far is proving to be a challenging but enjoyable year. The new vehicles are fantastic pieces of equipment which the soldiers seem to really enjoy operating. Another busy year but one which will see the MT continue to be the centre of focus for the conversion.



Corporal Thomson in full flow teaching the Foxhound engine to students.



Sergeant Pratt putting the new RWIMIK+ drivers through their paces.

AGC DETACHMENT

RAO: Captain N Fidler AGC (SPS)
RAWO: WO2 (SQMS) S Young AGC (SPS)
FSA: Staff Sergeant L Gordon AGC (SPS)

Post Operational Tour Leave has come and gone and despite the move from a holiday climate, the RAO's Department has remained in high spirits. The Deployment Administrative Checks have all been completed and operational wallets have been filed away. Routine admin is now the way of life with an eye on the G1 Staff Inspection in July. The Inspection Team from 51 Brigade arrived for a welcome liaison visit in February and it was an opportunity for some of the Detachment to meet Maj Rourke and his team for the first time.

Congratulations must be given to SQMS Young on her Chief of the General Staff's Commendation for outstanding service to the British Army. Pte Jones (Alpha Company) has attended his Potential Non Commissioned Officer (PNCO) cadre and will return as a LCpl. Ptes Ritchie (Bravo Company) and Ironside (Headquarters Company) have been pre-selected for LCpl and will attend their PNCO Cadres later in the year.

LCpl Taylor (Bravo Company) has been flying the "Soldier First" flag by completing the Pre-Speen Bridge Commando Memorial Speed March (15kg over 7 miles) with a time of 1hr 6 mins. The Detachment is now in training for the AGC Triple Crown (15kg over 20km best effort) in May...Bring it on!!!

Although the Detachment has been extremely busy, they have been equally busy playing hard. LCpl Whittall organised a Go-Karting session with LCpl Taylor being the best driver, even though Pte Ironside still continues to dispute the results.

We are happy to welcome SSgt L Gordon, Cpl Senehang, Cpl Ravutia, Pte R Ironside, Pte R Rhodes, Pte S Hopkins to the team. And we say goodbye to Sgt J Penman, Cpl J Buchan and Pte B Tilley. We wish them all the best in their new postings.

UNIT WELFARE OFFICE

UWO: Captain A H Cunningham
AUWO & WISMIS Manager: Sgt Trickovic MBE
Welfare JNCO: Cpls Simpson
Welfare Clerk: Rhoda Mills



Captain Cunningham, the UWO and the 'Wimberley Warriors'.



Santa visits the Community Centre.

The Welfare Office has recently been a hive of activity. From Halloween and Christmas parties, Burns Night celebrations and more, there has been no shortage of events to keep all entertained from young to old.

The highlight however has to be Ex Wimberley Warriors which involved a "Platoon" of military wives taking over from their husbands for a day of service with the Army. From live firing, First Aid training to fieldcraft exercises, including a two mile "insertion TAB", the wives showed they were more than up for the rigours of military life. A number of prizes were issued including Best Shot to Mrs O'Gorman, Best Effort to Hannah Nichol and the Top Student was Jen MacKenzie.

The wives' Burns Night was once again a great success with the star performance from "The Three Stooges" aka Mrs Grandison, Young and Aitken! There are certain things that go on that the Welfare Officer really shouldn't know about!!!

It only leaves me to wish you all the best for the coming months where there will be lots of activities to keep the families and soldiers entertained including a street party to celebrate the Queen's Birthday in June.

CATERING PLATOON

Regimental Catering Warrant Officer: WO2 (SQMS) M Philip

Platoon Sergeant IC Messes: Sgt Powell

Platoon Sergeant Kitchen Manager: Sgt Leye

As the majority of the platoon were preparing for the hand over to 1 SCOTS on Op TOSCA the Rear Operations Group lead by Sgt Powell were equally busy working alongside ESS providing the catering for the annual Highland Military Tattoo. During this they catered for vast numbers and delivered VIP functions in both the Officers' Mess and Fort George Museum.

After returning from Op TOSCA and some well-earned leave, it wasn't long before the functions came flooding in. There was the Officers' Mess Winter Ball and a Ladies' Dinner Night in the Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess, all executed by Sgt Powell and his team. By this point the Battalion were preparing for their festive period, the time of year we dread most, when over four hundred JNCOs and Jocks get the opportunity to collectively dine together at their Christmas lunch. For the chefs it was back to peeling sprouts and stuffing turkeys!

This year it was our turn to host the annual 51 Brigade Christmas Cake Competition. Units were given the opportunity to decorate six fruit cakes, all of which were done to a very high standard. The occasion was a complete success and enjoyed by all in attendance. The cakes designed by 3 SCOTS caterers were auctioned during the Officers to Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess games night, raising an impressive £720 for the Army Benevolent Fund.

Next up was the Burns Suppers for both the Corporals' and Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Messes, with the challenges



The Catering Platoon entries for the 51 Brigade Cake Competition.

the Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Regimental dinner brought with it, which was held in the gymnasium. Due to the location, a field kitchen was required to produce the food but no one could predict a power failure! With quick thinking and determination from Cpl Roseru and her team they managed to pull it off unknown to the Mess members. Now that the event has passed, the Catering Platoon are relieved they no longer have to listen to Sgt Leye rehearsing Bonnie Dundee.

We would like to congratulate Cpl Roseru who received the prestigious award of a Commanding Officer's Coin for her outstanding performance on Op TOSCA and throughout the year at various events.

FORT GEORGE KIRK

Padre:

Padre D Connolly

It's amazing how quickly a personal plan can be altered. I thought that I was hanging my chaplain's spurs up in April 2015. I had lots of retirement plans when I walked out of the door of Kinloss Barracks where I was Chaplain to 39 Engineer Regiment. My army connection would continue as a Reservist Chaplain with the Scottish and North Irish Yeomanry who have a Squadron in Cupar.

I was ready to go then the phone rang and I was asked to consider going to The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland for four months!

My first thoughts after receiving the invitation were "you must be mad going back so soon" and "what about the fishing"? I said yes, and duly arrived at Fort George in January. The weather was foul and I was soon running for my woolly pulley which hadn't seen the light of day for years. I quickly realised that Fort George has its own wind tunnels and moving from building to building had to be done at a brisk pace. My thoughts of missing fishing and semi-retirement soon dissipated when I heard the humorous banter of the Jocks. It was good to be back and be invited to wear the Red Hackle. I am ably supported by Padre Ivan Warwick, Officiating Chaplain to the military.

I was honoured to arrive at the Battalion just prior to Red Hackle Day, which culminated in a Thanksgiving Service at Fort George Kirk. Later in the year the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess kindly invited me to attend their Burns Supper which was a most enjoyable evening. This was an excellent opportunity for me to hear some brilliant recitations of the National Bard.

I look forward to serving the Battalion over the next few months and then welcoming Padre Stewart MacKay in May this year when he arrives to assume the post of Padre.

The Kirk has recently hosted one wedding and one baptism. On 17 October Sgt Alasdair Lavery and Miss Kirstin Duncan were married at Fort George Kirk, and on 28 November Sophie Florence Norah, daughter of Maj Martin Stanning and Mrs Anna Stanning, was baptised at the Kirk.

The Armistice Day Service also marked an important dedication for the Battalion. Rev J Duncan dedicated to the Glory of God, a bench in memory of the late Sgt Sean Binnie and all our fallen. We were pleased to welcome to our service the family of the late Sean Binnie.

BOXING

OIC Boxing:	Captain C M Treasure
2IC Boxing:	Major S MacKenzie
3IC Boxing:	Sergeant G Dunn
Head Coach:	Lance Corporal F McGarvey
Coaches:	Colour Sergeant Bowe
	Staff Sergeant Murray
	Corporal Wells
	Corporal Gracie
	Private McDonald

Boxers:

From Alpha (Grenadier) Company:

- Lance Corporal Knox
- Lance Corporal Wilson
- Private Alan
- Private Carr
- Private Hewitson
- Private Wan

From Bravo Company:
 Corporal Creighton
 Lance Corporal Meldrum
 Private Ogilvie
 Private MacDonald
 Private McPherson
 Private Pearson
 Private Shaw

From Charlie (Manoeuvre Support) Company:
 Private Bright
 Private Currie
 Private Davidson
 Private Dodgson

From Delta (ISR) Company:
 Lance Corporal Cunningham
 Lance Corporal Wallace
 Lance Corporal Meechan
 Private Copeland
 Private McGinn
 Private Rakovac

The Battalion held its first Inter-Company Boxing Competition for a number of years on 23 February. The boxers listed above began training months in advance in order to prepare for their respective bouts. It all started last year when the Battalion had troops in Cyprus and in the UK between deployments to Kenya and France. Boxing training was squeezed into busy programmes at least once a week with the aim of building basic skills and improving aerobic capacity.

Training stepped up a gear when the Battalion returned from leave in November. Those boxers that had demonstrated their commitment to fighting, and could be released from their respective Companies, conducted three training sessions a week under the guidance of LCpl McGarvey and his team of coaches. The last stage began immediately after Christmas leave when the boxing team were released to conduct intensive training. This training included further technical skills, arduous fitness sessions and contact sparring.

In the week before the event, important decisions had to be made regarding who would fight who. We had to consider both a boxer's weight and skill to ensure that the bouts would be safe and competitive. We were able to successfully match eighteen boxers into nine bouts.

The day of the event began with the inaugural weigh in under the watchful eye of the Army Boxing Association (ABA) Officials. Eighteen nervous boxers took to the scales where all of their hard work was rewarded by hitting their particular weights. The boxers' nerves were calmed in the hours leading up to the event when Mr Sandy Robb, a professional boxer from Nairn, who is a five times

Scottish District champion and the Scottish Cruiserweight champion, kindly spoke to the team and gave them some words of advice.

The competition began with a set from the Pipes and Drums Platoon and a video summarising the arduous training our boxers had been put through in preparation for fight night. Every boxer performed admirably for their Company, demonstrating bravery, discipline and robustness; many of the qualities that are required of an Infanteer.

We are incredibly proud of all the boxers, whether they fought on the night or not. Lance Corporal Meldrum particularly impressed Mr Sandy Robb and Mr Albert Duffus who subsequently selected him to be awarded 'Best Boxer'. Lance Corporal Cunningham wore his heart on his sleeve as he fought Private Pearson and was awarded 'Most Gallant' boxer for his courageous performance. Bravo Company took the title of 'Inter-Company Winners' after receiving the most points throughout the night. Congratulations go to all of the boxers and Bravo Company on their successes.

Many people and organisations made the night possible and it would be difficult to mention them all here but the ABA, 51 Brigade Physical Development team who officiated at the event and CSgt Currie and the 2 SCOTS tailoring team produced the Inter Company belt; Mr Sandy Robb and Mr Albert Duffus joined us on the night and selected some of our winners; Capt McRobbie and his team of signallers set up the electronic equipment and to the respective PMCs for their support. Finally thank you to the coaches for preparing the team and the boxers for their hard work and valour.

The team now look forward to the next challenge, the Royal Regiment of Scotland's Inter Battalion Boxing Competition at Meadowbank Stadium. The opportunity to fight for the Battalion has been keenly grasped by all of our boxers and those selected will conduct an intensive training programme in the lead up to the competition.



The Battalion Boxing Team.



Boxing team training.

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

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel PGB Strudwick
Second in Command:	Major J Anderson
Executive Officer:	Major WAB Wright
Quartermaster:	Major J Pearson
Regimental Administration Officer:	Major PJ Ward
Adjutant:	Captain TH Blair
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 1 (RSM) M J Fairweather
Regimental Operations Support Officer:	Captain A McEwen
Regimental Career Management Officer:	Captain BS Baxter
Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant:	WO2 (RQMS) S Lawrence
Regimental Operations Support Warrant Officer:	WO2 L McDowall

BATTALION OVERVIEW

Life in Highland Scotland's Reserve Infantry Battalion continues to move at pace! Since the last issue of *the Red Hackle* we mobilised a number of reservists on Operation TORAL in Afghanistan where they will complete a 4 month tour with the Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland and Balaklava Company. Operation TORAL will now become one of our main focuses and we will continue to prepare troops to deploy to Kabul. At home we are looking forward to supporting a number of events over the summer most notably the Stirling Military Show and Armed Forces Day. Our integration with the Black Watch Battalion continues to grow and we've recently begun to train drivers and crew members for their new Foxhound vehicles.

Our soldiers have benefited from some of the great adventurous training that the Army has to offer. In January we entered a team into Exercise SPARTAN HIKE, the Army's Alpine and Nordic Skiing semi finals which encompass the Army Reserve Championships. Despite bringing home no silverware the team experienced success in individual categories. Following this event the Battalion entered a team into Exercise SNOW LION, the Army in Scotland's Alpine Skiing and Snowboarding Championships. The team brought home several awards and titles and we hope that their success will help skiing grow across the Battalion.

Looking forward, our Companies are training teams to compete in the Battalion's patrol competition in July. From this we will form a nucleus that we will train and enter into the Cambrian Patrol Competition in October. This will pit our highly trained volunteer soldiers against some of the best units from across the British Army, testing their soldiering skills in disciplines such as navigation, first aid, vehicle recognition and much more.

The Army Reserve continues to be a unique organisation which allows our soldiers to experience adventure, excitement and a sense of

achievement in their spare time. We invest in our people to develop real capability that continues to contribute to operational effectiveness and make a meaningful impact on our community.



CO and Deputy Commander 51 Brigade, Stephanie Jackman.



Highland Band concert at Almondbank Church.



The Pipes and Drums of the 3rd and 7th Battalions.



Army Sergeant Major Glen Haughton at the 7 SCOTS Leadership Study Day.

ALPHA COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major A Cameron
CSM:	Warrant Officer Class 2 S Woods
PSAO:	Captain R Reid MBE
RSUSO:	Captain M Dunnigan
Mortar Platoon Commander:	Warrant Officer Class 2 Penrice
Anti-Tank Platoon Commander:	Sergeant J Carney
Rifle Platoon Commander:	2nd Lieutenant M Orr
Rifle Platoon Commander:	2nd Lieutenant R Hand
SPSI Dundee:	Colour Sergeant I Grant
PSI Aberdeen:	Colour Sergeant S Mitchell
PSI Kirkcaldy:	Colour Sergeant I Robertson
CQMS (Res):	Colour Sergeant G McKenzie
CQMS (FTRS):	Colour Sergeant J Twine

It has been another busy reporting period for A Company. Remembrance weekend saw the Company attending parades throughout the area. Over the weekend each location made a point of visiting their antecedent Regimental Museums, with Dundee and Kirkcaldy going to The Black Watch Museum at Balhousie Castle and Aberdeen members visiting the Gordons Museum. This gave the new Company members a chance to learn more about their regimental history. Company members attended parades in Aberdeen, Peterhead, Forfar, Powrie Brae, Kirkcaldy and Kinglassie. The main parade in Dundee was led by Alpha (Grenadier) Company, 3 SCOTS who after attending the Church service retired to Oliver Barracks to meet with some local dignitaries and Reserve soldiers over an excellent curry lunch prepared by Cpl Hutchison. Recruiting within the Company continues to gather momentum with both new recruits in the door and ex regular soldiers taking advantage of the excellent opportunities the Reserves can offer. Captain Mike Dunnigan with Sgt Wade and his team, have put in a considerable amount of time and effort over the last six months and we are now beginning to see some reward. The Christmas function was held in Aberdeen this year and saw the Company compete in an inter platoon competition. The Aberdeen Platoon took the spoils. The RSM was invited along, so as not to feel left out and was introduced to some of the Jocks' new "dating" methods. In the New Year, the Mortar Platoon started the Mortar Cadre in preparation for their live shoot in April. The intent is to have three barrels on the day with 3 SCOTS providing support on the range. WO2 Penrice and WO2 Bustard with the "Eagle Eye" of Colour Sgt Grant have put in a lot of time and effort to get the Jocks trained for this year's shoot. The platoon will shoot stage 1-2 with the majority having not touched a Mortar prior to the cadre.

Several members of the Company took advantage of the fantastic skiing opportunities. Ex SNOW CUB was very well attended but sadly the weather was not too ski friendly. The OC, CSM and Pte Crawford

did get some slope time in and managed to survive without too many bruises to both body and ego. Sgt McNiven and Pte Taylor attended Ex SNOW WARRIOR in Germany; with ideal conditions, both thoroughly enjoyed the experience and highly recommend it for next year. Ex SNOW LION was held in Aviemore. A Company members were well represented; 2Lt Orr captained the Battalion team and CSgt Robertson, Sgt McNiven, LCpl Gough and Pte Taylor were all team members. The team won a number of trophies.

The opportunities have come fast and furious and none more so than for our young Officers. 2Lt Brad Anderson deployed to Kenya for six weeks on Ex ASKARI STORM as a Platoon Commander attached to 2 SCOTS. 2Lt Mike Thornton took part in Ex WESSEX STORM attached to 4 Rifles as part of the training and mentoring team to a contingent of Omani troops and 2Lt Matt Orr with the unsavoury experience of taking part in Ex TRANSGLOBE; this was a sailing expedition, where he found himself off the coast of Australia and taking part in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

We currently have one individual on Op TORAL; LCpl Wallace is due to complete his tour later this year and is in fine spirits. With April just around the corner, MATTs weigh heavily on the "Bounty Hunters" and all personnel to complete their annual Certificate of Efficiency (COE). Not only does this provide financial reward to the Reserves, it is also a mark of how well the Company is performing.

A Company are now looking forward to the next six months with the Mortar Shoot in April and selection for this year's Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL. The training will be challenging but will also help to prepare the Jocks for our eagerly anticipated Annual Training Deployment to Croatia in August.

Our sympathies go out to the family and friends of the late Cpl "Big Gav" Mills who died earlier this year. Gav had served over thirty years in the Reserves and was a valued member of A Company. He deployed with The Black Watch for the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and returned again in 2006 as part of Alamein FP Company. He was highly respected by all who worked and knew him.



Major Cameron and CSM Woods on the piste.



Some of A Company Mortar Platoon after Exercise Heavy Carry 2.

EXERCISE TRANSGLOBE

By Second Lieutenant Matthew Orr

Exercise Transglobe is a JSASTC organised sailing expedition circumnavigating the globe. I was fortunate enough to be selected, along with sixteen other Army personnel of varying rank, cap badge and sailing experience, to take part in Leg 5 of the expedition. We crewed HMSTV Discoverer, a 57 tonne Challenger 72 yacht, in Australian waters and gave us the unique opportunity to enter the world renowned Rolex, Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

The first phase of the leg was delivering the yacht from Fremantle near Perth, to Sydney which passed without any major issues. We arrived in Sydney on the 22nd December and dedicated a few days to conducting crucial pre-race administration, meeting other sailors competing in the race and embracing the electric atmosphere in the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, the race's host. Ample time was set aside to let us explore Sydney, visit Bondi Beach and celebrate Christmas Day with a shrimp clad BBQ in true Aussie style. Celebrations on the 25th concluded with an early night to ensure we were ready for the start of the race on Boxing Day.

The Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race is one of the world's most prestigious yacht races and participating crews are envied by sailors across the world. Discoverer was one of 108 yachts competing which ranged from professional crews, in racing yachts, to amateurs, in smaller, less 'racy' craft. The start of the race was the most spectacular sporting event I have ever witnessed. The close quarters within which we and the thirty five other yachts with whom we shared a start line, had to sail demanded huge amounts of skill and technical ability from all the skippers and tacticians and the moments leading up to crossing the start line, proved yacht racing is a sport like no other. At 1300 the race masters horn sounded and we crossed the line, we had started the 'Hobart'.

We were blessed with northerly winds allowing us to sail, at significant speed, downwind in the direction of Hobart. This allowed us to gain a significant lead on our main competition, HMSTV Adventure, the second yacht participating in Ex Transglobe which was crewed by Royal Navy and RAF personnel. After only a few hours came a major wind shift

and the fleet went from gliding downwind, spinnakers hoisted, to beating into a strong southerly breeze. This created cold and wet conditions on deck and even worse, sea sickness inducing conditions down below, truly testing the crew's mental and physical strength. Due to this aggressive weather a third of the racing fleet had retired by the thirty sixth hour.

The weather allowed us to make good speed however the wind soon died. The light conditions that followed allowed Adventure to reduce the 70nm lead we had gained at the start of the race. This made for a nail biting finish in the early hours of the 31st. Despite being within 200m of each other at one point, Discoverer crossed the finish line 44 minutes ahead of our sister yacht, and main competitor, Adventure.

Ex Transglobe continues until August 2016, providing fantastic sailing opportunities to Service personnel. The crew were managed in such a way that everyone, at both ends of the sailing ability spectrum, were able to learn and build on their prior experience. With lots of sailing came plenty of time 'ashore' to take advantage of being on the other side of the world and the chance to explore Perth, Sydney and Hobart. I judge the Australian Leg, of the Exercise, to have been a great success and a truly unforgettable experience.



2nd Lieutenant Matt Orr standing proudly aboard his vessel on Exercise TRANSGLOBE.



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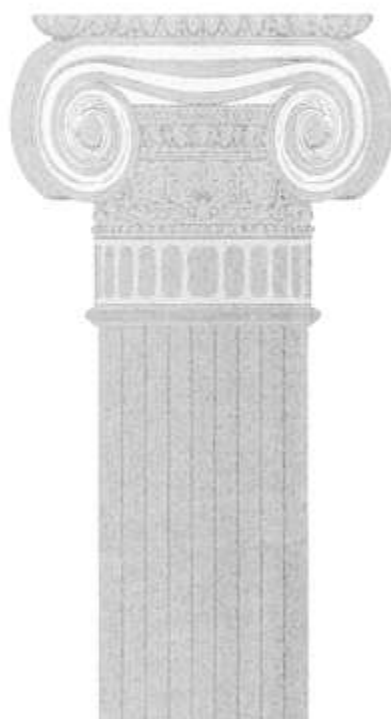
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The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada

The Black Watch (RHR) of Canada has been conducting training, tasks, and community engagements throughout this past training year. It has been a good year with lots of innovative training, strong participation on all the exercises, and a good deal of social activities.

Since October 2015, the regiment has been conducting additional advanced training for our soldiers above and beyond the normal operational tasks. Over a period of 4 months, more than 35 soldiers would come to the Armoury every Sunday in order to refine their skills in Urban Operations and specifically in basic room clearing. This culminated this past March with a full weekend training event using Simunition® to conduct live fire entries drills and force on force attacks. Every iteration was then reviewed using video footage from four GoPro® Cameras placed on individuals and in over watch positions. This was an outstanding training event that allowed the soldiers to rapidly improve their skills in the basics of urban operations.

While continuing with the full calendar of activities, we also saw four of our soldiers deploy overseas on various missions, and another deployed on an international exercise. Captain David Serapins deployed on OP IMPACT in the fall as the Adjutant for the Canadian Air Contingent in the Middle East. Being the only infantry officer in the immediate area, he was also quickly tasked with organizing the security requirements for the Canadian Headquarters. Sgt Ramsey, Sgt Wong, and Cpl Mazzocchi are also deployed in various parts of Europe for training missions on OP UNIFER and OP REASSURANCE. We are all looking forward to their safe return to Canada soon.

Recently, Master Warrant Officer Mamen was attached to the 1-111th Infantry Battalion from the US Pennsylvania Army National Guard for Exercise Citadel Javelin in France. This represents a part of our continuing efforts to maintain the link between The Black Watch and the 111th Infantry that dates back to the French and Indian Wars. This includes small unit exchanges for training, and of course, some social events. This past November the CO had the opportunity once again to attend their annual Mess Dinner. This regiment continues to reserve a spot for the Commanding Officer of The Black Watch, and even when the CO is not present, the seat remains empty, save for Black Watch tartan and a sword. There are few regiments in America with as much history and continuous traditions as the 111th Infantry, and it has been an honour to continue our relationship with them on behalf of all things Black Watch.

Our Associations continue to do outstanding work both within the regiment and the various communities in Canada. Every month volunteers from the Montreal Branch of the Association go to Ste. Anne's Veterans' hospital to visit our members as well as some of those we have adopted. In December of each year the Association organizes a special visit for Christmas that includes some of our serving soldiers along with Santa Claus to spread some holiday cheer. The day finishes off with a special concert for all the veterans at the hospital which includes a performance by The Black Watch Pipes and Drums.

In early January, a small contingent of serving members travelled to Canada's largest city to participate in the Toronto Black Watch Association annual Red Hackle Dinner. This is an increasingly important event that has been growing steadily over

the past few years. This year's guest of honour was the Deputy Minister of Veterans Affairs and former Chief of Defence Staff of the Canadian Armed Forces, General Walter Natynczyk, CMM, MSC, CD. His speech inspired all who attended to want to reach out and help our veterans across the country.

Community engagement continues to be an important part of our regimental activities. Throughout the last year there have been multiple events and activities in which our members continue to participate to help local organizations and charities. This past February the Commanding Officer accepted the challenge from some local city counselors to participate in a Polar Bear Plunge for charity. This usually involves jumping into the St. Lawrence River in the middle of February with a team of similarly deranged individuals. As it had been a relatively warm winter in Montreal,



CO Polar Bear Jump.



Highland Dinner 2016.

the CO accepted the challenge and opted to complete the jump in uniform. Unfortunately for the CO, the day of the jump happened to be the coldest of the year, with a wind-chill of -35C at the time of the plunge. While it was horribly cold, the CO survived the challenge and the organization was able to raise over \$15,000 for local charities.

It has been an interesting period for the Canadian Black Watch. The next major activity will be the change of command between Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Phare and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Mackay in early May. This will be the second time that Tom Mackay will have commanded the regiment. The last time he was the CO for the visit of HRH Prince Charles in Montreal. The regiment is looking forward to welcoming him back for his second tour in command with all of his new experiences at Army Headquarters and his post command deployment to Afghanistan.

ARTEFACTS FROM THE BLACK WATCH OF CANADA COLLECTION WORKS

By Orlando Norie

The name of Orlando Norie (1832-1901) is synonymous with images of the British Army during the reign of Queen Victoria. Norie is estimated to have produced over 5000 works, many of which grace the walls of military clubs and regimental museums. His paintings are highly sought after and command high prices, yet his life remained a mystery that has only recently been uncovered. The majority of his military illustrations were produced between 1860 and 1890, the period considered to represent his finest work. One of two Norie watercolours in the possession of The Black Watch of Canada, the painting shown here depicts the 42nd (Royal Highland) Regiment of Foot crossing a bridge c.1865. The watercolour, measuring 48 by 32 cm, was presented to The



Ste. Anne's Hospital visit.

Black Watch of Canada in 1949 by Lieutenant Colonel Keith I.D. Stewart. In 1912, Keith's father, Captain John Stewart, visited Montreal to assist the Canadian Regiment (then designated the Royal Highlanders of Canada) during the presentation of new Colours, and never forgot the friendliness and hospitality which he received while in Canada. John later commanded the Regiment in Scotland, and over his career, amassed a considerable collection of Black Watch artefacts which Keith subsequently increased. When Keith decided to retire to the West Indies in 1948, he divided his collection between The Black Watch Museum in Perth, and the Canadian Regiment's museum in Montreal. The other Norie watercolour in the Canadian Regiment's collection shows the 42nd in a village setting, also executed c.1865.

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



Norie Watercolour, 42nd crossing bridge.

Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force

Honorary Colonel:	The Reverend Professor Norman Drummond CBE FRSE
Commandant:	Colonel J M K Erskine MBE
Deputy Commandant:	Lieutenant Colonel C Hubbock
Training Officer:	Major S 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 weekend events that were held in Dundee in September to mark the Centenary of the Battle of Loos were written up in detail in the last Red Hackle but the notes for the magazine from this Battalion were submitted before the weekend. It is, therefore, appropriate to start by making reference to that occasion as a number of cadets from this Battalion took part in the parade and service on the Saturday. It was a memorable event not least because the Duke of Rothesay spoke to some of the cadets in the City Chambers after the service.

The second half of the year is always a busy one with a variety of events organised in addition to the all important company training weekends. By the end of the year there is no doubt everyone has earned a break.

The annual Brigade Military Skills Competition took place in September and for that a team was trained and chosen by Major Gill, Sergeant Major Instructor Smith and other adult instructors. It proved to be a tough and tiring two and a half days competition and, while the team did not win, they acquitted themselves really well.

The United Kingdom Swimming Championships took place on 10 October. It was a particularly good event for cadets from the Battalion. Ten teams took part and Scotland came 5th overall. Cadet Fiona Williamson (Band) took part in the Junior Girls Relay Team which won the Gold Medal. The Senior Girls team were the overall winners and Cadet Blythe Johnstone and Cadet Ellis Johnston were in the team which won the senior girls relay race. Cadet Ellis Johnston also won two silver medals in the butterfly and breaststroke races and bronze medal in the Freestyle race. This was a great achievement. In the Junior Boys competition Cadet Lewis Walker won the bronze medal in the backstroke. Cadet Conner Summers also represented Scotland in the competition.

On 24 October Cadet Staff Sergeant Judd Clark, Cadet Lance Corporal Bradley Banks and Cadet Charley Banks (Glenrothes Woodside) went to Edinburgh Castle where they gave a presentation on the First World War as part of a competition marking the centenary of the war. While they did not win, the whole experience of researching the subject, planning and giving a presentation proved to be interesting and a great confidence building exercise.

On the same weekend the ACFA Scotland held its 5-a-side football competition and the Cross Country Championships. The Battalion entered teams for each event and the cadets all acquitted themselves really well with the Senior Boys coming second in the football competition. Sport is an important part of what can be offered to the cadets and it is really pleasing to see so many taking part in the various activities on offer. However, pulling everything together requires hard work and for this the Battalion owes a debt to Staff Sergeant Stuart Taylor, the Sports Officer.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is a well respected and widely recognised scheme. For various reasons the Battalion has not focussed on this in recent years and so it was good to see this beginning to resurface when a number of cadets took part in their Bronze expedition at the end of October under Second Lieutenant Steven Mackenzie. It is hoped he will take this forward in 2016.

Major Sue Truscott once again took a party of cadets and adults to Belgium for a week's visit in the October half term. This has always been a popular event and never more so than during the centenary years of the Great War.

The week leading up to Remembrance Sunday is a busy one as many of the detachments collect for Poppy Scotland and then on

the day itself, the detachments parade in their local communities. They are often the only uniformed organisation to represent the Army so it is important the cadets play their full part on what is such an important national occasion.

On the weekend of 21-22 November, the Deputy Commandant laid on a weekend at Dunkeld specifically for the senior cadets. As well as learning about the responsibilities expected of senior cadets, on the Saturday evening they attended a black tie dinner which they all seemed to enjoy. Over the same weekend and also in Dunkeld, a number of younger cadets completed the first part of their JCIC course, a course they completed two weeks later.

Music is such an important part of Battalion life. Both the Regimental Band and the Pipes and Drums have been very busy. The Pipes and Drums took part in the Concentration at Redford in October. The culmination of this week was the competition on the final day. Members of the Battalion were among the medal winners. Cadet Lance Corporal Pratt won the novice piobareachd while Cadet Lindsay came second. The latter also won the Open Jig. Drum Major Paterson came third in the Drum Major's competition and in the Open Tenor competition, being beaten to second place by Cadet Bonnar. Cadet MacBain came second in the Novice Snare competition while Cadet Bisset came third in the intermediate competition. Finally the drummers won the best drum corps.

Meanwhile the Regimental band rehearsed for and laid on a concert in Dunfermline Abbey on 14 November. This was an exceptional performance. The first half was a concert and the second half was an Act of Remembrance, led by the Minister at the Abbey. Amongst a relatively large audience were the Honorary Colonel and his wife, Lady Elizabeth Drummond, and Sarah Rawlings, Deputy Chief Executive of Highland RFCA. The Pipes and Drums also took part in the event and the highlight of the evening was to hear both bands playing together at the end. It is hoped that there will be more joint performances in 2016.

Two weeks later the Perth and Kinross Council marked St Andrew's Day by holding a service in Scone and St Martin's Parish church. They kindly asked the Battalion to send a representation and Sergeant Instructor Scott Douglas took a detachment from the Perth Black Watch Detachment to it.

At the beginning of 2015, Sarah Rawlings from Highland RFCA introduced an initiative whereby cadets would be trained and used to give presentations to opinion formers, including MPs and MSPs throughout the country. Individuals have been called upon on numerous occasions to do this. Staff Sergeant Instructor Marcia Alzamora and Cadet Staff Sergeant Shae Simpson have been particularly busy promoting the ACF as part of this initiative.

It has been the custom that the beginning of each calendar year is marked by a training day for the adults, with a Burns Supper being held in the evening. 2016 was no exception and after a very successful day, everyone changed for what turned out to be an excellent evening. Unfortunately the Commandant could not be there but Lieutenant Colonel Craig Hubbock stood in for him. The guests included Lieutenant Colonel Piers Strudwick and Warrant Officer Class 1 Michael Fairweather, the Commanding Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major respectively of 7 SCOTS, Major Will Leek, Second-in-Command of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and Second Lieutenant Nicholas Hannay from 3 SCOTS. This was a chance to forge closer links with the units who are closest to the Battalion and to showcase what the Army Cadet Force does. Jenni Gerrard came as a guest but she had to earn her supper. She gave the address on behalf of the guests. Others who spoke included Major Tony Dowson who gave a memorable Immortal Memory, Jacob Black who toasted the Lassies and Kerry Willison who replied on their behalf. The Regimental Band played throughout the dinner and received rave reviews, while a small pipes and drums gave their usual polished performance. Congratulations are also due to Staff Sergeant Louise Carstairs who was presented with the Army Cadet Force Certificate for Good Service for her outstanding work for the Battalion over so many years.

So, as the very stormy and wet winter comes to an end the Battalion must look forward to what will undoubtedly be another full year.



2016 Burns Supper – Standing – SMI Christie, Major Truscott, Major Douglas, RSMI Cameron, Major Rae. Seated: Major Leek, Lieutenant Colonel Strudwick, Lieutenant Colonel Hubbock, Second Lieutenant Hannay, Warrant Officer Class 1 (RSM) Fairweather.



The Pipes and Drums at Dunfermline Abbey with the minister in the foreground.



The Regimental Band at the Burns Supper.



Black Watch Cadets on parade on Remembrance Day 2015.



Perth Viewlands Detachment.

Association News

Royal Patron:	HRH The Prince Charles Duke of Rothesay KG KT GCB OM
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Chairman:	Major Ronnie Proctor MBE
Vice Chairman:	Mr Peter Tindal
Secretary:	Mr Tom McCluskey
Treasurer:	Mr Jim Penny

The expected snows of winter which normally frequent the county of Angus at this time of year have failed to materialise however we experienced the most torrential downpours in living memory over the festive period which fortunately had no ill effect on any of our Branch members and the good monthly meeting attendance numbers remain constant with members travelling from as far afield as Aberdeenshire, Fife, Dundee and Perth as well as from the local towns in Angus.

The El Alamein Dinner in October was well attended and Mrs Georgiana Osborne the Lord Lieutenant of Angus and a current Vice President of The Black Watch Association was our Guest of Honour; members of A (Grenadier) Company of the Black Watch Battalion were also present. Tom McCluskey our Branch Secretary and WW1 historian gave an interesting short talk on the Battle of Loos. He managed to single out soldiers from the local area and draw parallels with the Battle of El Alamein which took place some 17 years later, under very different conditions and in a completely different part of the world. Ruairidh Proctor our young Branch Piper was absent from his piping duties on this occasion as he had recently been enrolled as a student at Edinburgh University. The Branch was well represented at the various Remembrance Services throughout the County, the Memorial Service at Balhousie Castle, the Powrie Brae Memorial, the Mill o' Mains Memorial and The Festival of Remembrance in the Caird Hall, Dundee. John Glen and Brian Smith our Standard Bearers are to be thanked for attending most of these events carrying the Branch Standard.

The Branch made two trips to France and Flanders but the Clan McCluskey made a further journey and attended the memorial service at Black Watch Corner which was initiated by our Associate member in Belgium, Erwin Ureel. This was the second such service to take place since the memorial was unveiled in 2014. The date and time of the service has been set for the 11th of November at 11 am. Tom McCluskey was also invited to present Red Hackles to the Field Marshal Haig Pipes and Drums which is affiliated to the Association and he gave a short dissertation on the Battle of Nonne Bosschen. The Branch was also well represented at the ANZAC Commemoration Service in Arbroath.

John Glen and the team including a small group of members from The Black Watch Battalion are to be thanked for carrying out the annual Pensioners and Widows Christmas Hamper distribution. John Glen masterminded the operation and Morrison's of Arbroath are to be thanked for their donation to this worthy cause which is well received by pensioners and widows. Sadly the number of pensioners is on the decline whilst the number of widows increases.

Our Burns Supper, held on Saturday the 23rd of January was again a great success. It had been decided at a previous meeting that although the past Burns Suppers had been both enjoyable and successful we should cut back on the programme as it was felt that there was too much time spent at the table. This was followed through and proved to be very successful, giving those attending more time to appreciate the excellent musical entertainment by Jim Brown and his Scottish Dance Music trio who played until the bewitching hour of midnight.

Pipe Major Peter Snaddon our "Senior Branch Piper" piped in the Haggis, royally entertained us with a good selection of pipe music and gave a star performance of "Holy Willie's Prayer". Thanks and congratulations should also go to Rab Simson for producing wonderful souvenir programmes for both the El Alamein Dinner and Burns Supper and to Bob Mitchel for his production of Athol Brose. Both he and Tom McCluskey managed to fit in 78 members and guests into the RBLs Clubrooms which is an increase of two on last year. Fraser Brown gave an interesting and novel Immortal Memory which he delivered in the prescribed time and Pte Beats



Members of the Executive Committee met on 23 March 2016. Pictured are (from left to right) Mr Bob Scott, Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies and Mr Gordon Kennedy; a veteran of the Battle of Tel El Kebir looks on.

from the Battalion once again volunteered to act as “Posey Nancy” and carry in the Haggis. He narrowly missed being stabbed by the Chairman who returned to his duties of addressing the Haggis.

Our visitors from the Battalion were presented with their membership cards by the Secretary and we extend to them a warm welcome. Eck Stott from Arbroath, our newest recruit, has also been welcomed into the fold and we hope that he will enlist his brothers into the Branch in the not too distant future.

We are sorry to report on the death of two of our Branch members, Gavin Mills from Kirriemuir and Morris Locke from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Both supported the Branch in their own way and they will be sadly missed.

On a happier note it is good to see Kenny Grant back on his feet and fully mobile after he had a leg amputation. It is rumoured that Kenny will be entering the next seniors’ para Olympics!!

The Branch is planning a trip to the nearby Montrose Aviation Museum in the near future and a report on this will be given in the next issue of the notes.

We are looking forward to taking part in the Annual Reunion in June and visiting the Weeping Poppy window at Balhousie Castle after it is open to the public on the 30th of June.



The Chairman addresses the Haggis.



Tom McCluskey presents the soldiers from The Black Watch Battalion with their Branch membership cards.



Peter Snaddon gives a star performance of Holy Willie’s Prayer.



Some members of the Angus Branch and their guests at the El Alamein Dinner.

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

Taking part in the Edinburgh Festival of Remembrance was the culmination of a busy period for our Branch. Lieutenant Colonel Julian McElhinney (Branch President) laid a wreath at The Black Watch War Memorial. This memorial is dedicated, "To the Memory of Officers, Non Commissioned Officers and Men of The Black Watch Who Fell in the South African War 1899-1902". A large crowd of passing tourists also took a moment to reflect as Drum Major Brian Alexander played The Last Post. Branch members also assembled in Princess Street Gardens to lay Remembrance Crosses on behalf of The Black Watch Association.

As a mark of respect for those who fell in the Korean War, Captain Bob Henry laid a wreath at the Scottish Korean War Memorial, Linlithgow, West Lothian. The memorial comprises a small traditional Korean pagoda surrounded by 110 Korean pine trees (One tree for every ten British Soldiers who died). The area is also surrounded by native Scottish birch trees of which 21 line the avenue representing all nations involved in the United Nations force in Korea.

A firm fixture in our annual social events is a Ceilidh Night which will now normally take place on the weekend following Red Hackle Day. The venue for the most recent function was the Leith Ex Servicemen's Club. Entertainment for the evening was provided by "Ballinceol" a ceilidh band from the Ballinluig area and Ally Alcorn singing his usual repertoire of golden oldies. Members and guests were also treated to an excellent piping performance by Mr Scott Hannah who is a member of current pipe band world champions, Shotts and Dykehead.

The Branch now has an established relationship with the Edinburgh Veterans Society which is coordinated by Legion Scotland. This is a welcome development that benefits our members and enables access to various events throughout the year. There is also a wealth of knowledge within the society relating to welfare support for veterans in need who are currently living in the region.

New membership to the Branch continues to increase at a steady pace. Past and present members of The Royal Regiment of Scotland living in the area are reminded that they are welcome to join our Branch. With regard to future activities for 2016 and early 2017, details will be published within the main Association Forecast of Events.



Mr Rory McIntyre lays a Cross of Remembrance at the Princes Street Garden of Remembrance.



Captain Ramsay Macdonald flanked by brothers Tom and Bruce.



The Edinburgh and Lothians Branch laid a wreath at The South African War Memorial on the Mound.

THE FIFE BRANCH

This period started with our annual trip to Balhousie Castle to join in the Remembrance Service for those who not only lost their lives in recent conflicts but for all who have lost their lives serving the Regiment and Country in the past. It is from this early service, that we then disperse back to our local towns and cities, to show our respects to all those who made the ultimate sacrifice within the community. It was then back to Perth for the OP Banner Dinner.



Fife Branch members enjoying Red Hackle Day at the Rothes Halls which included Gunfire supplied by David Thomson.

We had a quiet December, with only a Branch Meeting during the month. Early January i.e. the 5th and it was the first meeting of the Branch to celebrate Red Hackle Day in the Rothes Halls in Glenrothes. The gathering was well attended and it looks like it will now become an annual event.

The 9th of January and in support of the Edinburgh and Lothians Branch, it was off to Leith and a Ceilidh. On the 15th we joined the Dundee Branch at their Annual Dinner and at the end of January we travelled back to Dundee, but this time to see a Play called "The Scarlet Ribbon". It was written to give an insight into life in Dundee after The Great War and the Battle of Loos. The old and bold who attended, got a mention before the show and it was good to be approached by members of the public who wanted to know all about us.

In February we went to the Perth Branch Burns Supper, always on the hunt for a dram. We were now into March and what is normally the Rhine Crossing Dinner but this year, as a mark of respect we changed the name to the Vimy Ridge Dinner. From March to May 1916 the 7th Battalion operated in the Vimy Ridge Sector and it was only right that we should commemorate the men of Fife 100 years later.

The dinner was well attended with 81 sitting down and it was nice to see our friends from Perth, Dundee, Angus and Edinburgh in attendance. The entertainment was supplied by our own Pipey Peter Snaddon and a fantastic tale about a man called Tam O' Shanter from the well known Jock Gilfillan. It is always good to see the family side of the Regiment come to the fore in the way of the three "Ag the Bags" and the Gilfillans sitting together enjoying the banter. On a sadder note and there is always one, we have had our fair share of funerals to attend and again can I thank the Members for their continued support to the families.

VIMY RIDGE DINNER



THE HIGHLAND BRANCH

President: Major (Retd) John Stevenson
Chairman: Joe Barbour
Vice Chairman: Donald Etherington
Secretary: Gordon Kennedy

In the last six months Branch membership has increased by 23 bringing our current membership to 59. There are too many new members to mention by name but it is proof that the pairing with HQ Company is working well.

Our Christmas function took place in The British Legion Club in Inverness and was well attended by members and wives. Gordon Kennedy, the raffle bandit, managed to raise enough money from the sale of tickets which besides the sale of alcohol managed to pay for the night, resulting in no cost to members.

May will be our next major official function. The Aberfeldy Ladies Dinner will be held in Fort George, where we look forward to seeing guests from other Branches of the Association.

Branch meetings continue to be held on the 2nd Friday of the month in The Community Centre, Wimberley Way, Inverness.

LONDON BRANCH

Chairman: Brigadier (Retd) D R Wilson CBE
Secretary: Colonel Mike Smith MBE

Winter Events

This is normally a busy period for the London Branch as we take on the major national events that surround the November period in the Capital. Many of these high profile events are supported by a number of consistent Branch regulars without whom we would be at a loss.

The Field of Remembrance

On Thursday 5 November a delegation of some 13 members of the Branch attended the Memorial Garden ceremony at Westminster; the Branch were responsible for the plots for The Black Watch and The Tyneside Scottish.

The Field of Remembrance is a memorial garden organised annually by the Royal British Legion in Westminster.

For eight days, from the morning of the Thursday before Remembrance Sunday until the evening of the following Thursday, the lawn of St Margaret's Church, Westminster, between Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament, is marked out with 250 plots for regimental and Armed Services Associations. Participants are able to buy a wooden token of remembrance (originally remembrance crosses, now a variety of shapes for different religions, including for 'no faith') decorated with a Remembrance poppy. The token is generally marked with the name of a member of the armed forces who was killed in action and planted in the appropriate plot. The packed lines of remembrance symbols in the separate plots can resemble a temporary military cemetery. After the Field of Remembrance closes, the crosses are collected and burnt, and the ashes are scattered at the First World War battlefields in northern France and Belgium.

The Field of Remembrance was first held in 1928, organised by George Arthur Howson, an officer in the British Army in the First World War and founder and Chairman of the Royal British Legion Poppy Factory. In the first year, there were only two memorials – one dedicated to "Tommy Atkins" – a nickname for a rank-and-file soldier in the British Army – and one to Field Marshal Douglas Haig, 1st Earl Haig, who had died in January 1928.

For the 90th anniversary of the Poppy Appeal in 2011, other Fields of Remembrance were established at Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh.

Remembrance Parade The Cenotaph 8 November

A gallant band of warriors, twenty four in total, formed up at Horse Guards under the control of the parade Marshals/Legion Drill Sergeants prior to forming up in Whitehall. This was a sizable marching contingent, although it would be encouraging to see the numbers build up consecutively to a large contingent for 2018. A good lunch was had at The Albert pub after the parade.

For all those who have never experienced the Cenotaph parade it is one to put on your "bucket list". It is very memorable.

The Branch Annual Dinner "OP Banner" 19 November 2015

This was held in the Victory Services Club with a big turnout: some 83 members and guests sat down, ably organized by Ian Howarth the Dinner Secretary. It is the high point on the London Branch social

calendar and was an excellent evening, especially as it was the first time that the Branch Pipe Major, Chic Mackie, had the Branch Pipe Band on parade. Members and guests were entertained to some excellent pipe music and renditions of regimental tunes that will have awakened many old memories of bygone days. The Band was very well received; this was apparent by the appreciation that was shown on the night. The Band's performance was certainly the icing on the cake to a very enjoyable evening.

The Association AGM

The Branch AGM was held in the Officers Mess in Wellington Barracks on 9 March 2016 and 26 members were in attendance.

New Members

We welcome some new members into the London Branch;
James Russell, JR Findlay, J Tait. We thank them for joining us.

Looking Forward

We are already filling up the invitations to the summer events. The Not Forgotten Association Garden Party at Buckingham palace takes place on 26 May and Founders Day at the Royal Hospital Chelsea 9 June.



Association members gather on Horse Guards before the Cenotaph parade.



The National President of The Royal British Legion (1), HRH Prince Harry (2) and Bill Speakman VC (3) at the Field of Remembrance. Prince Harry speaks to Joe Hubble.



Pipe Major Chick Mackie and the London Branch Pipe Band entertain the guests at the London Branch Op Banner Dinner.

PERTH BRANCH

Management Committee:

President:	Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Roddy Riddell
Chairman:	Captain Alan McEwen
Secretary:	Ally Alcorn
Treasurer:	Frances Sandilands

I should like to open these notes by extending a vote of thanks, on behalf of all our members, to Jim Sandilands and Fraser Brown for the commitment and conscientiousness shown in spades during their term in office as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. We are however, extremely pleased that these positions were immediately filled by Ally Alcorn as Secretary and Frances Sandilands as Treasurer.

Our members continue to enjoy each other's company, whether through Association led events, other Branches activities, or indeed Perth Branch specific events; social, ceremonial or religious. There have been numerous occasions throughout the past six months to foster and promote esprit de corps, comradeship and Regimental interest amongst serving and former soldiers of The Black Watch.

The Op BANNER Dinner was held in the Salutation Hotel, Perth on Saturday 14 November and was an undoubted success. It was attended by a number of the Branch.

The annual Christmas Supper is held in the Perth and District Ex Servicemen's Club and follows on from the December monthly Branch meeting. The buffet supper on this occasion catered for both the traditionalist appetite (Christmas dinner) and also those with a slightly more exotic (curry with rice and accompaniments) appetite, and was enjoyed by all. My lips remain sealed as to disclosing the name of the individual who was later seen to fill a number of tupperware dishes to take home as a doggie bag. And no Perth Branch party would be complete without Ally Alcorn and Davie Stacey competing for top solo vocalist; well done guys, hugely entertaining.

The Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Branch Ceilidh, is fast becoming hugely popular with our Branch members. It is always a thoroughly enjoyable night out, so book early for 2017 to avoid disappointment.

The Dundee Branch Red Hackle Dinner is always an outstanding social occasion; the Dundee Branch really knows how to throw a dinner party. Always a fantastic gathering enjoying each other's company over wholesome Dundee fayre washed down with copious amounts of fine wines and whisky followed by an open mike session, as ever, opened by the extremely talented Ally Alcorn and Davie Stacey.

The Branch Burns Supper was an undoubted success with just over one hundred sitting down to supper with Provost Liz Grant and Councillor Alan Grant our principal guests, in the Salutation Hotel, Perth on Saturday 6 February. Our grateful thanks to Ally Alcorn for planning and organising the supper, to Jim Sandilands, the night's Chief Cronie and to Alastair Duthie for his outstanding Piping throughout the night. A very special mention to all the speakers and performers; George Kennedy (The Selkirk Grace), Sandy Clephane (Posey Nancy), Davie Stacey (the Address to a Haggis), Lee Fitzpatrick (Tam o' Shanter), Billy Whytock (Soldiers' Return), Sandy MacDuff (Absent Friends) and to Cammy Goodall (Immortal Memory and Songs). Get the date for our 2017 Burns Supper in your diary now; Saturday 4 February.

The Fife Branch Vimy Ridge Dinner is another firm favourite in the social calendar with our members. And although there was a real need for a translator (Fife (Kirkcaldinese) to English)) on more than one occasion, the food, refreshments, clatter and banter was simply outstanding.



Perth Branch members joined the Fife Branch for their Vimy Ridge Dinner.



Ally Alcorn and Eddie Kulick at the Vimy Ridge Dinner.



Association members at the Perth Branch Burns Supper.



Jim Colquhoun and Jim and Frances Sandilands enjoying the Burns Supper.

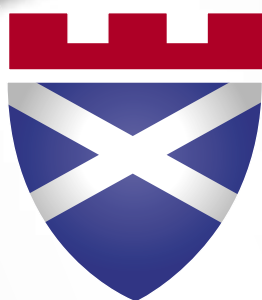


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CAN I CLAIM

If you drive your own vehicle to base and have been posted to different bases (including outside the UK), there's a good chance the taxman owes you a £2,500 refund. You may also be able to claim for Mess Dress.

Established in 1999, RIFT are the UK's leading tax refund experts. RIFT has reclaimed over £20 million for Armed Forces personnel in the last two years and in excess of £110 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.

Will it cost me anything to find out if I can claim?

It's free to find out if you are eligible for a claim, we just need to ask you a few qualifying questions first. If you do have a claim, you are not under any obligation to use our services and we don't charge you anything until we get you your refund.

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