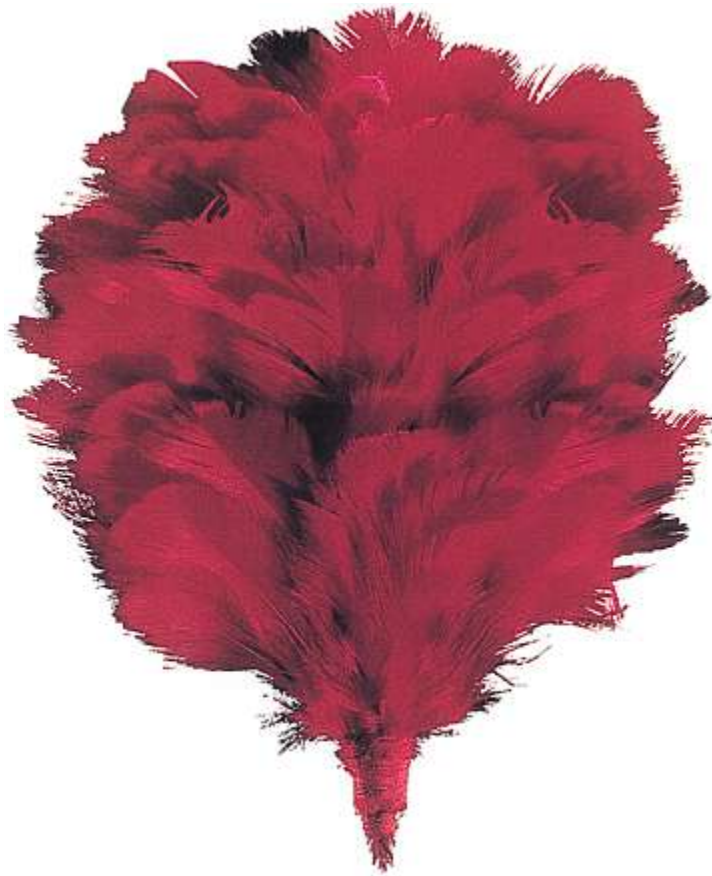


No. 172  
November 2017



# THE RED HACKLE

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Gary Jamieson, former Scots Guardsman, injured in Afghanistan in 2010, Charity Beneficiary. © Malcolm Cochrane



No. 172

42nd



73rd

November 2017

# 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*



*Mrs Georgiana Osborne, President of The Black Watch Association and Brigadier Melville Jameson, Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, unveil the memorial to the old Queen's Barracks on 17 June 2017.*



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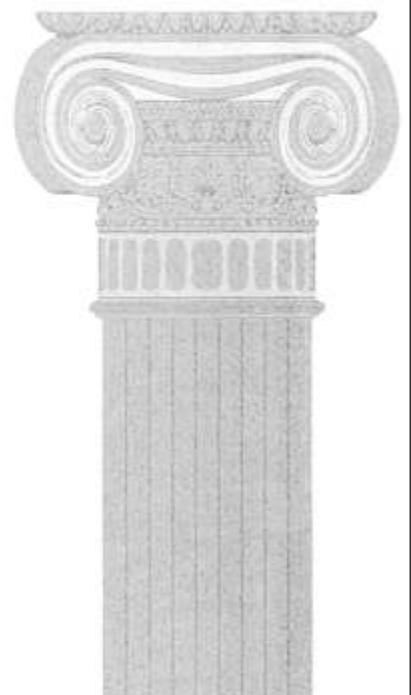
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# THE RED HACKLE



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

**November 2017  
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*Published for The Black Watch*



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## Editorial

The Association has had a surprisingly busy period with a number of projects coming to fruition in the early summer. The magnificent new bronze statue of the Black Watch piper was installed in the grounds of Balhousie Castle in May and was then unveiled in June. This was a busy month as the memorial and descriptor commemorating the site of the old Queen's Barracks was dedicated and then unveiled by our President, Mrs Georgiana Osborne and a party went to Monte Scalari to unveil a new memorial that commemorated the deeds of the 6th Battalion in July 1944. In September we were involved in supporting the book launch of Victoria Schofield's quite excellent second volume of our Regimental history "Fighting in the Front Line 1899-2006" whilst the everyday business of running the welfare, benevolence and comradeship continued. The final event was the commemorative service and lunch held in Kirriemuir in September, to commemorate the award of the VC to Private Melvin.

The Battalion have had a hectic programme of preparing for their role as the United Kingdom Standby Battalion as well as for their deployment to Iraq on OP SHADER 6, whilst a three week camp at Lydd and Hythe allowed them to hone their shooting skills. Running throughout this period has been an innovative leadership programme and I would recommend that you read the article about this programme. The most recent speaker was Sir Alex Ferguson.

The Castle and Museum have trialled a wedding reception as well as unique dining in the Wavell Room and the next step is to extend the café to allow greater flexibility in accepting private parties. This will happen over the winter months and should be completed by April 2018. Visitor numbers to the Museum have increased slightly with events such as "SCOTSPIRIT" and the display of Kelpie maquettes acting as a draw to the public.

The articles section covers a number of the events outlined in the first paragraph but I would commend the article on Wavell in Russia by Owen Humphrys as well as that on 77 Brigade written by Brigadier Alastair Aitken.

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

## FORECAST OF EVENTS 2017/2018

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
<b>2017</b>		
23 November	London Branch Dinner	London
4 December	Angus Branch Christmas Buffet and Drinks	Forfar
16 December	Officers' Regimental Ball	TBC
19 December	Perth Branch Christmas Buffet and Drinks	Perth
<b>2018</b>		
5 January	Fife Branch Red Hackle Day Breakfast	Roths Hall Glenrothes
13 January	Edinburgh Branch Ceilidh	Leith Ex Servicemen's Club
19 January	Dundee Branch Red Hackle Dinner	Dundee
27 January	Angus Branch Burns Supper	Forfar
10 February	Perth Branch Burns Supper	Perth
24 February	Dundee Branch AGM/Families Day	Dundee
9 March	Investment Committee and Trustees and Executive Committee Meetings	Perth
21 March	Great War Memorial Service German Spring offensive	Balhouses Castle
23 March	Fife Branch Rhine Crossing Dinner	Victoria Hotel Kirkcaldy
4 April	London Branch AGM	London
18 April	Great War Memorial Service Lys offensive	Balhouses Castle
21 April	Annual General Meeting	Perth
28 April	Edinburgh, Lothians & Borders Al Basrah Dinner	Edinburgh
11 May	Friends of the Black Watch Museum Cocktail Party	Balhouses Castle
19 May	Highland Branch Aberfeldy Ladies Dinner	Inverness
20 May	Officers' and Ladies Lunch	Ballathie House Hotel nr Perth
11 June	Officers' and Ladies Lunch	Caledonian Club London
15 June	Perth Branch Pre Reunion Function	Ex Servicemen's Club Perth
15 June	Black Watch Association Golf Meeting	Muckhart
16 June	Regimental Reunion	Perth
16 September	Fife Branch Alma Ladies Lunch	Victoria Hotel Kirkcaldy
29 September	Perth Branch Croix de Guerre 100th Anniversary Dinner	Perth

20 October	Angus Branch El Alamein Dinner	Forfar
26 October	Association Trustees and Executive Committee Meetings	Perth
26 October	Officers' Gathering Dinner	Perth
8 November	Field of Remembrance, Westminster	London
9 November	Balhouses Castle Remembrance Service	Balhouses Castle
10 November	London Branch Dinner	Victory Services Club London
11 November	Cenotaph Remembrance Parade	London



*Captain Nick Coles was presented with the Andrew Maitland Trophy in May 2017 by WO1 Glenn Haughton who is the Army Sergeant Major. The trophy was donated by The Hon Mrs Maitland in memory of her late son, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Maitland and is presented to the officer who contributes most to the life of the Battalion. The winner in 2016 was Captain Pete Marshall.*

## CONGRATULATIONS

To Mrs Georgiana Osborne, Lord Lieutenant of Angus and President of The Black Watch Association on the award of the CVO in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

To Colonel RRE Lindsay on his selection to Command 51 Infantry Brigade in October 2018.

To Colonel BMA Wrench on his selection to be Army Inspector in the rank of Brigadier in December 2017.

To Colonel A P Reilly (former Commanding Officer of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland) on his selection to Command 12 Armd Inf Bde in August 2017.

To Acting Brigadier James Roddis DSO, MBE on the award of the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Operational Honours and Awards List in April 2017.

To Colonel S J Cartwright (former Commanding Officer of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland) on his promotion to Brigadier in April 2017. He is the Commander British Military Saudi National Guard based in Riyadh.



*Lieutenant Colonel Jim Keating (right) and Major Jack McNally met up at the Regimental Reunion. They served together in Delta Company as Corporals in Edinburgh and Cyprus and then joined the Weapon Training Team in Knook Camp. Jim Keating later transferred to the RAOC but they have remained firm friends.*

## CHANGE OF COMMAND – THE BLACK WATCH, 3rd BATTALION THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Lieutenant Colonel Graham Sefton is currently serving as Military Assistant to NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe. He will assume command of the Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland in early 2019.

Educated at Dollar Academy and Napier University, he was commissioned into the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's) in December 2000. His early time at regimental duty included tours as OC Mortars, Intelligence Officer, Platoon Commander at the Army Foundation College and on operational tours in Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Iraq. He was appointed as Adjutant of the Argylls in 2005 and then served on the General Staff in the Ministry of Defence before being promoted and conducting a staff appointment in HQ Land.

In July 2011 he became Officer Commanding C Company of the Royal Scots Borderers, 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland. The Company deployed to Helmand Province on Operation Herrick 17 as the 4th Armoured Brigade's Operations Company. After another tour at the Ministry of Defence, this time in Army Resources and Plans, he returned to regimental duty as Second-in-Command of The Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland. He deployed with the battalion, as Chief of Operations of the Kabul Security Force, on the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan.

Lieutenant Colonel Sefton is married to Veronica and has two children, James and Emily, who are six and three years old respectively. His spare time is predominantly devoted to his family although he enjoys running, skiing, cooking and gardening.



*Lieutenant Colonel Graham Sefton.*

## CHANGE OF COMMAND – THE BLACK WATCH BATTALION ACF

Colonel Craig Hubbuck joined the ACF in 1994 and was commissioned into the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Battalion ACF in May 1996. Having covered various roles in the Battalion Colonel Hubbuck was a Company Commander prior to transferring to the Black Watch ACF in May 2013 on promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. On transfer he took on the role of Deputy Commandant. Colonel Hubbuck took over Command of the Battalion in June this year.

He is 49 years old and is married to Rae. They have one son, Ben, who is 19. Craig is a Shift Manager in the Scottish Prison Service currently working in HMP Edinburgh. He has been a Prison Officer for 28 years having previously worked in Polmont and Glenochil. His interests include running, military history and playing golf. He also follows Newcastle United travelling down to Newcastle three times a season to watch them play.



*Colonel Hubbuck.*

## DINING OUT

On Monday 15 May 2017 Brigadier G C Barnett, Brigadier E N de Broë-Ferguson and Colonel A Murdoch were dined out at Balhousie Castle to thank them for their many years of service in their capacities as Trustees and Chairmen of the various Black Watch Trusts.

## LEGION D'HONNEUR

George Ross who served with the 1st Battalion Tyneside Scottish (Black Watch) and the 1st Battalion The Black Watch was awarded the Legion d'Honneur by the French Government and in July this year he was presented with his medal at Liverpool Town Hall.

George now aged 94 underwent his training at Kinfauns Castle and served in the Assault Pioneer Platoon of 1st Battalion The Black Watch. He was wounded in Holland in mid October 1944 and returned to duty in November. He left the Army as a Lance Corporal and worked as a joiner and site foreman until he retired.

The award letter is printed below.

From: French Ambassador, London  
Sylvie Bermann

Dear Mr Ross

I have the pleasure of informing you that the President of the Republic has appointed you to the rank of Chevalier in the Ordre national de la Légion d'Honneur.

I offer you my warmest congratulations on this high honour in recognition of your acknowledged military engagement and your steadfast involvement in the Liberation of France during the Second World War.

As we contemplate this Europe of peace, we must never forget the heroes like you, who came from Britain and the Commonwealth to begin the liberation of Europe by liberating France. We owe our freedom and security to your dedication, because you were ready to risk your life.

I am happy to enclose your insignia of Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur and once again extend to you my heartfelt congratulations.

Signed: Sylvie Bermann



*Mr George Ross being presented with his Legion d'Honneur at Liverpool Town Hall.*



*Mrs Kathleen Renouf, the widow of the late Dr Tom Renouf MM, MBE, Legion d'Honneur unveiled a plaque and bench in Musselburgh in memory of her husband. The plaque and bench were funded by the local Community Council.*

## 51ST HIGHLAND DIVISION MEMORIAL

In the last Red Hackle Magazine (pages 6 and 7) we published details of the new statue that was to be erected in the grounds of Balhousie Castle. On Wednesday 10 May 2017 the statue and the plinth were delivered and under the direction of Alan Herriot the sculptor, it was erected facing the entrance to the Museum.

On Wednesday 21 June, the press were invited to see the new statue and Colonel Ian Critchley represented both the Regiment and the 51st Highland Division.

The project was managed by Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell, Major Ronnie Proctor and Mr Kevin Murphy.



*The 51st Highland Division Statue  
(Courtesy of The Courier @ DC Thomson & Co Ltd).*



*From the left: Mr Alan Herriot (Sculptor), Mrs Kathleen Renouf and Colonel Ian Critchley pictured at the press launch for the 51st Highland Division Statue (Courtesy of The Courier @ DC Thomson & Co Ltd).*

## ASSOCIATION PADRE

The Reverend Alex Forsyth stood down as Association Padre in April 2017 after many years of service to The Black Watch. He served with the 3rd (Volunteer) Battalion The Black Watch as well as being the Association Padre. He had the unenviable task of conducting most of

the funerals for the Black Watch soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan; he also conducted the service for the Laying up of Colours in 2012 and the dedication of the statue at Black Watch Corner in 2014. He led many of the Cross Laying Services at Balhousie Castle. We are most grateful to him for his friendship over many years, his support and commitment and for his guidance over matters spiritual.

We are delighted to welcome the Reverend John C Duncan MBE as the new Association Padre.

Born and bred in Dundee, he trained for the Church of Scotland ministry at the University of Aberdeen – Christ's College and the University of Dublin – Trinity College and the Irish School of Ecumenics. He was the Assistant Minister at St Margaret's Parish Church, Glasgow and was Ordained and Inducted as the Minister at Burntisland Parish Church, Fife, in 1987. John joined the Royal Army Chaplains' Department in January 2001.

He served with five infantry battalions; 1st Battalion Royal Highland Fusiliers, The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, 2nd Mercians (Worcester & Sherwood Foresters), 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's), and his final posting (leaving the best to last!) was as Chaplain to The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland at Fort George, Inverness.

John retired as an Army Chaplain in March 2016, and was Inducted as the Minister at Leuchars: St Athernase Parish Church, Fife, on 13 March 2016 and has already conducted a Service of Commemoration at Balhousie Castle and took part in the dedication of the Queen's Barracks memorial on 17 June 2017.

## THE REVEREND PETER SUTTON

The Reverend Peter Sutton AKC, BD, MTh, PGCert Counselling who served in the Regiment from 1989-1994 was ordained and inducted as the new Minister of the Parish Church of St Cuthbert, Edinburgh on 1st June 2017.

## A FALLEN OFFICER'S GIFTS

**Editor's Note:** I am grateful to Brigadier E D Cameron who gave me this newspaper cutting from the Times. The extract was dated 7 July 1917. Lieutenant Tyser was killed in action on 9 April 1917 and left two large legacies to the 1st and 2nd Battalion.

The Secretary of the War Office makes the following announcement: The Army Council desire gratefully to acknowledge the receipt of two gifts of £3,000 each for the provision of guns and machine-guns by the late Second Lieutenant H E Tyser, Black Watch. Mr Tyser had stipulated that his name should not be disclosed but, as he has been killed in action, his executor has agreed that his generosity should no longer remain unrecorded. Mr Tyser also made many contributions in aid of his regiment and of charitable funds connected with it, and by a codicil to his will executed a few days before his death he left a legacy of £2,000 to his battalion for the benefit of hard and deserving cases.

Harry Erskine Tyser was the only son of the late W H Tyser, of Tyser and Co, the Tyser Line, and was killed on April 9 last. Harry Tyser was at Eton and Trinity, Oxford, and since 1895 had lived the ordinary life of a young man of wealth engaged in business in London. No one of his friends of those days would ever have suspected that the generous but somewhat idle pleasure-loving friend, always at the opera or the bridge table, whose only excursion into military life, a short-lived commission in the Berkshire Volunteers, had quite failed to interest him would turn into the keen soldier who joined the Black Watch at an age at which no one could have pointed the finger of scorn at him for standing aside, who gave his CO no peace till he was allowed to take his place in the firing line, and who spent no happier years than the two passed in his beloved regiment. There is no harm in saying now that, besides his gifts to the Government and Red Cross, he gave large sums to regimental objects and, perhaps even more characteristic of him, the gift to every man in his platoon of a wristwatch the day before the act in which he fell.

A correspondent writes: "Those who knew Tyser at Trinity, Oxford, 20 odd years ago, recall a simple, straight, and lovable soul. He was happier at lawn-tennis or other games than with books, and appeared to be destined to a safe life of business and affluence. For 20 years he had it. His quality of serene directness and simplicity emerges in his surrendering all and giving his life for his country in the lowest commissioned rank at the age of 42".



*Jim Malone, the son of the late CSgt Malone of the 4th/5th Battalion The Black Watch and 51st Highland recently undertook to walk the battle route of the battalion on the anniversary of the battle of Passchendaele to raise funds for The Black Watch Association and the Firefighters charity. Jim with other retired firefighters whose relations had fought with the battalion wanted to commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of their forebears and raised the splendid sum of £975 for the Association. The team at Black Watch Corner – from left to right, Brian Wilson, Alex Malone, Doug Gall, Jim Malone, Rab Paul, Steve Malone, Mel Walker and Ian Grant.*

#### EDITOR AND BATTALION SUB EDITOR

The Editor of the magazine remains as Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell and the Battalion Sub Editor is Captain James Farrall.

#### BLACK WATCH ASSOCIATION GOLF MEETING

The annual Black Watch Association Golf Meeting was held at Muckhart Golf Club this year on 16th June. We had another very successful meeting in fine weather and some fine scoring. Muckhart Golf Club excelled themselves and it's fair to say that the greens this year were as good as they have ever been for our meeting, and the catering was exceptional.

As stated, we were lucky to play in fine weather, given the amount of rain that has fallen this Summer. The scoring was good and, as always, someone comes out of the pack with an outstanding round to claim the top prize. This year it was Allan Brannigan with a gross score of 77. A great round of golf from one of our stalwart regulars! Alex Stewart took the best Net prize, winning the Alan Mutch Memorial Cup with a score of 71 and the best Stableford prize went to one of the battalion golfers, Jay Wallace, with a score of 35. As ever, the golf was played in the right spirit and everyone attending had a great time meeting up with old pals. In fact one of the Muckhart members made a point of saying that she could feel the clubhouse was "buzzing" and that it was great to see many young men wearing their ties after the golf. In the afternoon, we played a 9 hole team Texas Scramble and the winning team was Billy Ramsay, Neil Elder, Michael Snape and Jamie Howe. There were, of course, the usual novelty prizes thrown in for good measure, with Allan Cammock proving to be the most resilient golfer of the day, playing the most golf.

Our grateful thanks go again to the Association Trustees who pledge a healthy subsidy which enables planning for the event to go ahead with confidence. Without this promise of support, we could not even get off the ground. Secondly, to our sponsors. Sidey Ltd continued as our headline sponsor but they were joined this year by Red Hackle Security. It would be extremely difficult for us to even contemplate running this event without the support of our sponsors and we are extremely grateful to them. Of course we would be nowhere without the participation of the golfers. They travel from far and wide, none more so than Billy Gibb who arrived the day before from Dubai and Kev Wann who always manages to plan his Summer trip home from Afghanistan just in time for the competition. There are also a few (quietly in the background) who provide additional prizes to support the day. All are welcome, and if they come bearing gifts, even more so! This year we were especially delighted to have 7 men who are still serving taking part, 4 of whom came from

the Black Watch Battalion. We hope they can make it back again next year, commitments permitting, and perhaps bring some more with them.

The event is an important date in many calendars and for many Regimental golfers it is the highlight of their year. It is not just the golf, but the tremendous comradeship felt and enjoyed by those taking part and for most, the latter is the most important aspect. Next year's event will take place again at Muckhart on 15th June 2018. This is an excellent day's golf with full catering and can be enjoyed by Black Watch Association members and serving members of The Black Watch Battalion, 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 alex8608@btinternet.com.



*Left to right; Jay Wallace (Stableford winner), Billy Ramsay (Team winner), George Ross (Red Hackle Security), Alex Stewart (Best Net), Allan Brannigan (Best Scratch), Arthur Keith (Red Hackle Security), Michael Snape and Neil Elder (Team winners).*

#### HIGHLAND AND LOWLAND BRIGADE AND BLACK WATCH GOLF 2017 SPRING MEETING – PANMURE

Twenty four Club members of The Highland and Lowland Brigades' Golfing Society enjoyed two memorable days of golf at Panmure on the 24th and 25th of May. The weather was stunning on both days and the wind was, for once, reasonably benign.

The Martin Holt team match is played on day one concurrently with the individual (Medal) round. The Black Watch fielded seven players in total split into two teams. The combined Lowland Battalion team (SCOTS) have proved to be strong team players taking the honours for the past two years. So it proved this year with SCOTS winning the Martin Holt by a mere .1 of a Stableford point from Black Watch B team – 28.7 to 28.6 stableford points.

A fine dinner followed in the evening of day one in the traditional and welcoming Panmure clubhouse, after which members retired to the Hogan Lounge to enjoy coffee and reflect on the day's play.

Thursday dawned ideal for golf and for contesting the Fort George Cup, the second team match. The Black Watch fielded two teams of two pairs of foursomes. The result was almost as close as the Martin Holt but this time Highlanders team ran out winners over SCOTS, 35 points to 34.6. Lunch, prize giving and the society AGM followed, members departing Panmure tired but content, golfing honours having been equitably shared.

#### ARGYLLS MATCH – ROXBURGHE

In June, the annual match between the Black Watch and The Argylls was held at The Roxburghe outside Kelso. In all twenty golfers assembled and a most convivial day was had, helped by playing 12 holes before an excellent lunch and 6 holes afterwards to aid the digestive system. Although a young course, The Roxburghe is beautifully laid out with stunning views of Borders countryside and many testing holes and greens, tightly guarded by deep bunkers. A keenly fought match was had with the Argylls coming out on top.

The Golfing Societies fixture list is issued by the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Club and anybody wishing to play in any match in 2018 is encouraged to contact the respective match managers.

Officers who represented The Black Watch at the Spring Meeting were: Captain Bruce Osborne, Captain James Osborne, Mr Jamie Farquhar, Major Colin Innes, Lieutenant Colonel Giles Le Maitre, Colonel John Rankin, Captain Will Henderson, Captain Charles Arbuthnot, Colonel Alex Murdoch, Mr Alistair Hammond-Chambers and Mr Andrew Hamilton.

Officers who represented The Black Watch in the match against The Argylls were: Captain Charles Arbuthnott, Captain Will Henderson, Mr Jamie Farquhar, Mr Andrew Hamilton, Captain Bruce Osborne, Major Angus Watson, Major Colin Innes, Major Derrick McIntyre and Mr Ronnie Adam.

### AHLUWALIA CUP

The Black Watch Battalion asked the Association to tell them the history behind the Ahluwalia Cup and luckily Major Alan McKinnell was able to furnish the information. It is a golfing cup and during the 1973-74 tour of Hong Kong, Mr Ahluwalia ran a sports shop in Kowloon and he was persuaded by Major Les East (the Paymaster) and Major Alan McKinnell to give our golfers a discount on any golfing equipment purchased. We also had the hard neck to ask him to present a trophy to keep his name to the fore in our golfing world which he very kindly did. The cup is held at Fort George.

### VISIT FROM ARGENTINIAN PIPER

Pipe Major Oscar Llobenes of the Highland Thistle Pipe Band of Buenos Aires joined Pipe Major Alistair Duthie to fulfil an ambition to play at Balhousie Castle, long regarded in South American piping circles as an iconic location in which to play. Senor Llobenes and the Highland Thistle Band were in Scotland to compete in the World Pipe Band Championships this year. The Pipe Major is no stranger to Scottish culture and has taught music and drama at St Andrews Scots School in Buenos Aires for several years. He has also played the lament at the Scottish Argentine War Memorial in the school grounds on Armistice Day service when the 547 men of Scottish birth or heritage from Argentina who were killed during the Great War are remembered.



*Pipe Major Oscar Llobenes and Pipe Major Alistair Duthie pictured beside the 51st Highland Division statue.*



*The Black Watch Association veterans marched in Crieff on Sunday 30 July to commemorate the Battle of Passchendaele. The 6th Battalion took part in this battle going over the top in the early hours of 31 July 1914.*



*Pictured with the successful Dundee High School CCF drill team are their drill instructors Eddie Ireland (right) and Willie Nichol, (ex Delta Company Hong Kong (1972-1974). Both were well drilled by RSM Fred Beattie and CSM Harry Berry and they did not forget their lessons.*

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

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Captain Anthony Perriam

Chief Executive: Mrs Anne Kinnes

Since the last edition, the Museum has had a busy summer. A series of events and a busy tourist season have combined to produce a successful six months for us all.

James Watt retired as a Trustee after our meeting in May. James has been intimately involved in the Museum from the start of the planning of the new build. With a wealth of experience in business and with a particular facility for numbers, he has been a key member of the project. His advice, experience and ability to ensure that we have got the detail right has meant that the Museum is now well established in every sense; as a business and in both accounting and governance terms. The Regiment owes him a great deal for all his unstinting efforts and his unfailing good humour. He remains a Trustee of the Friends of The Black Watch Museum and we look forward to seeing lots of him in the future.

There have also been a couple of changes to the permanent staff at the Museum. Richard Mackenzie, our archivist, has left us and he has been replaced by Richard Hunter, who comes to us from looking after the Edinburgh City archives and will work two days a week. Richard has already got his teeth into the archive and there will be plenty to keep him busy. We have also had a change in the kitchen, with Ray Allan leaving for another post and we have been joined by Marc Price who is in the process of developing and launching our new Autumn menu. We wish them both a very warm welcome.

The summer season has seen a continuing surge of visitors to the Museum, with an increased number of visitors coming to look around our collection. A promotion with "Itison" has been particularly successful and the new joint ticketing arrangements with Scone Palace have also helped.

The programme of special exhibitions and events continues. Foremost amongst these has been the mini maquettes of the Kelpies, which were in our courtyard for June and so were there to provide a stunning backdrop to the Regimental Reunion. Other exhibitions have included the Visit Scotland sponsored "SCOTSPIRIT" letters which joined us in April for a weekend and again provided an impressive backdrop to the Museum entrance.

The Easter weekend saw a particularly busy and varied range of activities. The Castle played host to the Great War Boys, who set up camp for the weekend in our grounds in their replica World War 1 tents and then showed our visitors what it was to be a soldier, using our WW1 trench. We were also joined by some soldiers from the Black Watch Battalion, who brought a rowing machine and weights to encourage people to stay fit and demonstrated modern day ration packs, much to the enjoyment of those who sampled them. Easter egg hunts and many family activities were also on offer.

In the last edition, the advent of a fine memorial to the 51st Highland Division was forecast and it is a real pleasure to be able to report that the statue has now been erected and forms a very fine addition to the front of the Museum. We are very lucky to have had the help of a large number of people in completing this project and if you have not seen it, do please make an effort to come and have a look.

The temporary exhibition space in the Museum has also been busy. The "Morrison: the Man, the Search: the Discovery", described in the last edition of the Red Hackle, was replaced by "Life Behind the Wire".

It is also a great pleasure to record the publication of Victoria Schofield's second volume of our Regimental History. The volume is

called "The Black Watch: Fighting in the Front Line 1899-2006" and is available at the Museum. Victoria came and took part in a book signing session in July and returned to give a fascinating lecture about how she went about tackling this project in September. That it has been an epic work is beyond doubt, taking as it did some 9 years of hard work to complete.

The Museum has held its' first wedding party, which was a huge success and has helped pave the way for a new venture in our portfolio.

As we move into the Christmas period, the plan to further extend the museum is now well underway. The idea is to extend the café to the West, in order to give us extra capacity during the summer months and to allow private events, special exhibitions, lectures and other events to take place, without having to close the café. Given planning constraints, the extension will, in essence, be a large conservatory, which will be light and airy and continue the high quality of the current extension, whilst being very different. At the time of writing, the project is out for costing and it is hoped that a decision on which contractor to use will be made in the middle of October, with building commencing in the middle of November. Given a reasonable winter, it is hoped that the build will be completed by the beginning of April 2018 and in use shortly thereafter. Clearly, one of the benefits will be the ability to host larger Association events without the additional costs involved in erecting marquees.



*The Kelpies on show.*



*An artist's impression of the proposed extension to the Balhousie Castle café.*



An aerial view of the grounds at Balhousie Castle showing the Kelpies and the 51st Highland Division Statue taken during the Regimental Reunion.



The Museum team hope that Balhousie Castle will be used as a wedding venue in the future.

## MUSEUM NOTES

By Hope Busak, Curator

The Black Watch Castle and Museum has had an eventful few months. We continue to welcome a steady stream of visitors and continue to be an exciting destination for families and tour groups. We are thrilled to announce that the museum team has been built up. We have welcomed Charlie Tzreciak, our new Learning and Audiences Officer, who has a degree in History from Oxford University and a Masters in Museums Studies from St Andrews. He has settled in very well and is already able to provide excellent tours, talks and workshops. Richard Hunter has joined us as archivist for two days a week. He is very keen to gain more knowledge of the Black Watch through research enquiries and tours. Finally, Fiona Connah has joined the team as Museum Assistant for eight hours a week. Fiona has volunteered for the Black Watch Castle and Museum since 2013 and is starting a part-time museum studies course in Glasgow this year.

Our major event programme for the summer was our new Museum Explorers Club. This consisted of 13 two-and-a-half hour workshops in which children followed the history of the Black Watch from 1725 to the end of the Second World War. Activities included making basket-hilted broadswords and targes, building Brown Bess Muskets and creating models of Mark V Tanks from the First World War. Children who attended the workshops were given a free Museum Explorers Polo Shirt. The Polo Shirts, and the majority of the craft materials used in the workshops, were purchased using a generous grant from the Friends of the Black Watch. We will extend this club through to December and, if it proves popular, into the New Year.

Our current temporary exhibition, *Behind the Wire*, has been well received by the public, with many people commenting on memories of their relatives who were POWs during the Second World War. Our next exhibition, *Art of War*, will delve into what John Ruskin described in 1865 as "the silver lining of conflict" – creativity and masterpieces.

The Black Watch Castle and Museum has accessioned 247 objects into the collections so far in 2017 and continues to receive wonderful donations on a regular basis. Most of these donations come from veterans of the Black Watch and families of those who wore the red hackle. We take great pleasure in hearing the stories that these objects bring to life and even greater joy comes from being able to share those stories with you.

We recently received a beautiful silver salver owned by 2nd Lieutenant Donald Liddell of 6th/7th Battalion The Black Watch. It was presented to him on the occasion of his marriage on 29th August 1939 to Barbara Dixon of Kenwick Hall, Lincolnshire. The salver has been signed by each of his fellow Black Watch Officers and represents an impressive roll-call.

The wedding took place just three days before the formal Declaration of War on 2 September 1939. It meant that many guests had difficulty attending the ceremony in Lincolnshire as they were already involved in military service and yet, most still managed to attend. This was particularly so in the case of the Best Man, Geordie Selkirk (Group Captain George Nigel Douglas-Hamilton, 10th Earl of Selkirk, KT, GCMG, GBE, AFC, AE, PC, QC) who was in Fighter Command's intelligence corps (latterly its Chief Intelligence Officer). He had to plead illness in order to 'escape' from his military duties for the day!

We would like to offer our thanks to Colin Liddell, son of Donald, who donated this wonderful object to the Black Watch Castle and Museum alongside a fire screen and razor set also belonging to Donald Liddell.

There are 56 signatures on the salver:

T Bryce Douglas	D P Bickmore
D F Russell	Keith M Black
James R Davidson	TL Rollo
H P Lindsay	WM Steven
A Murray Robertson	HEA Dewar
R Hutchison	J Bryce Douglas
William Foster	JP Wedderburn
B S Leslie	HD Halley
H MacDuff-Duncan	WH McIntosh
JL Swanston	EFA Morrison
HW Strathairn	J Peter Herd
GS Cairncross	B A Byrne
George Hay Drummond	Keith
	Purvis-Russell-Montgomery
	A Chapman
CN Christie	

WG Anderson  
Ian Lyle  
BA Innes  
ICP Sloan  
Michael G Nairn  
Ian Macrae  
R Hay Robertson  
PG Buchanan  
James McKechnie  
Michael G Nairn  
Donald Currie Mirrielees  
Douglas Spencer-Nairn  
DEF Coates  
G MacLean

IK MacRosty  
John Stewart  
CMP Smith  
R Hutchison  
John H Patterson  
John Craig  
Donald M Marr  
R Hutchison  
Thomson Smith  
JT Buchanan  
RO Heriot Maitland  
RF Spencer-Nairn  
JR Rankine  
RH Hamilton-Smith



*Silver salver presented to 2nd Lieutenant Donald Liddell on the occasion of his marriage.*



*Behind the Wire taken from the diary of Lance Corporal William D Anderson.*

## THE FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH CASTLE AND MUSEUM

*By Sarah Riddell-Webster*

This summer the Friends lecture program has looked at some of the technological advances that emerged during the First World War. In May



we welcomed Dr Dan Paton from the Montrose Air Station Heritage Centre. Dr Paton explained in depth about some of the very early flying machines that took to the skies when The Royal Flying Corps (RFC) was formed. He told us of the developments of the planes and the RFC and where around the country these early squadrons were based, also giving us an insight into the pilots and crews that were recruited. These brave crews took to the air in incredibly flimsy planes, made of wooden frames, often manufactured by men who were used to making furniture, and armed with only hand guns which they fired as they flew. In 2018 we will host a lecture to mark the centenary of the formation of the Royal Air Force (RAF) and the transition from the Royal Flying Corps.

Tanks also loomed large on the battlefield in 1917 so it gave us great pleasure to welcome Lt Col (Retd) Geoffrey Vessey Holt, late of The Royal Tank Regiment. Lt Col Vessey Holt gave a fascinating and at times horrifying lecture on the development and arrival of 'Mother', the first tank, and the tank's modest support of the infantry up to the first tank battle, the Battle of Cambrai. Designed to cross the wide and deep trenches on the battlefields of the Western Front, the tank could power across "No Mans Land". Unaffected by the machine guns and small arms fire and crushing barbed wire as they went, they could assault fortified enemy positions with powerful armaments thus clearing the ground for the infantry to advance. The tanks were also used to carry troops and supplies. The down side was the heat inside them, the appalling miles to gallon ratio and the very real danger that they could sink without trace into the deep mud of the battlefield. Lt Col Vessey Holt held his audience spell bound and horrified during an excellent lecture. I am delighted to say that he has agreed to come back in the future to continue the story of the advancement of the tank.

With the arrival of summer we changed tack and much enjoyed a lecture given by Major (Retd) Colin Innes on the subject of Freddie Tait: Golfer and Soldier. It was timely that as the Open Golf at Royal Birkdale came to a close we heard of the extraordinary golfing skill of this young Black Watch officer. Lieutenant FG Tait was one of the finest amateur golfers of his time, having come third on three occasions in Open Championships during the 1890's. He fought with the 2nd Battalion during the Boer War in South Africa where, on 7th February 1900, he was tragically killed, aged only 30, at Koodoosberg Drift, not far from Kimberley. Colin Innes was particularly keen to give this lecture on Freddie Tait, not just because they were both members of The Black Watch and The Royal and Ancient Golf Club but more poignantly because Colin's Grandfather was also a Subaltern in the 2nd Battalion in South Africa and he and Freddie Tait were wounded at Magersfontein and spent time together being patched up in Cape Town before rejoining the Battalion. As always Colin delivered a well researched and very interesting lecture which his audience greatly enjoyed.

Our most recent lecturer has been Victoria Schofield who spoke about the process and stories behind writing the history of The Black Watch. It was fascinating to hear how you set about writing a history that covers nearly 300 years and condense it into two volumes with a publisher that is very focused on the 'word count'. One of the biggest joys for Victoria, on this 10 year journey into the history of The Black Watch, was to talk to live veterans. Normally an historian is working their way through letters and diaries, as indeed Victoria had done for Volume One, The Highland Furies but for Volume Two, The Black Watch: Fighting in the Front Line 1899-2006, she heard many accounts first hand from those that had been there. Some of the veterans were of a significant age when Victoria started writing the books so much of her research and interviews for the second volume were done before she had written the first. The complexity of writing such a history was awe-inspiring. So much information, so many fascinating and extraordinary tales, so many men and their families, how do you put that into two volumes? Victoria did it by following a number of individuals, by researching their diaries, their letters to and from their families and their campaigns. The lecture that Victoria gave was so interesting and enjoyable and greatly appreciated by her audience. She is not only a great writer but also an extremely accomplished speaker who is very much the master of her subject. Before the lecture began Victoria signed many cop-

ies of the second volume which can be purchased through the museum shop, call 01738 638152 option 1 to buy your copy.

Along with the money the Friends raise from membership fees we are also bringing in significant funds through the lecture series. This means that we have been in a position to give the Museum sizable donations to cover many different areas. Recently we have bought T shirts for the young members of The Black Watch Explorers Club, set up a travel bursary fund to enable school visits, replaced the faulty chandeliers on the spiral stairways in the Museum, bought shelving and storage materials for the museum archive, sponsored the special exhibitions 'Behind the Wire', supported the special exhibitions that have been in the grounds of the Castle this summer and much more.

There is a full calendar of lectures in place for next year, see the website for details [www.theblackwatch.co.uk](http://www.theblackwatch.co.uk) With your help we can continue to support the Castle and Museum in many different ways.



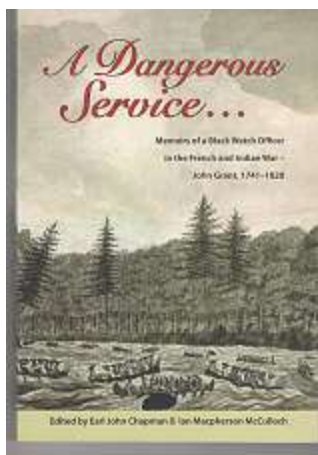
On 12th September 2017 Victoria Schofield the author of our Regimental history, written in two volumes, gave a talk to the Friends of the Museum. She was presented with a Black Watch Corner Statuette by Lt Col Roddy Riddell on behalf of the Regimental Association to thank her for all her hard work over a period of nearly ten years.

## FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH CASTLE & MUSEUM

### LECTURES November 2017-June 2018

<p><b>Cradle of Scotland</b>  <b>2nd November 2017</b>  <i>6:30 drinks reception   7:00 lecture commences</i>            Tickets £9 non-members   £7 Friends            Prof Steven Driscoll will talk about the archaeological dig around Forteviot, an area that played a central role in the development of Scotland from the 9th century.</p>	<p><b>The German advance in the Spring of 1918</b>  <b>15th March 2018</b>  <i>6:30 drinks reception   7:00 lecture commences</i>            Tickets £9 non-members   £7 Friends            Professor Gary Sheffield returns to take us through the German final major offensive on the Western Front especially against General Gough's Fifth Army and the advance to Amiens.</p>
<p><b>1917-Total War</b>  <b>14th December 2017</b>  <i>6:30 drinks reception   7:00 lecture commences</i>            Tickets £9 non-members   £7 Friends            Mike Taylor will give an overview of the highs and lows of a turbulent year both at home and abroad</p>	<p><b>The Ostend and Zeebrugge Raids, 1918</b>  <b>April 2018</b>  <i>6:30 drinks reception   7:00 lecture commences</i>            Tickets £9 non-members   £7 Friends            Naval historian Andrew Gordon will tell the story of the operation intended to frustrate German warship and submarine access to the English Channel by blocking both ports. The state of tide, weather, wind and fog were all crucial to the plan, its timing and success or failure.</p>
<p><b>"What Will we learn from all this?"</b>  <b>18th January 2018</b>  <i>6:30 drinks reception   7:00 lecture commences</i>            Tickets £9 non-members   £7 Friends            Professor Norman Drummond offers his reflections and hopes for the educational and genealogical legacy of the World War I commemorative program in the run up to and including the Armistice Centenary of 2018 and beyond.</p>	<p><b>Allenby and the Palestine Campaign 1917-18</b>  <b>17th May 2018</b>  <i>6:30 drinks reception   7:00 lecture commences</i>            Tickets £9 non-members   £7 Friends            Willie Coupar will describe how, after two unsuccessful attempts by General Murray to take Gaza, Allenby took over and how he conducted a most successful campaign leading to the capture of Gaza, the taking of Jerusalem and most of present day Syria.</p>
<p><b>The Russian Revolution and its impact on WW1</b>  <b>15th February 2018</b>  <i>6:30 drinks reception   7:00 lecture commences</i>            Tickets £9 non-members   £7 Friends            Dr Evan Maudsley of Glasgow University will cover the Russian aspect of the latter period of WW1: Revolution and the Brest Litovsk Treaty.</p>	<p><b>The battle of Amiens and the 100 days campaign</b>  <b>11th June 2018</b>  <i>6:30 drinks reception   7:00 lecture commences</i>            Tickets £9 non-members   £7 Friends            Prof Sir Hew Strachan will tell us about these momentous months, when militarily, all seemed to come right for the British Army after so many years of effort.</p>
<p><b>PLEASE BOOK ALL LECTURES IN ADVANCE BY TELEPHONE OR IN PERSON</b></p>	<p><b>Balhouseie Castle, Hay Street, Perth PH1 5HR</b>  <b>+44 (0)1738 638 152</b> <a href="mailto:friends@theblackwatch.co.uk">friends@theblackwatch.co.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.theblackwatch.co.uk">www.theblackwatch.co.uk</a></p>

# BOOK REVIEWS



## **A DANGEROUS SERVICE MEMOIRS OF A BLACK WATCH OFFICER IN THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR JOHN GRANT 1741-1828**

*Edited by Earl Chapman & Ian McCulloch*

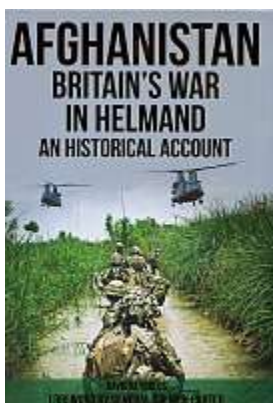
John Grant's eyewitness accounts of military life during the French Indian War provide fascinating insights into this period of history. We follow the young Scottish officer to the Caribbean, where he soldiered in the disease-ridden cane fields and swamps of Martinique and Guadeloupe and later at the siege of Havana. He then moves to America where he served at Staten Island, New York and on the Hudson River route to Ticonderoga. He worked on building forts at Oswego and Crown Point and was part of the "Battoe Service" making the movement of Armies and supplies through the wilderness possible.

Not only does he describe the physical conditions of the fighting and the strange environments but we learn first-hand of his emotions before and after combat, his will to fight and his perseverance in adversity. The exploits of The Black Watch in the Americas during the development of Britain's Empire were a critical factor in changing the image of Highlanders in British Society from Jacobite rebels to Imperial heroes. In Grant's memoirs we find a man whose career straddled that period.

Proud of his family, his countrymen and his Regiment, John Grant as a young Black Watch officer pursued a career while on "dangerous service". It marked him for the rest of his life.

This book is extremely well researched and illustrated and has a very useful set of Biographical Notes. I would recommend it to anyone who has an interest in the early service of the 42nd Regiment of Foot and a wider interest in Britain's early imperial wars.

The book can be ordered from Robin Brass Studio [www.robinbrassstudio.com](http://www.robinbrassstudio.com): ISBN: 978-189694174-5



## **AFGHANISTAN – BRITAIN'S WAR IN HELMAND AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT**

*By David Reynolds (Foreword by General Sir Nick Carter)*

Britain's Armed Forces spent a decade in Afghanistan, first deploying to the north followed by a move to Kabul, Kandahar and Helmand.

More than 100,000 personnel from all three Services served on what became known as OPERATION HERRICK.

With a Foreword written by General Sir Nick Carter, the first historical account has been published by DRA Publishing which documents the conflict in ten chapters and profiles the challenges faced by the men on the ground. The book covers many accounts of bravery; the Grenadier Guardsman who won the Victoria Cross; the Royal Marines who went back to rescue a colleague at an old fort in Garmsir or the Riflemen who were hit by two massive IEDs and gave medical care under fire in an incident which saw five soldiers killed. The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland gets a passing mention in the section on Op PANCHAI PALANG.

The book pays special tribute to every man and woman who was killed in the conflict and lists the deployment of each brigade and its units. There are a mass of photographs.

If I had served in Afghanistan it is a book that I would have wanted to have on my bookshelf.

It can be bought from high street bookshops at £25 or from the publisher at the discounted price of £20. Email [office@dramedia.co.uk](mailto:office@dramedia.co.uk)  
DRA Publishing ISBN: 978-0-9557813-3-9



## **ZERO HOUR Z DAY 1st JULY 1916 X111 CORPS OPERATIONS BETWEEN MARICOURT AND MAMETZ**

*By Jonathan Porter*

Whilst this book does not include any mention of The Black Watch (the 9th Scottish Division were the X111 Corps Reserve and the 8th Battalion were in 26 Brigade as part of that Division) it is one of the most fascinating and well researched Great War histories I have read. It looks in great detail at the planning carried out in the build up to the successful operations carried out by X111 Corps on the first day of the Somme offensive and it is very well illustrated by maps, photographs and modern computer generated graphics that overlay the routes taken by fighting patrols and the inter-regimental, brigade and divisional boundaries. He cleverly uses air photographs and contemporary panoramas of the ground.

Studies of the air war, mining operations, the German forces in the Montauban/Mametz area, intelligence patrols and raids, artillery plans, infantry and special weapons, medical preparations, training and rehearsals, the evacuation of the wounded and the clearance of the dead have all been researched. Throughout it all, the faces of the young men who fought the battles stare out at you from the pages. He has used the war diaries of Regiments like the East Surreys, The East Kent Regiment, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, The Norfolk Regiment, The Suffolk Regiment, The Essex Regiment, The Bedfordshire Regiment, The Middlesex Regiment, The Royal Scots Fusiliers, The Manchester Regiment, The Kings (Liverpool) Regiment to explain how each battalion operated taking their objectives or assisting as "moppers up".

He looks at the careers of the Corps Commander Lieutenant General Walter Congreve VC and the Divisional Commanders of the assault divisions, Major General Maxse DSO (GOC 18th Eastern Division – he had commanded the 1st Guards Brigade at the 1st Battle of Ypres) and Major General John Shea DSO (GOC 30th Division). The author

explains that all three were remarkably similar and could be described as having most of the following qualities; a fighting soldier respected by their men, professional to the core, detailed planners, trainers and instructors, daring, happy to question orders, known to think outside the box and innovators of new ideas, weapons and tactics.

The author asks why X111 Corps was so successful and attributes it to a combination of factors; command and planning, training and rehearsals, effective preparations, artillery superiority, new infantry tactics, use of special weapons and mining, exceptional battle leadership, topography and the enemy's inferior defensive preparations and strength.

The author spent 20 years in the Royal Marines and SBS but has always had a keen interest in the Great War. His experience as a soldier and his understanding of his profession shines through in this book. There are a number of typographical errors but it is a very detailed history that debunks a number of the myths surrounding the Battle of the Somme.

At nearly 500 pages it is not a book you read in one go but I would recommend it to anyone who has an interest in the Great War.

The book is exclusively available via the website [www.zerohourzday.com](http://www.zerohourzday.com) on the buy the book page. The hardback cost £30 a soft cover £25. ISBN: 978-0-9956911-0-0

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# Obituaries

## BRIGADIER OLIVER ROBERT TWEEDY

Brigadier Bob Tweedy died on Wednesday 20th September 2017. A full obituary will be published in the next edition.

## REVEREND TOM DAVIDSON-KELLY

The Reverend Tom Davidson-Kelly was appointed padre to the 1st Battalion in 1982 when, as a mechanized infantry battalion, it was based in West Germany as part of the British Army on the Rhine. For a new padre with no previous military experience, this was jumping into the deep end. He surfaced very quickly, and more or less instantly established himself as a 'character'. The Revd Norman



Drummond, from whom he took over, recalls that Tom had an instinctive feel for the character of the Army's senior highland regiment and literally sucked in our history and traditions. From the outset the battalion gathered him and his dear wife Kim into the bosom of the regimental family as if they had both always been part of it.

Not long afterwards 1BW embarked on a five month unaccompanied operational tour in West Belfast. In 1985 the battalion moved back to Edinburgh before embarking on yet another Op BANNER tour, this time to South Armagh. Tom remained our spiritual leader until early in 1987 when he was posted to the Scots Guards. Two years later Tom returned to life as a civilian minister but he retained links with the Army by serving first as chaplain to 1/51 Highland (later 3BW) in Perth and then to the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow finishing his time as an officiating chaplain in December 2014.

These are the bare bones of Tom's time in uniform. But what do we all remember with so much affection for the man he was and so much admiration for what he did and how he did it? It might be fair to say that he never really got to grips with the requirements of strict military discipline. His salutes drove the sergeant majors to despair. His time-keeping was a little imprecise to say the least of it. His navigational skills were not great either. The result was that he was often in the wrong place at the right time, or in the right place at the wrong time and only very occasionally right on both counts.

This sort of thing seemed to be of a natural piece with the visual impact that he created, whether brilliantly intentional or unconsciously spontaneous we never quite knew. He was enormously proud of his uniform, especially his Black Watch kilt and Tam o' Shanter with its famous red hackle, but somehow he seemed to wear it as if he were slightly pulling his own leg. But what really caught all our imaginations was what he used to wear going about his duties not in uniform but in mufti, and particularly his cape and French onion seller's beret. This, with his large spectacles, dark moustache and apparently permanent and very loud chuckle that was unmistakably Tom's, told us all instantly that our padre was quite unlike anyone else's. And how delighted we were that that was the case.

There was something of the disorganized about him too. As we were all preparing to move from West Germany back to Edinburgh, Tom asked Regimental Sergeant Major Mike Smith for advice about how he should pack up and handover his Army quarter, something he and Kim had never had to do before. Tom was particularly concerned about his extensive library of books. The RSM explained everything to him and asked Tom what day he was supposed to be handing the quarter over. "Tomorrow morning" came the astonishing reply.

As we all recall our life in Germany was dominated by the need to be ready for anything. There were those frequent practice call-outs to our war stations and the nearly as frequent exercises in the German countryside. Tom of course came too, complete with everything he needed to hold services in the field. He quickly gained a well-earned reputation for enjoying his food, not altogether matched by an eagerness to cook it. Thus it was that he and his driver, LCpl Roxburgh, could more or less be guaranteed to turn up when tea had just been brewed or the all-in-one stew prepared.

During the 1982/83 tour in West Belfast, Tom dutifully toured all the various fortified bases in West Belfast for Sunday services and for pastoral visits, often at very unsociable hours when other padres might well have felt free to go to bed. He did all this driving through places and along roads that were not exactly safe in a White Austin Mini in which was the prominently displayed legend: "This car has hidden power!" Indeed it did. In a way it is a miracle that he survived because, dressed in his beret, raincoat, dark glasses and luxuriant black moustache, he could easily have been mistaken for someone trying to be in the IRA and indeed he often was though happily never with irreversible consequences.

On another tour, this time in South Armagh where more or less all movement had to be by helicopter, he regularly visited every remote hill-top post with no little courage and sometimes with an obstinacy that defied common sense. On one occasion, despite warnings of imminent and persistent fog, he insisted on being taken into a very small position manned by half a dozen men where conditions were cramped and entirely free of creature comforts. After three days he was retrieved in very marginal conditions by a bold Royal Navy pilot who afterwards said that Tom had shown no signs of fear on what by all accounts was a very hazardous flight. "He had", said the pilot, "enough faith for both of us!"

His Sunday services were always memorable, whether safely in the Kirk in the barracks or in the field. A flavour of these can be gleaned from Tom's own words written for the Black Watch Kirk report in a 1983 edition of the Red Hackle. Under a heading taken from the hymn: "The Summer suns are glowing over land and sea" he wrote: "The Summer months have slipped by quietly if quiet is the right word to use. In thirteen weeks we have had fourteen baptisms. On Sunday 21st August we had eight Baptisms and the Padre was in full cry to match the contented noises of the little ones."

In fact the wives and children of the battalion were never far from Tom's mind. He took his pastoral duties with all of the battalion's families more than seriously, a constant and much sought after source of comfort, advice and guidance, not least because he did not thrust religion down anyone's throats. In his view faith was to be transmitted by example not by bible-bashing. By his brilliance with the families and the soldiers alike he made an extraordinary contribution to the morale and well-being of the whole battalion.

The Army was enormously lucky to have had Tom as one of its chaplains. Whether visiting the sick and wounded in hospital, or conducting services, acting as wise counsel to his commanding officer, organizing outings, presiding over the Kirk Session or all the other seemingly endless list of duties, Tom excelled in his own unique and thoroughly imitable way. Thanks to him for us in The Black Watch and more widely "the summer suns did indeed glow over land and sea."

A S H Irwin

## IAN PURVIS

Ian Purvis who died on 1 November 2016 aged 83, undertook his National Service as a soldier in the Regiment in the period 1950-52. He was then commissioned into the Royal Army Service Corps and this was followed by eight years service in the TA.

In civil life he was a Barrister on the Western Circuit and for a number of years he also served as an Assistant Parliamentary Boundary Commissioner. In 1985 he left the Bar and established a successful Age Concern organisation in Hampshire. He was head hunted in 1990 to become Counsel and Senior Legal Adviser at Age Concern England.

He is survived by his wife Sussanah.

R M Riddell

### MAJOR NEIL QUIN BEM

Neil Quin died on the 25th of April 2017 aged 67. Neil was born, brought up and educated in Dundee and was one of a family of ten. He was the fourth brother to serve in the regiment. His elder brother Charles (Charlie) kept a beady eye on him whilst Neil served in the 1st Battalion.

Neil joined the army in the late sixties and after basic training joined the 1st Battalion and became a company clerk before being promoted to Lance Corporal and moving to the Battalion Orderly Room. He later transferred to the Royal Army Ordnance Corps where he completed his 22 year engagement and reached the rank of Warrant Officer Class 1. On leaving the army he was employed for a time at HRFCA as Administrative Officer succeeding the late Dennis Giles.

He later was appointed as the Cadet Executive Officer of the Angus and Dundee Army Cadet Force Battalion in the rank of Major until he retired.

Neil's wife Valerie predeceased him, he is survived by his three daughters and their families.

**R J W Proctor**

### DOUGLAS TEMPLETON

Douglas was a National Service officer who served with the 1st Battalion just after the end of the troubles in Cyprus.

Born on 27 May 1935, he had a fine intellect and on his arrival in the Battalion the CO was delighted as at last he had an officer on his staff who spoke Greek but he was to be disappointed as Douglas only spoke ancient Greek.

He was a lecturer at Edinburgh University and his subject was theology. He was also a keen hillwalker and this was marked at his service by the singing of "Westering Home". His brother Alastair (Hof) also served in the Regiment and he died in 2014.

Douglas died on 7 September 2017 aged 82.

**R M Riddell**

### GEORGE WILLIAM BERRY

George Berry died age 92 on the 30th of August 2017 at Liverton Mines, Yorkshire.

He was born in Scarborough and when he was 18, enlisted into The Green Howards. He landed with them in Normandy on D Day, 6th June 1944. A few days after the landings, George with a number of other soldiers from The Green Howards were transferred to The Black Watch and were posted to the 5th Battalion. As a "Yorkshire Jock" in the 5th Battalion he was involved in the heavy fighting around Caen where he was wounded. George remained with the 5th Battalion for the remainder of the war until he was demobbed and returned to civilian life in 1946.

George like others who took part in the liberation of France was awarded the Legion d' Honneur in October 2016. He was always proud of his service with The Black Watch and his contact with the Association boosted his morale as his health declined. His funeral took place at Liverton Mines on the 7th of September.

**R J W Proctor**



### ALEXANDER CAIN

Alexander (Eck) Cain died suddenly on the 21st April 2017 aged 47. He joined the army on the 27th of January 1988 and after carrying out basic training joined the 1st Battalion in Berlin. He then served with the Battalion in Ballykinler, Tern Hill, Hong Kong, Pirbright, Fort George, Fellingbostel, Warminster and Palace Barracks, Northern Ireland where he completed his service in 2005. He was also

deployed on operational and unaccompanied tours which included the handover of Hong Kong, Kosovo, Northern Ireland and Iraq.

Eck was an excellent soldier and was well liked and respected by his peers and officers alike. He held various positions within the battalion which varied from Rifleman, Regimental Policeman, Medic, HGV Driver and gained promotion to full Corporal during his service.

**R J W Proctor**



### JOHN CAMPBELL

John Campbell always known to his Black Watch comrades as "Cammie" died suddenly on the 14th of August at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee aged 71.

John was born on the 29th January 1946. On leaving school he worked for a time as an apprentice mechanic before enlisting into the regiment at Preston on the 11th of July 1963. He was soon on his way to Stirling Castle which was the combined Depot of The Black Watch and Argylls. On his arrival he joined St Valery Platoon which was the last platoon to pass out from Stirling Castle. John took well to Army life and through hard work achieved the honour of being selected as Best Recruit.

Joining the 1st Battalion at the School of Infantry at Warminster, John served in a Rifle Company as the battalion prepared for its move to Minden, West Germany as part of BAOR in the spring of 1964. He later took part in the Battalion's UN peace keeping tour in Cyprus in 1966-67. During his time in Minden, John joined the Recce Platoon as a driver operator and soon gained promotion through his hard work and leadership. Returning with the battalion to Kirknewton in 1968 John continued to serve in the Recce Platoon where he took part in numerous exercises including a long trip to Malaysia when the Recce Platoon were employed as the Demonstration Platoon to assist in the training of the Battalion in jungle warfare. When the 1st Battalion deployed to Hong Kong in 1972 John was employed in the Boat Section with responsibilities for running the welfare motor boats which were used by the families and soldiers to enable them to get away from the claustrophobic and oppressive atmosphere of Kowloon. This job suited him as it combined his love of outdoor life, love of all things mechanical and keeping the engines maintained and the ability to get on with people with his cool unflappable manner.

He was employed with the Army Youth Team based in Dundee before he completed his engagement. Again John was an ideal candidate for this job as his love of sailing, hill walking and climbing made him an ideal instructor to the young people.

John married Muriel in 1974 and they set up home in Auchmithie, outside Arbroath and then moved to Muriel's home village to Newtyle. He had several jobs after leaving the Army and was latterly employed by Cameron Forecourts, servicing petrol pumps throughout the Highlands and Tayside. He worked right up until he died, which was well over the state retirement age.

Joining the Angus Branch of the Association after its formation, John was a great a supporter and regular attender of monthly meetings and functions. He also was a volunteer guide in the Regimental Museum.



The respect in which he was held within the Regiment and the local community was shown by the large turnout at his funeral.

John was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. Always quiet and reserved, he had a strong sense of loyalty and spoke out for things he believed strongly about, including The Black Watch.

**R J W Proctor**

### **SID COOPER**

Sid Cooper died on the 21st May 2017 aged 99. His funeral took place at Saint Peter's Church Arlesey, Bedfordshire on the 13th of June 2017.

Like many others during the Second World War, Sid served with more than one regiment. He initially served with the Queens before being transferred to the Hertfordshire Regiment and was finally transferred in 1944 to The Black Watch and took part in the Normandy Landings. He was very proud to have served in the Regiment and made it known that The Black Watch were second to none.

Sid was awarded the Legion d' Honneur a short time before he died and sadly was not presented with it formally.

**R J W Proctor**

### **TAM COUPER**

Tam Couper died peacefully on the 17th of May 2017 at St John's Hospital Livingstone after a brave fight against cancer.

After training, he joined the 1st Battalion in 1968 and he served mainly in the Regimental Band playing the clarinet where he rose to the rank of Corporal. Bandmaster Norman Rogerson who knew Tam for a good deal of his service said that he was an excellent musician who got on well with his peers and seniors and was always reliable. Tam served in Kirknewton, Hong Kong, Colchester, Northern Ireland, Catterick, Werl, Edinburgh and Berlin, he also took part in the numerous Band Tours and other unaccompanied tours in which the battalion were involved.

On the reduction of the Army Regimental Bands' establishment Tam moved to the Medical Centre where he was employed as a medic. His final change of employment was his appointment as Movements NCO in Berlin.

This was a very onerous and responsible task as all travel documents had to be one hundred percent correct and the demand for travel in and out of Berlin was very heavy as all members of the battalion and their families had to use his services. His attention to detail and completely cool and calm manner ensured that people went on the correct flight, to the correct destination at the time and date stated. Due to his success and popularity in this appointment he was affectionately known by all in the battalion as Pan Am Tam!

He kept himself fit and was well known as a football referee within Army circles.

Throughout his service he was well supported by his wife Mary who survives him along with their daughters Gwen, Wendy and Lyn and sons James and Thomas who are currently serving in The Black Watch Battalion. Tam was a great character who will be missed by all who knew him.

**R J W Proctor**



### **BRIAN COUTTS**

Brian Coutts died suddenly and unexpectedly of a heart attack on the 20th of May 2017 aged 56.

Brian was born in Dundee on the 28th July 1961 to parents Catherine and James Coutts. He served in the 1st Battalion for almost 10 years and was mainly employed as a driver in the MT Platoon. He married Susan in 1986 and they spent time between Scotland and South Africa where they settled after leaving the Regiment.

Brian was a devoted family man and is survived by his wife Susan and daughters Paula and Laura.

**R J W Proctor**



### **BRUCE COWIE**

Bruce Cowie the last surviving piper who played at President John F Kennedy's funeral procession in November 1963 died at his home in Kirriemuir on the 13th of September 2017 after a short but brave fight against serious illness. Bruce was just hours short of his 78th birthday.

Born in 1939 and brought up in Dundee, Bruce enlisted into the regiment in 1957 and after completing basic training at Queen's Barracks joined the 1st Battalion at Redford Barracks, Edinburgh prior to the battalion's departure for Cyprus. He later served in Warminster and Minden, West Germany from where he left the Army in 1966.

After a short time in a Rifle Company Bruce attended a pipe cadre where he learned to play the pipes and became a member of the Pipes and Drums.

Prior to joining the Army, Bruce worked in a jute mill in Dura Street, Dundee where he met Anne whom he married in 1959 and they spent 58 happy years of married life together.

Bruce always maintained that he was more of a band player than a solo piper.

He was smart and always immaculately turned out and he never forgot being one of the pipers selected to play at John F Kennedy's funeral. He often said that to play at the White House was a great honour but to march and play in the funeral procession was something that would remain with him forever. In 2013 he was invited to London to take part in the 50th anniversary commemoration event where he played the pipes with the internationally renowned tenor Alfie Boe and afterwards, realised that he was part of history.

After leaving the Regiment Bruce worked for a time in a laundry in Dundee and later emigrated to South Africa where he and the family spent three years. They returned to Scotland and moved to Kirriemuir where he and Anne settled down, both working in the local textile factory. Bruce then moved to work as a CCTV Camera operator with Tayside Police until he retired.

He and his late brother Ewan (Peem) were members of the Angus Branch of The Black Watch Association and regularly attended meetings and functions.

Bruce is survived by his wife Anne, their daughters, Margaret and Sandra and son, Bruce. The couple also have nine grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. Bruce was a quiet and warm hearted man.

**R J W Proctor**

### **DENNIS GILZEAN**

Dennis Gilzean died on the 1st June 2017 following a short illness. He was 63. His funeral was attended by a large number of Black Watch veterans, local friends and family members. Dennis was born in Perth on the 11th October 1953 and educated at the Grammar School.

Dennis served for a great many years between the late 1970s through the early 1990s in Headquarter Company, 1st



Battalion, 51st Highland Volunteers and latterly as a Corporal in the Quartermaster's Platoon under Lieutenant Colonel Roland Rose, Quartermaster and Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Tom Graham. His friends during this hugely enjoyable period in his life were the likes of Willie Barr, Scott Dalton, Greg MacGillivray and Winky Greer.

He was a lifelong St Johnstone Football Club fan and one time St Johnstone FC Supporters Club committee member.

He remained an active and supportive member of the Perth Branch for many years; utterly loyal and a true friend to the end, his cheery face, infectious smile and hearty laugh will be sadly missed by us all.

**A McEwen**

### NEVILLE HUBBLE

Neville Hubble died on the 18th of August 2017 aged 79. He was the brother of Joe Hubble and he served in D Company of the 1st Battalion in Berlin, Edinburgh and Cyprus. He also served in the Pipes and Drums and is survived by his wife Nanette. Neville left the Army as a Corporal.

**R M Riddell**



### DAVID HUTTON

David (Dave) Hutton died in Ninewells Hospital on Monday 19th June at the age of 100. He was born in Liff as the 9th child in his family. Sadly, his mother died when he was only 2 weeks old and he was brought up by his grandmother. His father went on to marry again and had 5 further children. Dave's family were market gardeners and also graveyard diggers in Liff church.

After leaving school at the age of 14, he worked on a local poultry farm. He saw the horses of the Scots Greys at a local show and was determined from then on to join the Army. After an unsuccessful attempt at 16, a year later he convinced his dad and he joined The Black Watch in 1934.

He served with the 2nd Battalion in Palestine, Egypt, Aden and Somaliland. The battalion was then deployed to Crete and put up a stiff resistance to invading German paratroops defending Heraklion airport. Dave, a Corporal at the time, was wounded by shrapnel and was taken prisoner when the Battalion had to withdraw from their positions, prior to the fall of Crete.

He was very well treated by the German medical units and was flown to Piraeus with Pipe Major Roy (who escaped from the hospital in Piraeus with the help of some nuns) and recovered from his wounds before being shipped up the Corinth canal. The POWs were packed in the closed hold of a ship and transported to a transit camp in Salonika. After some months he was transferred to Stalag VIIIB in Lamsdorf, Germany (now Lambinowice, in Poland). Conditions in the camp were very harsh. Dave helped try to keep up morale by organizing football matches with Jim Slaven. He wrote home to get some equipment and was sent a Red Cross parcel containing some very fetching canary yellow shorts.

He volunteered with Jim Slaven for a work party at a camp in Czechoslovakia as assistant cook and escaped in the confusion at the end of the war as Russian forces approached. He was with a Russian armoured unit when he was beckoned by Czech partisans saying "Englander, Englander, come quick", Not stopping to correct their mistaken identification he joined them and was taken to Prague. Many years later he travelled back to Prague to meet the father of one of the partisans who had been instrumental in helping him get away from the Russians.

Dave was eventually airlifted in a Lancaster bomber back to the south coast of England, then home. He rejoined his unit in Perth. It was during this period that he renewed his acquaintance with Bunty, who he had known at school, and who was a cook in the ATS at Balhousie Castle. Promoted to Sergeant, he then spent time in



Glasgow training Dutch soldiers, meeting Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands when she came to say thank you. Due to an administrative hiccup he was kept on beyond his 12 years' commitment. He married Bunty in 1946 in Liff Church in a double wedding ceremony, with Bunty's sister Jessie also marrying a member of the Black Watch, Jimmy McNeilly.

Dave started training as a forester on resettlement in Dumfries and Galloway, but on trying to get a job closer to home with the Forestry Commission, they were unable to offer him suitable housing. However, an old Army friend got him a job in the Post Office in Dundee where he stayed for almost 32 years.

He always looked forward to attending the annual Reunion at Balhousie Castle. He travelled out to Crete in 2000 with Bill Lark to present a plaque from The Black Watch commemorating those who lost their lives in the defence of Heraklion.

Bunty and Dave always did everything together, and it was a real sadness to him when Bunty died in 2001. Nevertheless, with support from his family, Dave found plenty to keep him interested, going on a cruise to the Baltic and St Petersburg when he was 91 and being persuaded to get his first computer at the age of 94 to help with his photograph and video collection. He discovered the internet and always said it opened up the world to him when he could no longer travel so freely. He used the computer to keep in touch with family around the world, a real silver surfer.

He always kept a sense of humour, and was known for having something cheery to say; he had the gift of getting on with everybody he met. His 100th birthday was celebrated in style with friends and family and members of The Black Watch and British Legion, even enjoying a short dance with one of the day care centre staff from Oaklands. Soon afterwards, however, his health deteriorated, and he was again admitted to Ninewells Hospital where he died.

**R J W Proctor**

### ALFRED KEIGHTLEY

Alfred Keightley who was known as Alf by his family died on the 4th of May aged 96. He enlisted in Leicester and like so many of his contemporaries who came from the Midlands was posted to the 6th Battalion.

He served in North Africa and Italy and was taken prisoner at Monte Cassino. He then spent the remainder of the war in Stalag XIA until he was repatriated at the end of the war. He was later transferred to the Gordons and served with them until demobilisation.

Alf was immensely proud to have served in The Black Watch and was a long-time member of the Stoke-on-Trent (Midlands) Branch of the Association and was a regular attendee and supporter of Branch activities until a short time before he died.

**R J W Proctor**



### DAVE MITCHELL

Dave Mitchell died on the 26th March 2017 aged 82 in Antiquary House Care Home, Arbroath. He served his time as a painter and worked for the Local Authority before being called up for National Service in 1953. On completion of basic training at Queen's Barracks he was posted to the 1st Battalion who had moved from Korea to Kenya. Dave served with the battalion until he was demobbed when the battalion had moved to Crail in 1955.

Returning to civilian life Dave went back to his trade and even-



tually became self-employed for some time before returning to work for Angus Council.

He was an accomplished artist and watercolourist and some of his work was on display in Arbroath Royal British Legion. Dave was a quiet man with a dry sense of humour. He was one of the founder members of the Angus Branch of the Association and was a regular attendee at monthly meetings and supporter of all events until he was prevented from doing so due to illness.

**R J W Proctor**

### **JIM MORRISON**

Jim Morrison died aged 67 at Queen Margaret Hospice Dunfermline on the 1st of July 2017.

Jim served with the 1st Battalion in Colchester, Ballykinler and Catterick. During his service he took part in three operational tours in Northern Ireland. He was very proud of his time with the Regiment and spent most of his service in B Company. On hearing of Jim's death, Brigadier Edward de Broë-Ferguson who was Jim's Company Commander, commented that "Jim was very smart and polite and that he was an excellent soldier."

**R J W Proctor**

### **BRIAN SIMPSON**

Brian Simpson known as Kiwi to his friends and contemporaries within the Regiment died on the 20th of May 2017 as a result of a motorcycle accident when visiting friends and former members of the 1st Battalion in Werl, West Germany.

Kiwi was a good soldier and an excellent shot and was a member of the Battalion Shooting Team which qualified to attend the Regular Army Shooting Association Meeting from 1984 and in successive years until 1987. He was always reliable and well turned out and was often tasked to drive the team Land Rover in addition to taking part in the various competitions at Bisley. He had a good sense of humour which raised morale when things were not going as expected.

He kept in touch with the Regiment by visiting Regimental Headquarters and the museum from time to time.

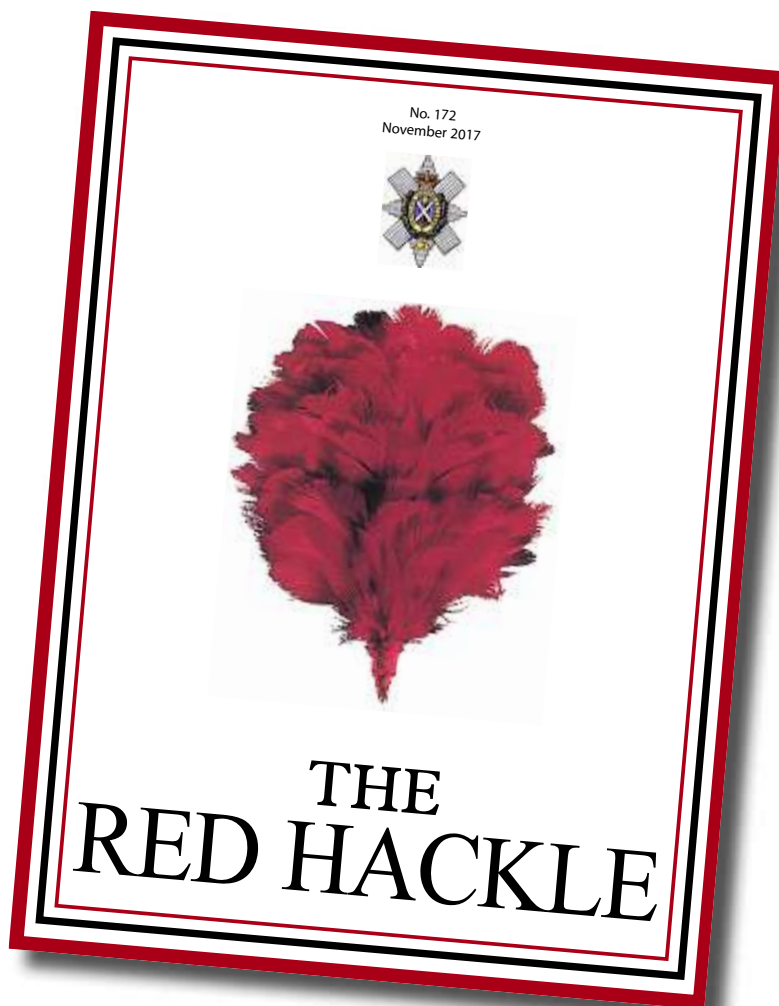
**R J W Proctor**

The following deaths have also been recorded;

**Alastair Walters** – he was a member of the London Branch.

**Stanley MacDonald-Smith** died on 2nd of June 2017 – he was a member of the Dundee Branch.

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## QUEEN'S BARRACKS MEMORIAL DEDICATION

At a Regimental Association Executive Committee meeting held in 2012, the late Major Bob Ritchie suggested that the Association should consider erecting an information panel or memorial, close to the site of the old Queen's Barracks. After a number of false starts the project gained momentum. On Saturday 17 June 2017 the memorial was dedicated before the Regimental Reunion. On a sunny day, a crowd of about a hundred gathered between Black Watch Gardens and the Caledonian Road. Major General James Cowan, Chairman of the Association welcomed our President, Mrs Georgiana Osborne, Brigadier Jameson the Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross and Councillor Dennis Melloy, the Provost of Perth. He then invited the President and Brigadier Jameson to unveil the memorial.

Lieutenant Colonel Fred Beattie then spoke eloquently about his memories of the old Queen's Barracks seen from the perspective of a soldier under training and as an NCO instructor. He was followed by Major Colin Innes who spoke equally well. He had been serving at the Depot as a young officer at the time of the closure in 1961.

The Reverend John Duncan, the Association Padre led the prayers and then dedicated the memorial.

After the short service the "marching troops" moved to Low Street and prepared to march down Balhousie Street to the castle. Led by Perth and Kinross District Pipe Band under the direction of Pipe Major Alistair Duthie and supported by the motorbikes of Legion Scotland, the parade arrived in the grounds of the castle. The President gave leave to dismiss the parade and the festivities began.

The Association is grateful for the support of Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust who paid for the descriptor and to Mr Kevin Murphy who managed the project on behalf of the Association.



Major General James Cowan, Mrs Georgiana Osborne, Brigadier Mel Jameson and Councillor Dennis Melloy (Provost of Perth) pictured at the dedication of the Queen's Barracks Memorial (Courtesy Phil Hannah).



Some of the Association veterans who attended the dedication including Kevin Murphy (third from right) who was critical to the success of the project (Courtesy Phil Hannah).



The information panel mounted on the memorial beside Caledonian Road.

## QUEEN'S BARRACKS PERTH

By Major CB Innes

**Editor's Note:** Readers may also wish to read two previously published articles. The first also written by Major C B Innes in the May 2013 Red Hackle Magazine covered life at the Depot as a Training Subaltern, leading up to the closure of the Depot and the second in the November 2013 edition reminded readers about the history of the Coat of Arms once displayed on the Officers' Mess building and now in the new Queen's Barracks.

It was a sad day when, in the early 1960's, the Ministry of Defence decided that our Regimental Depot at Queen's Barracks, Perth had to close and that, along with the other Highland Brigade Depots, all recruits for the Brigade were to be trained in future at Gordon Barracks, Aberdeen.

Defence cuts following the end of World War II had led to the amalgamation of many old and famous regiments and to further cuts to the much smaller training organisation.

Looking at the photograph and at a street map of the City of Perth, perhaps the MOD decision was inevitable. Situated right in the centre of the town and surrounded by the busy Barrack Street and Dunkeld Road on the East side, the Lade and Industrial Estate on the West side, the Don and Low factory to the North and St Ninian's Cathedral to the South, Queen's Barracks was hemmed in on all sides and could never ever expand and, as the City grew in size after the War, was always going to be considered by the Council as very valuable land for retail and housing developments.

But the old grey Regimental Depot at Queen's Barracks was a lovely place in which to serve and I was fortunate to be just about the last Officer there, before it was finally closed on 31st May 1961 by the Quartermaster Major "Nobby" Clark MBE.

Right in the heart of our regimental area of Perthshire, Angus and Fife it was a place where we could instil our young Black Watch

recruits during their basic training with our own regimental history and traditions, unencumbered by any other military influence. We were right in the public eye, for Jocks went out training on the North Inch, up Kinnoull Hill, out to Kinfauns Range and route marches took place all over Perthshire.

The high stone walls surrounding the Depot meant that a lot of what was going on inside could not be seen by the public but anyone living within half a mile would have been able to hear the Duty Piper playing Reveille every morning and hear other calls throughout the day. Local folk would also clearly hear the Depot RSM and Squad Sergeants shouting out words of command to soldiers who were learning how to march, to salute and to drill smartly and frequent Passing Out Parades were held as another Squad of Jocks finished their ten weeks Basic Training before being posted to join the 1st Battalion.

There were always a few people staring in through the gates by the Guardroom and there was much to amuse those who did; the Cawnpore Gong was beaten to ring out the time; sometimes prisoners were seen polishing the gong or a sentry was posted in the Sentry Box and Army vehicles came and went.

And look what happened when the Depot closed! Within months the contractors came in and the old barracks were reduced to rubble and new building plans were put into place. Now that horrid square multi-storey monstrosity of the Tayside Police Headquarters sits where the Barracks Square used to be. Where the Officers Mess once stood, at the head of the Square, we now see the St Catherine's Retail Park with a large BP Service Station, a Frankie and Benny's, Bannatyne's Health Club and Spa and TK Maxx and the like. Across the Lade now lies essential new housing blocks and even more of the Retail Park.

One cannot really recognise what was once the old Depot, so that it has been very good that the City Council have recently approved the new Memorial which stands in Caledonian Road, just opposite the Police Station. It was unveiled on 17 June 2017 and it records where the old Depot once stood.

The Officers' Mess also contained the Regimental Museum and on the closure of the Depot this was moved into Balhousie Castle where a fine display was laid out under the guardianship of Colonel Rusk. The fine wooden Hanoverian Coat of Arms on the pediment of the old Georgian Officers' Mess building was fortunately saved and this was re-erected in the new Queen's Barracks in Dunkeld Road at a later date.

On either side of the Square were the Barrack Blocks containing the troop accommodation. There was not much space for all the men under training and some barrack rooms were full of double-bunk beds and the toilets were pretty cold, bare and basic.

On the North West corner stood the QM's Store behind which was the Depot Back Gate leading onto the side of the Lade, crossing which led to the large Gymnasium.

On the South West corner stood the NAAFI and MT area and then to the South, a large collection of huts containing the Medical and Dental Centre, the Cookhouse and Dining Hall and Ration Store, the .22 Range and Sergeants' Mess accommodation.

The move was a very sad loss for the Regiment but also for the City of Perth, and the then Lord Provost, John Young, declared, "We cannot deny that it will be a sad loss for Perth when the Black Watch leaves. They have added colour to the City for many years."



*Queen's Barracks 1962 after the fire in the Officers' Mess.*

# MONTE SCALARI

*By Major R J W Proctor MBE*

Rachel Rennie, a Scottish lady living in Rome first contacted me in 2015 regarding the memorial which commemorated the Battles of Monte Scalari and Pian d' Albergo that took place in 1944. The former, fought by the 6th Battalion had helped open the road to Florence and the latter by local Partisans, which took place a few miles distant and a few months earlier and was the cause of the many barbaric reprisals to be taken against the local population by the retreating German forces.

The original memorial had been the brainchild of Rachel, her friend Elvezio Galanti, whose uncle Ezio Baccetti was a member of the local Caribiniere and Partisan Group and who was killed at Pian d' Albergo and John Clarke of the Birmingham Branch of the Association. John was a member of 6 BW and had fought on the heights of Monte Scalari or Corbett as it was marked on the Battalion's battle map. (see pages 90-97 in "A History of The 6th Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) 1939-1945 by Lt Col B G N Madden)

The original memorial, made of local sandstone, was unveiled in 1995 and is recorded on page 7 of the December 1995 edition of the Red Hackle Magazine. Unfortunately over the years, the weather took its toll and the stone split and became irreparable.

Rachel was invited to attend the Association Trustees and Executive meetings in October 2016 to present the case for a new memorial; this time the memorial would be carved out of the very hard and durable Carrara Marble of which many of the ancient Roman buildings and monuments are made. The Trustees and Executive Committees were unanimous in their support and approved the project and soon it began to take shape.

Organising the project between Perth and Italy took much emailing and telephoning; we had hoped that the Defence Attaché in Rome (a serving former Black Watch Officer) would have been able to assist, however his duties prevented him from doing so and it was left to the Association Secretary and Ms Rennie.

It was decided that the Regiment would be represented by Colonel Alex Murdoch the past Chairman of the Association, Major Ronnie Proctor the Association Secretary, Captain Alan McEwen the Perth Branch Chairman who was to carry the Perth Branch Standard and represent 6 BW and Lance Corporal Jake Noble from The Black Watch Battalion. Alex's wife Ina and Ronnie's wife Sonia also accompanied the party to make sure that no one was led astray during the trip!

The unveiling of the new memorial took place at 1100 on Sunday the 25th of June outside the town of Figline Val Darno in brilliant sunshine and a temperature of 35 degrees celsius. The unveiling ceremony also doubled up with the annual commemoration of those partisans and local community members who lost their lives due to enemy action and reprisals. Over one hundred Italian veterans, Caribiniere serving and retired, partisan family representatives as well as the general public and officials were present.

Fortunately a light breeze kept participants and spectators reasonably cool during the hour and a half ceremony. It comprised of speeches both in Italian and English, the unveiling of the memorial by the removal of the Union Flag and Italian Tricolour and a full remembrance ceremony complete with the laying of wreaths, choral music, the playing of the Regimental Lament and Reveille both on the pipes and by the Italian buglers and finally a blessing by the local priest.

At the end of the formalities time was given for numerous photographs to be taken and for Lance Corporal Jake Noble to regale the spectators and participants to a very full and varied repertoire of pipe tunes.

Italian hospitality was then given at the local Fire Brigade Headquarters situated in the mountains not far from where the battle was fought. The local ladies plied us with numerous Italian dishes of meats and pasta. Local Tuscan Chianti was also in plentiful supply and veterans of the Bersiglieri, the oldest of whom was 96 were in attendance. He regaled us with tales of how he managed to escape from the Russians on the Eastern Front during WW2 when attached to the Wehrmacht.

The following day we said goodbye to Rachel who had made the event possible and then drove to Florence and after a day's sightseeing moved on to Pisa from where we returned to Edinburgh after a short but very eventful trip.



*Rachel Rennie, Major Ronnie Proctor and Caterina Cardi, the Deputy Mayor pictured before the unveiling ceremony.*



*The Black Watch party at Monte Scalari.*



*Lance Corporal Jake Noble, Rachel Rennie, Colonel Alex Murdoch, Major Ronnie Proctor and Captain Alan McEwen pictured after the dedication ceremony was completed.*

# SCOTTISH MEMORIAL, YPRES SALIENT REPORT TO DONORS

**Editor's Note:** The Black Watch Association gave a grant towards this project and this report was prepared by Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin in his capacity as President of The Royal British Legion Scotland. It is followed by a short report from Tam McCluskey who represented The Black Watch Association at the Ceremony.

This brief note is a report for all those who so kindly contributed to the cost of the silhouettes that were unveiled at the Scottish Memorial at Frenzenberg on Saturday 19th August 2017.

A weekend of Scottish themed events included the main ceremony at the Memorial, a civic reception in Zonnebeke Town Hall, a tattoo in the grounds of the Passchendaele Museum, a ceremony in Dochy Farm New British Cemetery in honour of Scottish footballer Sgt J H Speirs MM and an afternoon of highland games. All were conducted in good weather, albeit with a stiff breeze blowing for most of the time. The weekend was a great success and much appreciated by all who were there.

## The Main Ceremony

Scheduled to last just over an hour the ceremony in the event took 2 ½ hours to complete. For the standard bearers and bands this was a very long stand indeed but they all stood manfully (and in many cases womanfully) to their task.

Amongst the 600 spectators were: strong parties from the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Royal British Legion Scotland; the Brussels based ambassadors from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom; many Scots; and many more locals and passing tourists. Amongst those taking part in the ceremony were: Professor Norman Drummond, Chairman of the Scottish Government Great War Commemoration Advisory Panel and representing the Scottish Government; the pipes and drums of the London Scottish; various local pipe bands; the chaplain to the Royal British Legion Scotland, the RBLS national standard bearers and the Black Watch Association standard bearer; and singers Isla St Clair and Alan Brydon.

There were several speeches and, in case it is of any interest, attached to this report is a copy of the speech made on behalf of the regiments (and therefore of all of you, the donors) by the President of RBLS.

All but one of the silhouettes were unveiled; the final one, representing the Canadian Scots, will be unveiled in November on the day 100 years ago when the Canadians captured the village of Passchendaele.

The entire ensemble, Memorial and silhouettes, is enormously impressive. The contributions that you all made have been put to particularly good effect. Collectively the figures represent not only the Scots of the British Army but also those of the Scottish diaspora. There are ten figures altogether. From left to right they are: a piper; a soldier with arms reversed at the grave of a comrade; a soldier of a Lowland regiment; Sergeant Jimmy Speirs (see below); a member of the South African Labour Corps attached to the 9th Scottish Division; a soldier of the 1st South African Brigade, also attached to the 9th Scottish Division and representing the SA Scottish regiments (Transvaal Scottish and Cape Town Highlanders); a kilted soldier of a Highland regiment; a Scottish Australian; a Scottish New Zealander; and finally a Scottish Canadian. With the exception of the soldier at the grave, all the others are depicted marching up the side of the road from Ypres to Passchendaele. Behind them is the Scottish Memorial erected in 2007 and beyond that are two steel panels featuring Robert Burns' *The Soldier's Return* and the "negative" of the kilted soldier silhouette. The whole effect is stunning.

The silhouette to which you all contributed was unveiled by Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs Grenville Johnston (he is Lord Lieutenant of Moray and it was her great uncle who was killed in the Ypres Salient while serving with the Highland Light Infantry); and by Brigadier Alastair Bruce of Crionaich, the Honorary Colonel of the London Scottish.

The ceremony included the unveiling and dedication of plaques that had been added to the Memorial in honour of the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the South African Labour Corps. Many wreaths were also laid at the foot of the Memorial.

## The Tattoo

With an audience of 1400 people and a cast of perhaps 600 performers, the evening tattoo in the grounds of the Passchendaele museum lasted

2 ½ hours. It featured the pipes and drums of the London Scottish (who were magnificent throughout the weekend), many local bands, Isla St Clair, Alan Brydon, the corps of drums of the 1st Cinque Ports Rifle Volunteers Corps, rhythmic flag wavers, and some heavyweights giving a taste of the highland games to follow the next day by hauling Belgian Army Landrovers of 1940s vintage into the arena (with some difficulty). The President of RBLS and the Mayor of Zonnebeke took the salute (or rather several salutes at unpredictable times during the event). It was a very good evening with much to enjoy.

## Unveiling of Frenzenburg Memorial Addition

### Saturday 19th August 2017 Speech by President of the Royal British Legion Scotland and of Poppy Scotland

Minister Weyts, Mr Mayor, Aldermen, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

You have already heard from Professor Norman Drummond who has spoken on behalf of the Scottish Government. It is now my privilege to say a few words on behalf of Scottish soldiers, of their comrades of 100 years ago and of their families and descendants. I speak as President of the Royal British Legion Scotland and of Poppy Scotland but today most proudly on this great occasion as Patron of this extraordinary project here at Frenzenburg.

Ten years ago many of us here today took part in the wonderful ceremony on this very spot that marked the unveiling of this fine memorial to the Scots who fell in the defence of Ypres. It was erected on the initiative, and at the expense, of the people of Flanders. We Scots who were there on that day were more than humbled that our fallen comrades should have been acknowledged so generously in this way by those in whose land their bones still rest.

And now, in the 100th anniversary year of the 3rd Battle of Ypres, the Battle of Passchendaele, you have done it again by adding to the Memorial these remarkable, highly evocative silhouettes making it truly eye-catching, truly thought-provoking. Although there have been significant contributions from individual Scots, from the Scottish regiments and from other organisations the majority of the silhouettes, and of all the preparatory work and other arrangements have been paid for by the people of Flanders. It was their idea, their inspiration, their generosity and their hard work that has made it all possible. Once again we fighting men of Scotland find ourselves humbled by the sentiment that lies behind this great project. It is a sentiment that we know is also attached to those very many Scots women who served and died here as nurses and volunteers.

The silhouettes represent Scots who marched into battle along this very road 100 years ago. They were the men not just of the British Army but also the men who served in regiments of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. We Scots have a history of spreading ourselves around the world. It is not surprising that so many of the Scots diaspora came here to join the fight in the uniforms of their adopted countries.

And perhaps special mention should be made of the 1st South African Brigade, which included battalions of the Transvaal Scottish and the Cape Town Highlanders. After active service in German South West Africa and the Suez Canal, the Brigade was transferred to the Western Front. In due course it was attached to the 9th Scottish Division here in the Ypres Salient and suffered tremendous casualties. It is more than appropriate that they too should be represented in this file of steely troops marching so resolutely to the front.

So this great project, reaching its climax here today, commemorates all men and women of Scots blood from around the world who fought and died here. It commemorates all those who though not themselves Scots fought and died alongside us. We honour them all.

In concluding I make no apology for repeating something I said on this very spot ten years ago. It was this:

Every day at the Menin Gate, I said, you honour the British and Imperial troops who died in the defence of the Ieper Salient. It is clear to all of us that our dead are in the most thoughtful of hands. I hope that you will not think it inappropriate if I quote the words of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. It is a message to the families of the British and Imperial troops who gave their lives in the Gallipoli campaign.

This is what he said:

*Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives,  
you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country.  
Therefore rest in peace.  
You the mothers who sent their sons from far away countries, wipe away  
your tears.  
Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace.  
After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.*

Minister Weyts, Mr Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Ieper Salient, I take the liberty of saying that by your actions today and by your actions every day at the Menin Gate you demonstrate exactly the same noble sentiments.

On behalf of all the Scottish military community, serving and retired, which takes so much pride in what our predecessors did, I thank all of you who live in this part of Flanders for this most touching of gestures. Although we Scots are not represented here in great numbers today, our hearts and sentiments of those of us who are here are overflowing. We hugely appreciate what you have done and we thank you all most warmly.

## **The Long Road to Passchendaele, Scottish Centenary weekend, 19-20 August, 2017**

*By Tam McCluskey*

I was in attendance at the Frezenberg Ceremony, at the Scottish Memorial on the afternoon of 19 August, 2017, and carried out the duty of Standard Bearer on behalf of the Black Watch Association.

My family and I arrived early just after 14.00 to enable our cars to be parked nearby. All participants had to be in place by 15.15 in readiness for the pipe bands march on at 15.30. The Royal British Legion Scotland ensured we Standard Bearers were on parade before that time, to little avail as the massed Pipe bands led by the London Scottish did not begin their march-on until 15.45. The massed bands which included Field Marshall Haig's Own Pipes and Drums were a fine sight and as they marched on they played 'On The Road to Passchendaele' and 'Bloody Fields of Flanders'.

Next buglers Gildemuziek of Roeselare gave the bugle signal to commence proceedings. The guests and audience were welcomed to "The Long Road to Passchendaele", the Scottish Centenary weekend ceremony marking the occasion of the centenary of the fight for Passchendaele. The seated spectators were called to stand as the Standard bearers marched forward to take up their positions at the front of the assembly.

Scottish folk singer and member of the project group, Isla St Clair, sang 'Will Ye Go to Flanders', before Zonnebeke's Mayor Sioen and Alderman Vanderhaeghen came forward to give their opening speeches. This was followed by Professor Norman Drummond, representative of the Scottish Government and Chair of the Scottish Commemorations Panel to mark the Centenary of World War I, who delivered a message on behalf of Scotland. Next, Alan Brydon, Scottish folk singer from the Borders area, performed a ballad. Allan is also a very active member of the project team which ran the campaign for the statue group to be unveiled during the ceremony.

About 16.30, a speech was delivered by Minister Weyts of the Flemish government – "Although almost all Scottish Regiments were involved in the fighting in Flanders at some stage of the war, there is one which has a more than exceptional connection with the very place where the Celtic Cross in front of you was raised in 2007. Colonel Angus Loudon of the King's Own Scottish Borderers will now explain why this place is so special for his Regiment".

Colonel Loudon said: "The unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the Great War efforts of the KOSB in general and the capturing of the very place where we are holding this ceremony will ensure that the costly effort of these men will be remembered for the future". Whereupon the new KOSB plaque attached to the Celtic Cross Scottish Memorial was unveiled by Lieutenant Colonel Andy Middlemiss and Colonel Angus Loudon.

The Reverend Karen Campbell, National Chaplain of the Royal British Legion Scotland, was invited to lead us in a moment of reflection and prayer.

Next, was the announcement that when the campaign to raise a memorial for the men of Scottish origin and all South Africans involved in the Great War in Flanders started, only few people were convinced about a good outcome. Not so Sir Alistair Irwin, President of Legion Scotland, who not only immediately accepted the position of Patron of the memorial campaign, but also personally became very actively involved in it at a very crucial moment. Sir Alistair was called to the dais and gave a fine speech.

This was followed by the Passchendaele Project unveiling of the splendid new panel for the site which includes a poem of Robert Burns, 'The Soldiers Return'. This large panel was unveiled by Sir Alistair Irwin, Isla St Clair and Patrick King. The higher ground of Frezenberg was a German strongpoint in the middle of the Ypres Salient, which was overrun by the 15th Scottish Division on 31 July 1917. The unveiling was accompanied by a KOSB piper playing 'All the Blue Bonnets are Over the Border'.

Thus, thanks to the engagement of these three people, the site will now be properly identified as one of the main Scottish sites on the former Western Front.

Next, the Flemish Government Minister Weyts, Mrs Allison Rose, British Ambassador to Belgium, the Mayor of Zonnebeke Dirk Sioen and Professor Drummond for the Scottish Government, unveiled a Scottish Diaspora Signpost, pointing to Passchendaele, Scotland and the Scottish diaspora countries in remembrance of Scotland's long tradition of emigration, thus reflected in large numbers of emigrated Scots serving with the Expeditionary Forces of the British Empire.

Brigadier Letsholo and Chairman of the Volunteer organisation Marc Bulckaen then unveiled the second part of the South African group. Not only is the springbok the general symbol on the graves of many South African soldiers, one of them, called 'Nancy', also accompanied the 4th South African Regiment, which was recruited from the Scottish community in South Africa, as a mascot.

Last Post and Reveille were followed by the reading of the Kohima epitaph and then the massed bands marched off playing Scotland the Brave and Tipperary.



*The Frenzenberg silhouette statues.*



*The Scottish silhouette statues being unveiled.*



*The silhouettes with the Scottish Memorial and massed bands in the background.*

# SWORD OF HONOUR WINNERS

*By Lieutenant Colonel R M Riddell*

Whilst carrying out research for an addendum to the Roll of Officers (1739-1986) I was in contact with the Curator of the Sandhurst Collection and then realised that we did not have a record of all The Black Watch Sword of Honour winners. The list of twelve officers is shown opposite but I have also included a short resume of officer training from 1800.

The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) was formed in 1947. It was descended from two older institutions, the Royal Military Academy (RMA) and the Royal Military College (RMC). The RMA had been founded in 1741 at Woolwich to train gentlemen cadets for the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, and later the Royal Corps of Signals and some for the Tank Corps. It remained there until it was closed on mobilisation in 1939.

The RMC began in 1800 as a school for Staff Officers. A Junior Department was formed in 1802, to train gentlemen cadets as officers of the Line. A new college was built at Sandhurst, into which cadets moved in 1812. Following the abolition of the purchase system in 1870, attendance at Sandhurst became the usual route to a commission. The College was enlarged in 1912, when New College was built.

On the outbreak of the Second World War, Sandhurst became the home of 161 Infantry Officer Cadet Training Unit (RMC). This unit moved to Mons Barracks, Aldershot in 1942 and for the rest of the war Sandhurst was used solely as a Royal Armoured Corps Training Unit.

In the post war reconstruction, the RMAS was set up to carry on the traditions of both the RMA and Sandhurst, and to train regular officers for the whole Army. Its two year course included both military and academic subjects, and allowed for the continuity of the cadet body from one intake to another. National Service and Short Service Commission Officers were trained at Officer Cadet Schools (OCS).

After the end of conscription in 1960, Mons OCS continued in existence, training short service commission cadets, graduate entrants and Territorials. In 1972 the functions of Mons were transferred to RMAS. Academic studies were reduced in scope and undertaken only by future Regular Commission Officers, while all officer cadets undertook a Standard Military Course (SMC) which lasted for six months. Subsequently, many other changes were made leading to the present system.

The Sword of Honour is awarded to the British Army Officer Cadet considered by the Commandant, overall, to be the best of the course. It used to be donated by Wilkinson Sword but after the closure of their sword making division is now donated by Pooley Sword.

Finally, I am most grateful to Dr Anthony Morton the Curator of the Sandhurst collection for his assistance.

## Sword of Honour Winners, RMA, RMC & RMAS

NAME	TRAINING ESTABLISHMENT	YEAR
N N Ramsay Killed at Magersfontein 11 December 1899	RMC	1896
R E Anstruther Died of ill health caused by wounds 22 July 1921	RMC	1909
M A Carthew-Yorstoun Retired as a Brigadier. Died 24 April 1968	RMC	1916
D C Daly Retired as a Lieutenant 1920	RMC	1917
W N Roper-Caldbeck Retired as a Brigadier. Died 22 July 1965	RMC	1922
P F Prideaux-Brune Transferred to Coldstream Guards 1931. Died 15 April 1932	RMC	1928
C N M Blair Retired as a Honorary Lieutenant Colonel on account of his wounds. Died 1988	RMC	1930
D A J Noble Retired as a Major 1980	RMAS	1969
N C D Lithgow Retired as a Colonel 2005	RMAS	1970
A D MacGillivray Serving Colonel	RMAS	1989
A M Philp Serving Lieutenant Colonel	RMAS	April 1996
P D L Rennie Retired as a Captain 2002	RMAS	April 1996

Royal Military College – 1800-1946

Royal Military Academy Sandhurst – 1947



*The Sword of Honour awarded to SUO A D MacGillivray in April 1989.*

## WAVELL IN RUSSIA

*By Captain Owen Humphrys*

A P Wavell spent 42 years in the Army before he became Viceroy of India in 1943.

One of those years he spent in pre-revolutionary Russia, learning the language as a newly qualified staff officer. Later he attended Russian Army manoeuvres four times, and spent eight months in 1917 as our Military Attaché in the Caucasus; a total of two years in Russia.

At his death in 1950, Wavell was still in the Army List as a Russian linguist. This skill he used to good effect on his last visit to Moscow, in 1942. Sitting beside the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Alan

Brooke, at a conference with the Russian Marshals, Wavell was able to write some quick notes about what was being said, and pass them over before the official translator gave his version. This gave Brooke a few extra seconds of thinking time before he had to reply.

This was the conference at which Stalin's Marshals, Voroshilov and Shaposhnikov, were demanding of their Allies a "Second Front Now". On the plane back to Teheran, Wavell composed that tricky form of verse, a ballade, which has only two rhymes in 28 lines. The verses, often printed since, end with the refrain:

(Prime Minister loquitur)

"Prince of the Kremlin, here's a fond farewell,  
I've had to deal with many worse than you.

You took it though you hated it like hell,  
No Second Front in 1942.”

It was to be nearly two years before D-Day in Normandy. The key meanwhile was for the Allies to keep open, and enlarge, the supply routes through Persia, as an alternative to the dangerous White Sea Arctic convoy route.

This August 1942 visit was also the occasion when the supposedly ever-silent Wavell made an impromptu speech, in Russian, to Stalin in the Kremlin, during the endless rounds of vodka toasts. He had made another such speech in Russia, to rapturous applause, in November 1917. He was about to leave the Caucasus, eventually for Palestine, and was suddenly forced to speak to hundreds of mutinous troops from a platform, immediately following a Bolshevik agitator. He described it later as probably the shortest speech he ever made, and “certainly the most effective.”

Wavell's year in Moscow began in February 1911, shortly after passing out from the Staff College. He stayed with a family of liberal intellectuals to learn the language, and only wore uniform when he had gained permission to attend the Tsarist army's autumn manoeuvres. He was once asked by a Tsarist officer how British officers could hope to be respected by civilians, and more importantly feared, if they did not wear uniform all the time in public. In his hitherto unpublished “Recollections”, Wavell commented on this fundamental difference between the characters of the two armies, saying that the British officer was not out to be feared by England and Scotland's peaceful citizens.

Wavell did, however, once astonish an assembly of Tsarist officers by his Regimental finery, wearing his Black Watch kilt and all accoutrements. This created “a veritable sensation.”

While in Moscow that year, aged 28, Wavell played football for a combined Russian and British team against a German team from Berlin. In a rematch, an all English team, largely of Lancashire-born mill-hands, were outplayed in the first half. The second half of this game was about the roughest and toughest game he ever played.

He also went ice-hilling, a very artificial form of tobogganing, and perhaps one of the origins of bob-sleighing, which took place at night.

On his return to the War Office in 1912, Wavell wrote, or revised, a handbook on the Tsarist army. He twice returned to Russia, in 1912 and 1913, for the autumn manoeuvres, spending time with each branch of the army. Sadly, his Report on the pre-Revolutionary Russian army did not survive; but his “Recollections” do (and also his small collection of photographs). Extracts are published in book form this centenary year, most for the first time.

One hundred years ago, this was Wavell's summary of his impressions from three years attendance at manoeuvres. “I had a great admiration for the Russian soldier and thought that he was adequately led up to battalion commander. The higher command I thought generally weak; the General Staff impractical and academic; the equipment in many respects poor and inadequate; and the transport and administration behind the front line troops almost entirely deficient. I think this judgment was borne out by events.”

In the early part of the 1914-18 war, Wavell was posted to GHQ in France, working in Intelligence and advising on Russian matters. The Allies had an exaggerated view of the “steam-roller” effect of the huge Tsarist army. At a meeting of Sir John French and his three Corps commanders, the view was expressed that the Russians would reach Breslau (Wrocław) by 15th October. Wavell was asked to comment. He replied that he did not think the Russians would reach Breslau either in October, or even that winter 1914-15. He was right, but his opinion was discounted.

After losing his left eye at the second battle of Ypres in 1915, and recuperating at home, Wavell was posted back to GHQ for the opening of the battle of the Somme. Then he was posted to Tiflis in the Caucasus, as Military Attaché to the Grand Duke Nicholas. Of him he wrote: “He was a great personality...full of common sense and character. It was a great pity he was not Tsar instead of his nephew, and might have held Russia together. I asked him once whether the story was true that when Rasputin wired that he wished to come and visit the troops, he had wired back that he hoped he would, as he would certainly hang him on arrival. He said the story was true and that he would have done so.”

Wavell experienced the first revolution of 1917, but returned home through Moscow and Petrograd by the middle of June that year, after eight months in the Caucasus.

Wavell's next visit to Russia was for the Soviet army manoeuvres of 1936. This was the occasion of the world's first ever parachute drop of an entire brigade. The German observer was Student, later to command

the Air Division that took Crete (with almost annihilating casualties) in May 1941. A more important war-winning weapon was also on display, the Soviet tanks with the famous Christie suspension system.

Wavell dictated his “Recollections” while he was Viceroy, in the gaps of an always busy diary. Using only a “Life Journal” that he kept, with a record of where he spent every night of his life, he told from memory the stories of each phase of his life. They were typed, single-spaced, on foolscap, and fill nine folders each of 25-35 pages. They were never intended for publication, at any rate in the lifetime of any of the major participants. Each folder has the caveat on the opening page, “For Family Eyes Only”.

Perhaps The Black Watch can count as “family”.

Note: “Wavell in Russia”, compiled from the Field Marshal's “Recollections” and other family papers, is now available from [owen-humphrys@btinternet.com](mailto:owen-humphrys@btinternet.com)



*Lieutenant AP Wavell, 42nd Royal Highlanders (The Black Watch)  
(London, before 1914).*



*Wavell in Russia 1936.*



*Wavell the footballer Moscow 1911.*

# 77 BRIGADE

*By Brigadier A J Aitken*

**Editor's Note:** Brigadier A J Aitken commanded 77 Brigade from its inception and recently retired from the Army.

In the summer of 2013, I was delighted to be selected to command 20th Armoured Brigade; I had been Chief of Staff of that formation ten years earlier, my daughter was born in Paderborn and crucially it was one of only three remaining Combined Arms Brigades in the Army. I had a while to wait which as everyone who knows the Army will appreciate is the chance for fate and senior officers to meddle. When I had been the Brigade Chief of Staff, the commander was the man who was about to take over as the Chief of the General Staff and we had both been frustrated at our lack of ability to fight the campaign in the way that we knew we needed to – the focus was on politics, information, money and the generation of trade; not skills that are in abundance in most infantry battalions. While we had perhaps focussed on structures for armoured vehicles and artillery, our adversaries had driven forward reforms to be able to out manoeuvre us in all these 'non-warrior' skills. We were behind. After hours of discussion, we agreed that armoured brigades were dull, and I was the man to set up a new brigade that would be able to drive together all of these more 'unconventional' aspects of conflicts.

So later that year I was moved from 20th Brigade to establish an organisation that did not even have a name. I was given some offices in a barracks, a phone, a desk (but no chair, I had to forage for one), some people and a side and a half of written instructions. My final words of encouragement were 'just don't get into trouble and don't get arrested'. Over the next three years I was in the enviable position of getting to raise my own force, design the concept, recruit and then make operational a formation that was very quickly becoming the new tip of the military spear. The capabilities we needed were extremely diverse: countering corruption, financial operations, capacity building, proxy forces and the largest area was in the field of Information Warfare – we were very quickly nicknamed the 'Facebook Warriors' by the press which was a huge boost to our recruiting!

The people also needed to be from a diverse background for the range of skills we required. We were an eclectic mix of Special Forces, intelligence analysts, infantry officers, medics, engineers and logisticians; in fact, 28 different capbadges. But the real difference was made by our Reserve element (48% of the Brigade) which were a mixture of 'traditional' Reserves but also a new type of much more loose service for people from a wider background. We recruited from film, TV and theatre (including two BAFTA winners), cultural experts, imams, authors, global chief executives, journalists, digital entrepreneurs and the just plain brilliant. We had two recruits over 70 years old, a paraplegic, a quadriplegic and several who were verging on anti-military, but

each found a way that they could serve that suited them. In the words of one historian, it is probably the greatest and most diverse collection of talent in service since 1945.

We had soldiers who deployed all over the world. We had great commitments to the operation in Northern Iraq and Syria, in east Africa (especially for Somalia) but also in more unusual areas such as countering Ebola and as I type, a large force has been deployed to help with the humanitarian operations in the Caribbean. We have soldiers deployed with a variety of agencies, as well as embedding troops in civilian firms as widely as advertising agencies and at Google. It never felt like a normal brigade, especially as junior officers and NCOs held responsibility way beyond regimental duty; a junior captain ran all of our Counter Daesh operations and the Army's digital capability was designed entirely by a Sergeant and Lance Corporal.

To cap it all, we needed an ethos and a brand that would inspire a new generation. After much discussion and with the support of the Chindit Society and Burma Star Association, we were named 77th Brigade. Why this name? Well because along with a great many readers of the Red Hackle, I had been brought up in the shadow of that great monocol portrait in the Mess and had an often-read copy of 'Beyond the Chindwin' on my desk. Wingate's original 77th Indian Infantry Brigade, in which Bernard Fergusson had such a large role, was an unconventional force with commanders who were prepared to experiment with novel tactics; a force that was successful not for the physical punch but because of the psychological impact which they had on an enemy. It was that spirit of ruthless determination, innovation and cunning that we wanted to replicate. The name the 'Chindits' is reserved purely for the veterans and is not used, but the Brigade is now the only formation on the British Army order of battle that draws its history from the Burma campaign and is very proud to preserve the memory of the extraordinary men who fought there.

We now have a very close relationship with the surviving veterans of the Chindit campaigns and their families and try to keep alive their legacy. Last year we were deeply moved to be able to follow the route of 77th Brigade during the 1944 Op THURSDAY campaign from White City to Mogaung. I was able to stand on Pagoda Hill at White City and see in the distance where No 42 and 73 Columns had manoeuvred to the south to protect Brigadier Calvert's withdrawal. I was also able to stand in the rough area in which we believe Archie Wavell lost his hand in the attack on Mogaung. A feat few have been able to do or see.

I was enormously blessed to have been given the opportunity to raise from scratch a new section of the British Army and to have commanded such an extraordinary range of talent that was committed across the globe. It is a concept and a model that has been copied by numerous armies, as we all seek to adapt to the rapidly changing character of conflict.

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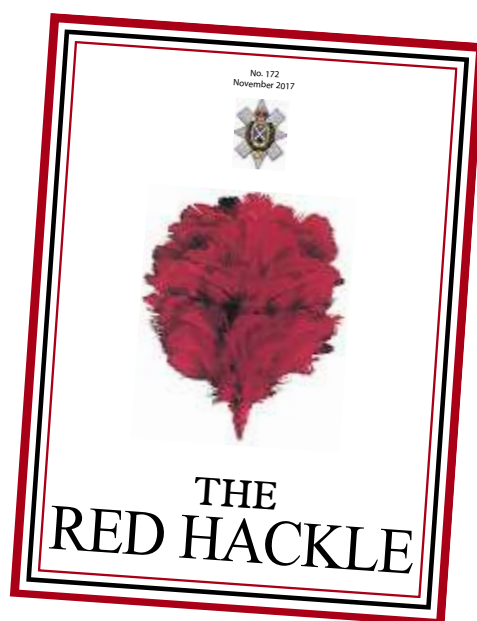
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# The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment Of Scotland



## BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel RSJ Hedderwick
Battalion Second-in-Command:	Major JA Reid
Adjutant:	Captain I Walker
Regimental Signals Officer:	Captain J Farrall
Operations Officer:	Captain CM Treasure
Intelligence Officer:	Captain CG Voce Russell
Assistant Operations Officer:	Captain Z Smyth
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 1 K Stacey

## COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

I am glad to report that the Battalion is in fine fettle. Busy, but happy and focused nonetheless. As I write this we have one Company held at twelve hours readiness to deploy to help civilian authorities deal with any calamity that may befall any part of the United Kingdom, with the rest of the Battalion held at twenty four hours readiness. Simultaneously, we are preparing to deploy to Iraq in early January 2018 to help train Iraqi soldiers for their battle to rid Iraq of Da'esh. Members of the battalion are also away adventure training and supporting a host of other organisations' training and we have just finished helping to deliver this year's Highland Military Tattoo. However, our forecast and tempo is not unique. Instead, as I mentioned in the May edition of *The Red Hackle*, it is reflective of the broad array of tasks that all units in 1 (UK) Division are asked to undertake as the core component of the Adaptive Force. When the Army 2020 plan was unveiled a number of years ago there was a suspicion that the Reactive Force would be the favoured son and the Adaptive Force it's less committed and resourced relation. Thankfully this has been convincingly disproved and I am delighted that we are in a division where the tasks are so varied and full of opportunity.

So, after our adventures on the savannahs of Kenya and in the arid mountains of Jordan earlier in the year, on the 1st August we became the United Kingdom Standby Battalion (UKSB) for the north. The task is exactly as it sounds. At any given time a Company is poised to run out the door to whichever corner of the UK requires military support with the rest of the battalion prepared to immediately follow on. The task has required specific preparation over and above routine military competencies; Armed Police Integration and flood defence training being two of the more notable skills mandated. It is an important role, highlighting the utility of the Army at home as well as abroad and reinforcing the fact that we remain an organisation that can be relied upon whatever the circumstances. We will continue in the role until the 1st of November this year when we will hand the responsibility back to 3 RIFLES, retaining only our permanent Regional Police Backfill tasks which will endure for the foreseeable future. As we found out in mid-September when we were called out to specific locations to our north, the task is not particularly onerous.

In and amongst honing our professional skills there has been a great deal of other activity. We have managed to launch over 200 soldiers on adventure training this year with the majority kayaking, rock climbing or mountain biking. Often put completely out of their comfort zones, the soldiers have on the whole embraced the challenge and had their nerve tested. The combined football and rugby trip to La Manga was a great success and the 2018 tour has already been booked – I suspect that in addition to the superb level of sport played at the tournament the welcoming 'pool party' and Mediterranean weather has had a small part to play in the desire from the soldiers to return! WO1 (RSM) Stacey led a small team on a 600 mile cycling trip to Passchendaele and back to mark the First World War commemorations, returning just in time to participate in the *Crieff Remembers* Parade, and the same group accompanied Geoff McDonald, the former Global Vice President of UNILEVER and guest speaker on our leadership programme, on his final leg from Inverness to John o'Groats as part of his efforts to raise the profile of his mental health work. In and amongst keeping us well fed

two of our chefs, Cpl Stockham and LCpl Deans won gold medals at this year's Army Catering competition and our Pipes and Drums have been playing for the good and great worldwide, from Seoul to Edinburgh.

Speaking of pipers, it would be amiss of me not to mention specifically the tremendous success the Battalion's Pipes and Drums have enjoyed this year. Not only have they won the Scottish and European championships, they also won the World Championships in their category to round off an unbeaten season. So impressed was Her Majesty the Queen, that when they played for her at the annual Royal Guard Cocktail Party at Balmoral they were granted permission to have their band photograph taken in front of Balmoral Castle. It was a fitting end to the season for the Pipes and Drums who have worked tirelessly for their success. It is well deserved and, led by Pipe Major Tripney and Drum Major Campbell, they go from strength to strength. They have set themselves high standards to live up to next year!

Of course, as we near the end of 2017, our tour to Iraq next year is increasingly coming into focus. Over two hundred will deploy initially with just short of a further hundred being rotated through at the midway point. The task we will be undertaking will be very different to the last time the battalion had elements deployed in Iraq. This time we will be training Iraqi soldiers north of Baghdad for their battle against Da'esh, operating out of a joint coalition base governed by a US 1\* formation. So while our posture and deployment will be different to this we have previously undertaken, events in the UK alone this year have demonstrated that what we will be doing is certainly no less significant. As part of our preparations the battalion deployed to Lydd and Hythe for three weeks over the summer to make use of the extensive ranges on offer and the RODET (a clever machine that allows you to practise your drills in the event of a vehicle rolling over). In total the battalion fired just over 350,000 rounds and as a result of the time spent on the ranges nearly 40% of the battalion are now marksmen. It was a great three weeks – the JNCOs ran most of the static ranges and did a superb job. Despite putting numerous details through their respective ranges, their enthusiasm and professionalism never faltered; that we had so many qualify as a marksman pays testament to their coaching ability.

So there has been much to celebrate this year. Our manning gets better every day, and our programme ahead looks good. As of early 2018 we will grow in size as we adopt our Army 2020 Refine structure and after the tour to Iraq we will start refocusing on conventional war-fighting against a near peer adversary as we prepare to be part of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force designed to deter aggression in eastern Europe. The next foreword will be written from northern Iraq and I look forward to being able to update readers on the battalion's successes in theatre.

## EDITORIAL NOTE: VIRTUS

You will see multiple references to VIRTUS throughout the articles and I thought we would provide you with a few words on what it is.

VIRTUS is a complete load carrying system, the idea being that everything is integrated and forms one system. It is modular, so depending on the operation and/or threat environment we face, we can tailor the system to suit our purposes. For example in a high threat scenario additional body armour plates can be fitted, or drivers and operators of machinery can be fully combat effective with protection and combat equipment on their person without needing different designs (webbing/chest rig/assault vest). The helmet has proven to be a welcome change, with integrated mounts for optical devices (night vision for example) and the ability to put additional attachments, giving drivers of quads or Land Rovers added protection from the elements and debris. The light role soldier also benefits by the ability to dynamically redistribute weight from hips to shoulders and vice versa as the webbing, armour and daysack/Bergen can all be connected, helping the soldier carry their equipment effectively and efficiently regardless of the load/terrain and job being done.



*The CO and RSM in the new VIRTUS equipment.*



*VIRTUS body armour, webbing and helmet all being worn on the ranges.*

### THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee: Major L Curson  
 Mess Secretary: Captain J Farrall  
 Mess Treasurer: Captain R Doughty

Since the last set of notes provided by way of an Officers' Mess update for the Red Hackle, it has been a time of normality and battalion routine in and around Fort George that has allowed the Mess to be together for a relatively long period of time. However, as with all summer periods, the movements of officers into and out of the Officers' Mess have been significant and it is a different team since my predecessor last reported.

Despite this upheaval, there have been a wide and varied number of events conducted in the Mess. We were very lucky to have the opportunity to host Major General (Retired) Patrick Marriott as part of the Battalion's leadership programme. His fireside chat was most honest and entertaining and provided an insight to life as a subaltern and sub unit commander in Northern Ireland and Germany and also the leader-

ship challenges he faced in senior officer appointments. We also used this event to promote Andrew Atterbury to Captain and Callum Howie to Lieutenant – many congratulations.

We hosted a summer Cocktail Party that brought together many personalities already known to the Battalion from around the local community. The opportunity provided by these events to ensure our continued support from outwith the military sphere of influence is excellent and I am sure all our guests were thrilled by the outstanding display provided by the Pipes and Drums, despite a relatively light summer evening shower.

Captain Rab Loudon was a competitor in the Inverness Strictly Come Dancing charity competition – yes fake tan and sequins aplenty. The Mess effectively uprooted itself from Fort George to the Inverness Ice Centre (conveniently decked out as a dancing arena) in support of Rab and he did not disappoint. Making it to the final (including receiving a 30 out of 30 score for one of his dances) he managed to finish third overall. I am sure the bug has spread and rumour has it that Captain Paul Naismith will be continuing the tradition next year.

An early period of summer leave for all Companies led to the Summer Ball being conducted in June. An excellent event was delivered by the Mess Committee and supporting wives and this allowed us to showcase ourselves amongst many guests who had travelled from far and wide. A talented ceilidh band afforded us the opportunity to fill the dance floor with some excellent reeling that ensured a brilliant atmosphere throughout the night. We said farewell to many characters in the last few months including Major O'Neill to Afghanistan, Captain Tim Towler to Iraq, Captain McRobbie to HQ Home Command, Captain Loudon to APC, Captain Marshall to 7 SCOTS, Captain Scott and Captain Durkan on retirement, Captain Hawke and Lieutenant Gibson to 1 SCOTS, Capt Pearson as ADC to MS and Captain Hamilton, Lieutenant Hannay, Lieutenant Howie and Lieutenant Mitchell to Army Recruiting and Training Division appointments.

We have had the opportunity to welcome the following into the Mess – Major Beard, Major Brian Cooper, Captain Fairweather (on commissioning) Captain MacKintosh (on commissioning), Captain Young (2IC A Coy), Captain Crook (2IC B Coy) and Captain Doughty (on re-joining the Army as 2IC D Coy) and Second Lieutenant Thorpe on completion of RMAS and PCBC.



*The Officers and Potential Officers enjoy a drink on the ramparts.*



*The Officers' Mess Whisky tasting society.*

## WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Presiding Member: WO1 (RSM) K Stacey  
President of the Mess Committee: WO2 (CSM) C Weir

Since the last instalment, the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess has seen a fair bit of change. The Mess Committee has changed over almost completely, primarily with WO2 (CSM) Danny Buist handing over the reins to WO2 (CSM) Craig Weir as PMC.

The Mess has hosted various people as part of the CO's drive in leadership training. The Army Sergeant Major, WO1 Glenn Haughton visited the Mess and addressed the Officers, WOs and SNCOs of the Battalion. WO1 Haughton gave his insightful take on what it means to him to be a leader in the Army, along with his roles and responsibilities within Army HQ. He reassured the audience that using the Army Sergeant Major as the link, our voices are being heard in the top echelons of the Army.

The RSM and the PMC were invited to the annual Queen's Own Highlanders reunion dinner, where they took a bit of "stick" from the Queen's Own old and bold for being ex Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) soldiers! Unsure of the real reason why this occurred, the RSM and PMC put it down to the Queen's Own lads jealousy of 1 BW being the senior Highland Regiment, pre Royal Regiment of Scotland.

We also hosted the annual Regimental pace stick competition, with head judge being WO1 (Comd SM) J Dickson. The wet weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of the teams. After a hard fought competition, the RHF/2 SCOTS team were the victors. Our very own WO2 (CSM) Alan Ferrier was awarded a "Fort George Bayonet," in recognition of being the "Best Driver" of the competition.

This year's summer ball was a 1920s, "Great Gatsby" theme. All those who attended loved the theme with some great outfits on display. The ladies especially enjoyed getting dolled up for the night with many a flapper girl to be seen. As always an excellent buffet was laid on by the chefs. The night was filled with laughter, merriment, high jinks and excellent music. The Mess would like to thank CSgt Ross Hunter and his wife Donna for organising this very successful occasion.

The Battalion then went into a period of preparation for deployment to Lydd and Hythe ranges. All the WOs and SNCOs have worked particularly hard to ensure that all the VIRTUS soldier system (next generation helmets, body armour, webbing and load carrying system) had been issued to the troops in good time so it could be utilised on the ranges at Lydd and Hythe.

We will have one more major function this year which is going to be a JOCKTOBERFEST themed night at the beginning of November. Due to the commitments arising for Op SHADER, we have an early Christmas stand-down in preparation for our return in January 2018 followed swiftly by deployment. Unfortunately there will be no Burns' Supper in 2018 as a result of the deployment to Iraq.



*The Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess prepared for PT.*



*The Summer Ball had a Great Gatsby theme.*

## CORPORALS' MESS

PMC: Corporal Kelly  
PEC: Corporal Robertson  
Treasurer: Lance Corporal Ironside  
Property: Corporal McIvor  
Presentations: Corporal Holiday

The Corporals' Mess has recently seen a few changes to the Mess Committee with the PMC changing from Cpl Palmer to Cpl Kelly, the PEC changing from Cpl Ure to Cpl Robertson and LCpl Ironside becoming the new Mess Treasurer.

The PMC was tasked by the Regimental Sergeant Major to assess the feasibility of holding a Corporals' Mess Summer Ball but we could not find a suitable date.

However before the Battalion went away to Hythe/Lydd, the Mess did have time to present Cpl Couper from the QMs department with a "Comrades" statue in memory of his late father Cpl Tam Couper who had completed 22 years' service with the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch and who died recently.

A second statue was presented to Cpl Nick Culligan on completion of his 22 years in the Army.

The Corporals' Mess would also like to say farewell to the following members of the Mess on leaving the Army; LCpls Newell, Hutton, Campbell, Cameron, Kennan, Drinkwater, Muir and Cpls Culligan and Palmer. We wish them all the best and will welcome them back with open arms (less Nick Culligan as he's now too old) if they realise that the grass isn't greener on the other side.

The Mess also lost a few members to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess on promotion to Sergeant. Congratulations go to newly promoted Sergeants White, Lilley, Watson, Thomson, Paterson, Fay, Wells, and McFadden.

With a few members leaving the Mess there's always a plus side and the Mess would like to welcome the following soldiers who have been promoted from private soldier to Lance Corporal; LCpls Hall, Ramage, Campbell-Brown, Wan, Braes, Rakovic, McLean and Vuetiyaroi.

The Mess would also like to congratulate the following soldiers on being promoted from Lance Corporal to Corporal; Corporals Marshall, Withington, McNicol and Ratumaisese.

The Corporals' Mess would like to welcome back Cpl Muir who has returned from the Army School of Bagpiping and Highland Drumming and we would also like to wish Corporal Qalobulaiwasaiakabara all the best while he's on his posting to the Engineer Training Wing.

The following Corporals' Mess members have been awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct medal; Corporal Brown from the MT Platoon and Corporal Miktrovic from Charlie Company.

Looking ahead we are planning a final fling before we deploy on Op SHADER. Hopefully the Forecast of Events will allow some form of function for the Mess.

## ALPHA (GRENADE) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major OGW Beard
Second-in-Command:	Captain JA Young
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 (CSM) Wilson
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant McMaster
Officer Commanding 1 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant C Francis
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Gray
Officer Commanding 2 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant TF Fortune
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Wells
Officer Commanding 3 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant TM Thorpe
Platoon Sergeant 3 Platoon:	Sergeant Mackie/Sergeant McFadden

After several months spread to the four winds supporting Delta Company in Jordan, Bravo Company in Kenya and Charlie Company with various Support Weapon cadres, the Grenadiers came back together in May. The Company began training in earnest for their United Kingdom Standby Battalion commitment which included flood defence and Police integration training, as well as basic medical and marksmanship practice.

The Duke of Rothesay's Patrol Competition also provided a welcome focus on good old fashioned field soldiering and proved a useful way to reform the teams and sections that had otherwise been dispersed over previous months. The week long Section level exercise saw five Grenadier Company teams take part in a march and shoot, map read-

ing, medical scenarios as well as a tough 25km hike over some interesting terrain on the Cawdor Estate. This was a real chance for the Jocks to show their leadership, endurance and basic military skills. Given the compressed training time and newly formed teams, the performances were excellent.

The Company then bid farewell to Major O'Neill who left us for a tour of Kabul as part of the Resolute Support Headquarters. Major Beard arrived with just enough time for a 'high-five' before the Company turned southwards to Lydd as part of a battalion level Battle Camp, in order to prepare for Op SHADER. This saw the majority of the Company taking part in firing rifles, Sharp Shooter, GPMG and HMG cadres. There was also a rather good shoot from the top of a Foxhound! With 75 people in the Company, it was excellent to see 35 of them being awarded their Marksmanship badge. It is still being debated how Pte Diffin achieved an 8mm grouping at 300m, but then 'the computer doesn't lie'.

2Lt Fortune was given a baptism of fire as the only Platoon Commander in the Company, with a heavy burden of Range Conducting Officer tasks to complete. A stalwart effort by him and his range team overseeing a significant proportion of the Battalion's ranges, including the Fire Team night range. Luckily for all he got a slight break on the final night when the range caught fire and everyone had to stop and put it out.

The Company has also managed to focus on medical training in the background of the ranges, although several Jocks were a little perplexed when both OC and 2IC turned up for their Team Medic Cadre. Thankfully they both passed, saving the casualties and putting the correct bandages on the correct wounds (two long suffering Jocks in the form of Ptes Nevison and Lauridsen).

The Company now looks forward to building on this solid base of training in advance of next year's Iraq tour. Vehicle courses, mounted shoots, All Ranks briefs, Mission Rehearsal Exercise, all fill the calendar ahead, and no doubt it will be Christmas before we know.



*Lance Corporal Kyle collecting ammo states during a range practice at Hythe and Lydd.*



*Private Jones improves his military skills but complains that he doesn't even peel carrots at home.*



*Corporal Christie delivering a set of patrol orders to his section.*



*Corporal Christie as Range Conducting Officer on the pistol range.*

### **BRAVO COMPANY**

Officer Commanding:	Major L Curson
Second-in-Command:	Captain R Crook
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 R McCready
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant R Hunter
Technical Sergeant:	Sergeant B Thomson
5 Platoon Commander:	Gapped
5 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant S Simpson
6 Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant M Gray
6 Pl Sergeant:	Sergeant S Watt
7 Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant C Howie
7 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant R Miller

Time has not stood still for Bravo Company. I can however confidently report back that the Company has continued to undertake every task

and activity with 100% effort and determination to ensure we achieve the best results and every member of the Company continues to improve and develop both professionally and personally. We have certainly been provided with the opportunity to do so in the last six months.

I closed the last report just after we returned from providing the COEFOR (enemy) for the RHF/2 SCOTS on Ex ASKARI STORM in Kenya. Shortly after our return, the Company deployed on two well earned weeks of Easter leave. There were two key themes to the Bravo Company leave block – the more ‘senior’ members of the Company spent time at home with their families, whilst the more junior members made the most of the extra allowances we accrued in Kenya and travelled to somewhere much hotter than an Easter in the Highlands of Scotland!! The performance the Company put in against the RHF/2 SCOTS has been a real high point and is still to this day talked about fondly, not just by members of Bravo Company.

The early part of this reporting period witnessed a large number of key staff changes. A new Company 2IC, CSM and CQMS have been brought into the fold with stability maintained throughout (testament to the standard of handovers from outgoing staff, and the quality of incoming staff to pick up new portfolios quickly). There have of course been movements at the Platoon level, with Commanders and Sergeants moving on and arriving in the Company, and many new recruits arriving from ITC (C). The Company is well manned (if not fully manned – but we are not far from it) and with the forecast inflow of recruits from ITC (C) in the coming months we are in a very good position for forthcoming tasks and commitments.

The focus of the Company has been shared with that of Battalion HQ and the other Companies. This can be broken down as preparation for the United Kingdom Standby Battalion (UKSB) commitment, Light Mechanised and Driver continuation/re-validation training and Mission Specific Training for the 2018 deployment on Op SHADER 6.

We are currently undertaking the lead for the UKSB North commitment which runs from 1 August to 1 November 2017. In essence this sees the Battalion held at 24hrs notice to move in the event of any incident that may require support/backfill to Police Forces across the UK. For the first month of the commitment, Bravo Company have been nominated as the initial lead Company (held at 12hrs notice to move). There was a significant training package that the Company had to undertake to ready ourselves for this commitment. This included range packages, deployability assurance checks, and specific Police integration training that will allow all members of the Company to conduct the duties required of them to best effect in the event of a callout. I’m sure the professionalism of Bravo Company will allow us to work effectively with the Police in the event of a callout but it will be interesting to see some very strong characters ‘take the back seat’ and work in support of the Police – something we have all mulled over from time to time!

Of course, we have not lost sight of our current Army 2020 role and we have trained hard to ensure our competency and capability as a Light Mechanised STRIKE Company has been maintained. The Technical Sergeant has worked hard with the Company 2IC to ensure all our current pool of FOXHOUND drivers and commanders have been re-validated, whilst we have also worked hard to generate and develop the next wave of FOXHOUND drivers and commanders, and also build our capability across the wider Army ‘green fleet’. Of significant note have been the successes of Ptes Davies, Lyon and Robertson who are the nominated Company drivers to support Op ESCALIN, which is “Defence Backfill” in the event of fuel driver strikes. They have each passed their Hazardous Materials awareness course and C+E drivers course. This is no mean feat when you consider that this has had to be done alongside all other mandatory annual and Company training. They will undertake their final training hurdle in October but I am confident each will succeed.

Our final training focus has been that of Mission Specific Training for the Battalion’s deployment on Op SHADER 6. Much of the UKSB preparation can be overlapped with the pre-training for deployment to Iraq and training efficiencies have been made but the operation is very different to that experienced by those of us who have deployed on operations in Afghanistan. Thus there are a number of different/new training serials and packages the Company has already undertaken and will undertake in the coming months aligned to the roles we will be required to fulfil in Iraq. The highlight certainly has to be the deployment to Lydd and Hythe ranges on the South coast of England for three weeks in August. Having the full Company away proved very valuable, and not only did we develop our marksmanship skillset but we have further developed the Company bond and cohesion, enabling the transi-

tion and welcoming of the new recruits who have arrived from ITC (C) over the summer months.

Throughout this fast paced reporting period, the Company has had significant successes on a number of professional career courses. Cpl McFadden (PSBC) and LCpl McNicol (SCBC) have both returned to Inverness with strong course reports and six members of the Company have passed the highly demanding Section 2IC cadre (Ptes Ramage, Ross 76, Duthie, Madsen (awarded best at Physical Training), Gunn and Kemp). We have also had success in qualifying two further FOXHOUND drivers and Maintenance Instructors (LCpls Donald and McNicol) who will be a vital asset upon return from OP SHADER 6 when focus returns to developing the Company Light Mechanised skill set.

It has been a number of years since Bravo Company and the Battalion deployed on operations. There are certainly a large number of the Company who have no previous experience of Iraq or Afghanistan, thus there is an excitement throughout the Company and it ensures Bravo Company undertake and attempt everything with great enthusiasm. We are all aware that the pace will continue to build as we prepare to deploy to Iraq in January 2018 but I am certain my next report will continue to be of a similar positive theme from across all ranks.



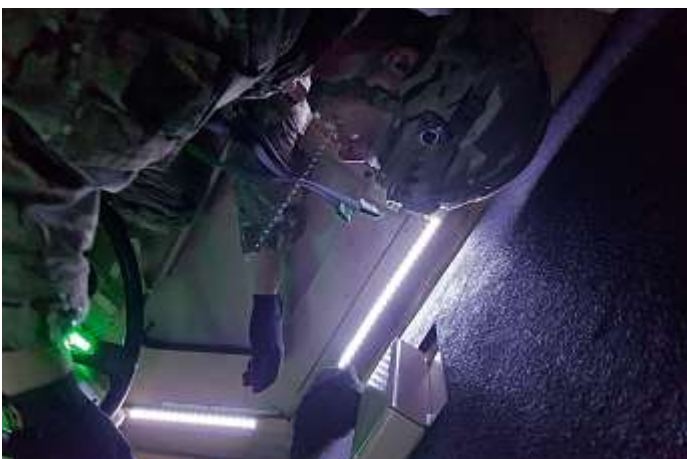
*Corporal Carter delivering foreign weapon training.*



*Colour Sergeant Hunter delighted he passed the top cover shoot.*



*Private Davies preparing to move position during the Section in Defence range.*



*Private Duthie is thrown upside down in the RODET simulator.*



*Privates Hart and McPherson preparing to undertake RODET training.*

## CHARLIE (MOBILITY SUPPORT) COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

Officer Commanding:	Major H Wilson
Second-in-Command:	Captain N Coles
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 Buist
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant McCarthy

The Savages seldom pause for more than a moment and even during the Easter break there was concurrent activity. The trusty logistics chain continued to work to the drummer's beat in the background. While the majority of the Company took some leave Colour Sergeant Bowe conducted his hand over to Colour Sergeant McCarthy and of course his dog Rommel who we joyfully welcomed back to Fort George.

After fantastic mentoring and guidance from Company Sergeant Major Buist and Cpl Ravutia, Lance Corporal Rhodes was selected to move across the square to Bravo Company and had to exchange her well-earned green t-shirt for an ordinary run of the mill Bravo Company blue one. In her place we welcomed Pte Almanun into the hot seat to take on the challenge.

Over the last few months, Company Headquarters has celebrated two marriages; the first being that of Company Sergeant Major Buist to SSgt Leanne Gordon. Will there ever be enough gin and cocktails for these two in the years to come??? It must have been something in the air as a month later Pte Almanun took some time off to celebrate his wedding.

Sergeant Sharman has been a fantastic asset to the company as a training sergeant providing some new, varied and very relevant training. Sergeant Rabonu moved from the RP Staff to the much sought after job of Technical Sergeant and having the joys of looking after the Savages' vehicle fleet.

The Company, under the tight command of Major Wilson, deployed to Lydd and Hythe along with the rest of the battalion for battle camp to hone their skills as they prepare to fulfil the role of Battlefield Casualty Replacements for Op SHADER.

## MORTAR PLATOON

Officer Commanding:	Captain NJT Coles
Second-in-Command:	Warrant Officer Class 2 Harding
Platoon Sergeants:	Sergeant R Ellis
	Sergeant J Steele
	Sergeant W Kyle
	Sergeant G Watson

On the return from Easter leave the platoon took advantage of the opportunity to spend two weeks in the Highlands on adventure training, exploring areas of northern Scotland that they had not seen before. Fortunately, the Scottish summer had arrived which meant that some individuals could keep their Kenyan suntans topped up while others emptied the CQMS' store of Factor 50 sun cream to prevent too many red faces. The cyclists had a wonderful time winding along lochs and spending their evenings on the riverbanks camping while the canoeists concentrated on staying dry whilst fighting against the rapids. Some even admitted to having aching muscles in areas that they didn't know existed.

After a night to turn their kits around the platoon exchanged their t-shirts and shorts to combats and were on the road to Benbecula for two weeks with 51st Highland/7 SCOTS. On the remote island, the platoon was delighted to find better accommodation and a much faster wi-fi infrastructure than Fort George. However, their attention was on coming back up to speed with their basic mortar number drills as others were trained up on the executive cadre. Some people say that the Outer Hebrides are incredible in the summer months, however, this was not the opinion of those that battled against the constant wind and rain.

The platoon subsequently deployed to Lydd and Hythe to conduct the training for operations. They are looking forward to more mortar live firing in the coming weeks.



*Mortar Platoon Cadre in Benbecula.*



*Captain Coles' birthday cake made by Laura McCarthy.*



*Corporal Muir and Lance Corporal Macpherson firing pistol on Lydd ranges.*



*The Mortar Platoon mountain biking.*

### **MACHINE GUN PLATOON**

Platoon Commander: Lieutenant AW Gibson  
Platoon Sergeant: Sergeant J Fay

The Machine Gun Platoon returned in March from Kenya. Following the demands and rewards of supporting the RHF/2 SCOTS on Ex ASKARI STORM, the Platoon was ready to pursue its own training

in earnest. A demanding week of ranges and GPMG training culminated with a march-and-shoot competition. Cpls Spears, Chadburn and Forsyth led their respective sections on a six-mile march through the woodland and hillocks of the local training area, ending on the moving target range. The Jocks of the Platoon displayed real fortitude to cover the ground quickly before shooting accurately on a physically demanding range.

The Platoon embarked in May on various adventure training expeditions. Jocks and NCOs alike were pushed to their limits on rock faces, mountain-bike trails and the foaming rapids of Scotland's lochs and rivers. LCpl Wilson, who has spent an informative and highly enjoyable period attached to the Adventure Training Group at Cameron Barracks, returns to us with a wealth of experience in a range of adventurous activities.

In August the Machine Gun Platoon trained dozens of soldiers from across the Battalion in the Light Role General Purpose Machine Gun. Engaging targets out to 500m by day, and firing in the dark with night-vision devices; the training displayed the Jocks' impressive marksmanship abilities.

Looking forward, a core of NCOs and Jocks from the Machine Gun Platoon are currently preparing to form a training team on Op SHADER. Highly motivated by the prospect of training Iraqi soldiers, the Platoon is eagerly anticipating the deployment.



*The Machine Gun Platoon Commander shows the platoon how to take aim.*

### **PIPES AND DRUMS**

The past year has been a busy but successful year for the Pipes and Drums.

At the start of the year was the Army Pipe Band Championships in March where the band went head to head with various other Regimental Pipes and Drums. We came 2nd in the March, Strathspey and Reel (MSR) and 3rd in the Medley competition gaining an overall 2nd place, setting the standard for the season ahead. At the time of the Army Championships we were without the Drum Major as he was deployed to Kenya on Ex ASKARI STORM.

It was now time to dig out our No 1 Dress and head to Arras with the SCOTS Military Band to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 3rd Battle of Ypres, with Pte Gary McKay given the honour of playing as the Lone Piper on the balcony of the Town Hall. In May, Pte Wainwright travelled to South Korea to commemorate the Queen's Sapphire Jubilee Celebrations at the British Embassy. This was followed by LCpl Noble travelling to Italy to represent the Pipes and Drums at the commemoration of the Battle of Monte Scalari.

The Pipes and Drums have had a very successful competing season. The first civilian competition of the season was the United Kingdom Championships held at Stormont Park in Belfast, where we were placed 2nd. A little more hard work and preparation led us onto the European Championships held in Forres and this time we won the competition. Our next commitment was at Holyrood Palace for Her Majesty.

The winning streak continued as we headed to Dumbarton for the Scottish Championship. The band had to cut short the preparations for the World Championships and head to Ballater to play for Her Majesty the Queen's arrival parade at Balmoral Castle. We next had to travel to Glasgow Green for the last competition of the season, the biggest of the year, the World Championships. Again keeping up the high standards

and the winning tradition the band were crowned World Champions as a Grade 4A Band. The first time in over 30 years any Army band has been able to achieve this and we also think the first time in the history of The Black Watch. Due to our successful season, the Pipes and Drums were also crowned overall Champions of Champions for 2017, something that will live with the members of the band for a lifetime. We have recently been promoted to Grade 3B Band status.

With not much time to celebrate our recent achievements we dusted off our combats and headed to Lydd to complete a three week range package in just three days.

The band would like to welcome Pte Scott 'lexy' McCaskill who joined the platoon from B Company; we welcome back Cpl Ryan 'Gonzo' Gonsales and Cpl James 'Jimmy' Muir who return from their respective postings. We bid farewell to Pte Martin Craig (again) who embarks on a new career in civilian street and Pte Merrick Baird who embarks on a new career in the Scots Guards.

Congratulations must also go to LCpl McDonald on completing his Pipe Major's Course, Pte Murray on completing his Class 2 Piping course, Cpl Lowe on completion of his Assault Pioneer Platoon Sergeants' Course and to Pte Hall on completion of his SRTT JNCO Cadre and subsequent promotion to LCpl.

The final congratulations go to Pte McKay and his wife Karen on the birth of their daughter Kelsie and to LCpl Hall and his wife Andrea on the birth of their son Lewis.



*End of season photograph at Balmoral Castle showing the Scottish, European and World Championship trophies.*



*Pipes and Drums after the arrival of HM Queen at the Palace of Holyrood.*

#### **DELTA (ISR) COMPANY**

Officer Commanding:	Major RA Smith
Company Second-in-Command:	Captain RCW Doughty
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 (CSM) Ferrier
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Pratt

*It is believed that smart people learn from the mistakes of others in order not to repeat them.*

With such wise words ringing true, this submission for the Red Hackle by Delta (Light) Company will focus on the training conducted and will not, repeat not, mention just how busy the last six months have been!

Our adventure begins in the deserts of Al Quwayrah, Southern Jordan, as part of Exercise OLIVE GROVE.

The reader will have to forgive a degree of crossover from the previous edition as this fantastic exercise spanned both. Whilst Ex OLIVE GROVE was led by Delta Company, it was in fact an exercise that had representation from every Company and department in the battalion – and we needed every person. Having flown in to the historic port of Aqaba, it was a relatively short bus journey to the camp – or Forward Operating Base (FOB) DON as it came to be known, in the middle of the desert. The five weeks in country allowed us to train in some of the most spectacular scenery, in the footsteps of T E Lawrence and Peter O'Toole. Using a combination of Rifle Platoons and Specialist Platoons, an exercise was designed that allowed Section Commanders the time and space to operate. This included some of the best live firing opportunities seen by many and conditions that ranged from 30°C+ to torrential rain and gale-force winds; not an exercise to ditch warm kit and waterproofs as some found out! The exercise also afforded the Company the opportunity to work alongside a Company of the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF), who were superb hosts throughout.

There were a number of highs (and undoubtedly the occasional low) during our time in Jordan. Of particular note were: the section level March and Shoot competition for the inaugural 'Golden Don Cup' – many congratulations to Sgt Morrison and the winning Anti-Tank Platoon section; seeing one of the Seven Wonders of the World by spending the day in Petra and of course the phenomenal catering support provided by Sgt Bob Powell and his team – every member of the Company would agree that this was probably the best food ever provided on exercise. And so, with our stomachs full, it was time for home, only a flight and a long drive from RAF Brize Norton stood in our way of some well earned Easter Leave.

No sooner had the Company reformed – including those detached during Ex ASKARI STORM in Kenya – we were back in the thick of things, this time training to be ready to assume our role as the United Kingdom Standby Battalion (UKSB). This included understanding how to deal with various internal threats as well as providing Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA), such as erecting flood defences without slicing a finger off. With webbing and ponchos swapped for hard hats and plasti-cuffs, Delta Company assumed its role on 1 August.

With our forthcoming operational tour to Iraq as part of Op SHADER 6 fast-approaching on the horizon, these notes are penned from Lydd Camp on the South Coast where the Company has been deployed for three weeks. We have taken part in a superb live-fire package that has included everything from basic marksmanship through to Fire Team attacks – of note is the self-proclaimed 'Dream Team' made up of Company Headquarters including WO2 (CSM) Ferrier, CSgt Pratt (CQMS), Cpl Grandison and Cpl Tudor. In between the range time, the Company has been able to bask in the sunshine of Southern England, conduct some low-level training and shift the excesses of Summer leave with some Physical Training – including inter-platoon football.

As these notes come to an end it is timely and right to mention those that we have said farewell to and others we have welcomed: Capt Russell Doughty has assumed the mantle of Company 2IC from Capt Ali Pearson who heads to be ADC to Major General Riddell-Webster as Governor of Edinburgh Castle and Major General Bruce as GOC Scotland. We also welcome WO2 (CSM) Ferrier who has taken over from WO2 Carlisle who now heads to the QM's Department as the RQMS (Tech) – we wish him the best of luck for the G4 challenges that lie ahead – and ask him to take mercy on Delta Company!

As we close, the next few months will include the remainder of our preparation for the deployment to Iraq – where the next set of notes will be penned from. The Golden Don will be ready for the next challenge.



*Captain Atterbury firing on the CQB range supervised by Corporal Walker.*



*Delta Company PT session.*

## RECONNAISSANCE PLATOON

Officer Commanding: Lieutenant W Kelly

The Reconnaissance Platoon completed the second half of Exercise OLIVE GROVE which included a live fire package that took the soldiers from live fire marksmanship training (LFMT) all the way to Fire Team Attack at night. The terrain was rugged and provided training for some very demanding ranges which were thoroughly enjoyed. Next we headed in to the teaching phase of the exercise and this proved challenging with the area being very difficult to navigate at night. We finished off with a six day final exercise where the Recce Section was commanded by Lieutenant Kelly to help him prepare for his Light Role Reconnaissance Commanders' Course (LRRCC). Finally before we packed up to go home we had a day trip to Petra.

In the latter part of the Summer we all headed down to Lydd and Hythe for a three week live fire battle camp in preparation for Op SHADER. This proved to be an excellent training opportunity allowing individuals to complete the necessary live fire requirements as well as other individual mission specific training. It was also considerably warmer than Fort George.

Finally we congratulate Lieutenant Kelly for passing the LRRCC course and say farewell to LCpl Newall who has left the army after five years of service.



*The Recce Platoon practice contact drills during Ex OLIVE GROVE.*



*Members of the Recce Platoon Ex OLIVE GROVE in Jordan.*



*Corporal Walker of the Recce Platoon exiting the RODET.*



*Lieutenant Will Kelly, Recce Platoon Commander with Corporal Alhammadi, from the UAE Presidential Guard, on the ranges.*

## SNIPER PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Colour Sergeant Roadnight  
Second-in-Command: Corporal Smith

"To Improve is to change; To be perfect is to change often."

This is a particularly apt quote from Winston Churchill given the diversity of the tasks and challenges that the Sniper Platoon has found itself engaged in over the last six months. Members of the platoon have had to adapt to suit the situation they find before them and they have done this and never missed a step.

On return from Kenya, LCpl Meechan and Pte Souter represented the battalion at short notice on Ex RHINO SNIPER the 1 UK Division Sniper Competition. Time spent on a recce is seldom wasted and despite not finishing at the top end of the results table we learnt a lot from attending. This competition is something that the platoon is keen to compete in again and progress through to the Tri-Service Sniper competition.

Meanwhile in Jordan, the platoon began making the most of the training opportunities that Ex OLIVE GROVE had to offer. Having recently

completed the Urban Operators Course Sgt Sims took the lead, training with the Jordanians in operating in built up areas (OBUA). The Jordanians adapted quickly to our tactics and in no time were at a very good standard.

During the exercise phase the Sniper Platoon worked closely with the Reconnaissance Platoon to provide a forward screen and a live feed on the enemy objective. On H hour they used precision fire in the form of a coordinated shoot to destroy High Value Targets (HVT) on the enemy position as part of the exercise scenario.

After a successful exercise there was the opportunity to visit Petra, undoubtedly for most, the highlight of the trip. After all it is not often you get paid to visit one of the Seven Wonders of the World!

On arrival back in the UK, attention was focused on training to meet the commitment for the United Kingdom Standby Battalion (UKSB) and concurrently preparing for Op SHADER 6. At the time of writing the Sniper platoon had just finished running an extremely successful Sharpshooter Cadre for the Battalion on the south coast in Lydd. Cpls Jamieson, Brownless and Cruickshanks have delivered some excellent lessons and tirelessly coached and mentored the firers over the three week period. We have seen some excellent marksmanship from those on the cadre. A clear desire and passion for shooting has been evident from the outset. This is something that the snipers can relate to and are keen to nurture in the future. Pte Campbell of A Company was the overall top shot.

As I finish these notes it is timely and right to mention Sgt Sims and LCpl Drinkwater. It is only right to acknowledge their extremely valuable contribution to the platoon and we wish them every success in their next endeavours!



*A sniper pair firing off sticks during Exercise RHINO SNIPE.*

### ANTI-TANK PLATOON

Officer Commanding: Captain A Atterbury  
 Second-in-Command: Sergeant Pasifull

With April drawing to a close the Platoon remained split across the Battalion's various commitments. Whilst the main body of the Platoon was to be deployed to Jordan, there remained an element supporting Bravo Company in Kenya and yet another with the UK Commitments Company. An exceptionally taut period but one that developed all areas of the Platoon and allowed us to reconstitute in May, with fresh impetus to begin UKSB and the build up to Op SHADER 6.

The short summer has seen the Platoon focus on preparing itself for the UKSB task. This has meant a focus on individual competencies primarily, although we've managed to fit some Javelin training in along the way. May also saw Capt Atterbury, alongside LCpls Steel, Roy, Livingstone, and Kah go down to Warminster to tackle the Anti-Tank Platoon Commanders' and Detachment Commanders' courses respectively. While LCpl Kah was unfortunately forced to return to the Fort due to injury the remainder were successful, leaving the Platoon in good shape going forwards.

With summer leave over far too quickly the Platoon deployed to Lydd to begin training for Op SHADER 6. This intense 3 week package which focussed on marksmanship, has been excellent and the improvement in this core skill encouraging to observe. It has also been fantastic to be centralised as a Platoon for the first time in ages, allowing cohesion to build again.

Looking forwards the intensity will begin to ramp up as we focus on our coming deployment. With the majority of the Platoon due to deploy there is a real incentive to work hard up to Christmas, with plenty of interesting training to be done!



*Corporal Gordon of the Anti-Tank Platoon explains a shooting practice to Lt Aldhanhani.*

### HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Officer Commanding: Major C McRobbie/  
 Major B Cooper  
 Company Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class 2 Weir

Headquarter Company better known as High Quality Company continued to support the Battalion in all its multitude of tasks over the last six months with its usual flair and panache. As always Headquarter Company sees more than its fair share of churn. Major Cooper returned again after his jaunt to Mogadishu as Deputy Chief of Staff to Operation TANGHAM the United Kingdom support to Somalia and mentoring of the African Mission in Somalia.

Major McRobbie left to take up his new role as far away from a radio as possible after standing in as OC and juggling the role as RSO at the same time. He left mumbling about MODNET and laughing at the same time; no one knows what that was about but we are sure time will tell.

CSM Weir has been away conducting his Chris Ryan skills as a Survive, Evade, Resist, Extract instructor in Brunei. He is currently the battalion subject matter expert training everyone deploying on Operation SHADER. This is a small price to pay for his time in South East Asia. His next great escape is to Norway if we manage to spare him during the Rear Operation Group task.

The Company have managed to get the majority through some form of adventure training during the breaks in between tasks. A successful BBQ and clay pigeon shooting competition was organised with the AGC being the deserved winners. Volunteers from the Company had a great experience enjoying a day out grouse beating but after tabbing the hills may not be so quick to volunteer the next time.



*Privates Mitchell, Whitelaw, Smith and Williamson grouse beating.*



*Privates Vueta and Smith and Lance Corporal Boa on the grouse moor.*

## QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster:	Major G Wallace
Quartermaster Technical:	Captain I Houston
Regimental Quartermaster	Warrant Officer Class 2
Sergeant (Maintenance):	Hannah
Regimental Quartermaster	Warrant Officer Class 2
Sergeant (Technical):	Carlisle

The QM's department continue as always to work hard behind the scenes supporting and sustaining all G4 support to the Battalion throughout an extremely busy period. The main events have been two deployments to Ex OLIVE GROVE (Jordan) and Ex ASKARI STORM (Kenya), receiving the new VIRTUS (next generation combat equipment) whilst concurrently assuming responsibility for United Kingdom Standby Battalion (UKSB). Most recently we, along with the rest of the battalion conducted a range package at Lydd & Hythe as part of our individual mission specific training for Op SHADER. It's not all work and no play. The Department has also found time to challenge and develop the team by conducting some worthwhile adventure training.

The Department including the Catering Platoon enjoyed an adventure training week from 1-5 May. This included Level 2 activities in the form of mountain biking, canoeing on Loch Morlich and a 32km daily hill walking route. On top of this we enjoyed a visit to the Cairngorm Brewery and a session on Tree Zone. The week culminated with a BBQ and a visit from both the Adjutant and his successor. Soon after we conducted a Land Equipment Assurance week which was successful. We then said goodbye to RQMS (T) Fraser who took up post as RSM 2 SCOTS and we welcomed WO2 RQMS (T) Carlisle. We also say goodbye to SSgt Beddoes (Assigned) and LCpl Cameron who goes to civilian street.

It then became an extremely busy period for the Department as we trained and became a VIRTUS equipment unit and receipted all the new individual protective equipment to account before issuing to the Companies. The QM's team then headed down the A9 to the RHF/2 SCOTS to take over the UKSB equipment pack as the Battalion assumed the role until 1 November 2017. Once secured at Fort George in five ISO containers, the contents were transferred into pantec trucks for the journey south to Lydd & Hythe in preparation for the Battalion arriving.

RQMS Hannah and the team took over most of Lydd Camp and conducted the necessary work for the arrival of the Battalion on Sunday the 6th of August. The Department completed training on the RODET, ACMT on the rifle and pistol, IBSR and a top cover shoot from the Foxhound vehicle. Cpl MacIvor emerged as competition for both RQs.



*Members of the QM's Department undertake training at Lydd and Hythe Ranges.*



*A day out in the hills for members of the QM's Department.*

## TRAINING WING

Training Officer:	Captain M Fairweather
Training Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer Class 2 Taylor
Training Colour Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Cooper
Training SNCO:	Sergeant Lavery
Training SNCO:	Sergeant Belshaw
Training SNCO:	Sergeant Mackie
RAPTCl:	Staff Sergeant Fielder

The Training Wing has recently seen many changes in staff. Capt Fairweather took over as Training Officer from Capt Smyth and we gained a number of SNCOs bringing the staff levels up to where they should be.

Battalion training continues at pace with the build up to Op SHADER just around the corner but we have to maintain the regular training events also.

Driver training on the Foxhound and Mastiff vehicles must be maintained to ensure we have sufficient drivers for our current role and we continue the pre-beat up courses for the Potential Junior Non-Commissioned Officers and Infantry Battle School (IBS) courses. These courses are where we test the candidates to ensure they are up to the standards required to go to the Scottish, Welsh and Irish Division Training Team courses and selections in Redford Barracks, Edinburgh. The soldiers are tested on a number of skills including navigation, fitness, tactics and military knowledge. On the last Pre IBS course we combined some of these areas during a day on Cairngorm and Ben MacDui. This tested both fitness and navigation over an arduous route of twelve miles.



*Captain Fairweather debriefing the pre-Potential Junior NCOs' Cadre.*



*Corporal Mitchell teaching duties of a sentry.*



*Members of the Pre Infantry Battle School Courses at the top of Cairngorm.*

## CATERING PLATOON

Regimental Catering

Warrant Officer (SQMS):

WO2 R Jupp

Catering SNCO:

Sgt W Powell

Platoon Sgt:

Sgt S Leye

This has yet again been a very busy period for the Catering Platoon, with the ever growing necessity of catering support required by both the Battalion and Brigade it has seen the Catering Platoon deploy on various exercises and taskings. During this time the Catering Platoon has seen a few new faces arrive including the changeover of RCWO's.

At the beginning of this period the Catering Platoon alongside the QM's Department underwent some adventure training near Aviemore. Based out of Rothiemurchus Lodge we enjoyed a week of activities including mountain biking, hill walking and kayaking. This coupled with some amazing weather shaped an extremely rewarding training package.

There have been numerous exercises that we have supported over the last few months with Sgt Powell and his team deploying to Jordan; Ptes Sutherland and Sanders both deployed to Benbecula, providing catering support to the Mortar Platoon and LCpl McCallum headed up a team of chefs on Ex Catalan Recovery, an external tasking from 51 Brigade. LCpl (Alan) Souter provided fantastic support to the Coast to Coast team and LCpl McCallum supported the Flanders Castle Cycle event that saw some members of the Battalion cycle from Crieff to Passchendaele. More recently the Catering Platoon headed up by the RCWO deployed to Lydd and Hythe. As well as providing catering support we also took the opportunity to conduct our own mandatory annual catering training.

We have a number of chefs either deployed or are preparing to deploy away from the Battalion on external tasks. LCpl Deans is currently at Ballater providing a support to the Royal Guard. Pte Battensby is about to deploy to Cyprus on Op TOSCA for six months attached to the Scots Dragoon Guards battle group.

During this period both Cpl Stockham and LCpl Deans represented the Battalion in Exercise Army Sustainer, an Army wide annual catering competition. They formed a two man team competing in the Grand Prix event where they had to create a three course meal for two people from

a box of mystery ingredients in 90 minutes. Their hard work coupled with great vision and perfect execution saw them win gold and walk away with the top prize.

The Catering Department has worked extremely hard over the last few months, whether it be based in Fort George or deployed on various exercises. Each member of the Department has conducted their job professionally.



*Corporal Stockham presenting his starter during Exercise Army Sustainer.*



*The Army Champions of Exercise Army Sustainer.*

## WELFARE UNIT

Unit Welfare Officer: Captain P Naismith  
 AUWO & WISMIS Manager: Colour Sergeant Nichol  
 Welfare JNCO: Corporal Simpson  
 Lance Corporal Clement  
 Welfare Clerk: Rhoda Mills

The welfare team have been very busy improving things in the Community Centre. We have developed an X-Box room, a craft room for the children and a bespoke BBQ, built with the kind assistance of 39 Engineers, to name a few. The implementation of a Patch Kids Club which has eased the cost of childcare for some of the soldiers and their partners and has allowed the spouses to come together to support each other.

The diary of events has been exceptionally busy for the team with events planned and executed such as; the wives' exercise "WIMBERLEY WARRIORS 2", a "Hoe-down" barn dance and a Topsy Patch party (afternoon street tea party), the latter two events being organised by some dedicated and committed wives.

Cohesion of the community is steadily improving with a drumbeat of regular activity such as, Veterans' Associations meetings, Military Wives Choir, a darts team, coffee mornings, Karaoke, quizzes, kids and adult movie events and tea time clubs all organised and executed by forward leaning members of the community. It augers well for the deployment and challenges in 2018.



*The wives who took part in Exercise Wimberley Warriors 2 prior to deployment.*

## MOTOR TRANSPORT PLATOON

Motor Transport Officer: Captain A Cunningham  
 Second-in-Command: Colour Sergeant Pratt  
 Motor Transport Sergeant: Sergeant R Gilmour  
 Details JNCO: Corporal Richardson  
 Driver Training: Corporal Tod Corporal Aitken  
 Green Fleet Manager: Corporal Koro  
 Service Bay Manager: Corporal Brown

The MT Platoon have set a fine example to the Battalion over the summer months with a notable "high point" being our adventure training programme which culminated in a climb to the top of the UK's highest mountain Ben Nevis. The trek resulted in fierce competition which was only matched by LCpl Lyons' desire to get back to the bottom after a somewhat marathon climb to the summit!

The Battalion move to Lydd was an exciting time for all the MT personnel and an opportunity for all ranks to brush up on their shooting skills. This brought much amusement to the platoon as Capt Cunningham was given some helpful tips on how to improve his skills on the Fire Team Attack range from a very keen and newly arrived subaltern from Sandhurst! Early morning PT was a great success with all ranks building on their fitness.

Assumption of the UK Standby Battalion role and our preparations for OP SHADER in Iraq have kept all members of the Platoon busy though particular mention must go to Sgt Gilmour in his efforts to secure appropriate driver training courses for the Battalion. With the support of Cpl Brown he has successfully passed over 40 members of the unit with Cat C licences which is no mean feat in such a short period.

The Platoon are in great shape and look forward to the months ahead with the usual spirit and humour that can be expected of any proud wearer of the Red Hackle.



*Captain Cunningham, Corporal Aitken and Colour Sergeant Pratt enjoying PT at Lydd.*



*Lance Corporals Ross and Chalenga and Corporal Aitken and Colour Sergeant Pratt on the ranges.*

## RAO'S DEPARTMENT

RAO: Captain Fidler  
 Det Comd: Gapped  
 RAWO: Warrant Officer Class 2 Young  
 FSA: Staff Sergeant Buist AGC (SPS)

To say the RAO's Department has been busy is an understatement. We have been working extremely hard to prepare, support and maintain the G1 administration of the Battalion.

Summer leave has come and gone but we have returned to the Fort in high spirits as we prepare for Op SHADER and all the extra administrative tasks that come with it. Deployment Administrative Checks are being carried out on a weekly basis and the deployable wallets are being compiled. We are also preparing for the G1 Operational Readiness Assurance visit in November. The Inspection team from 51 Brigade visited in August which gave us the opportunity to meet the new Brigade SO2(SPS), Major Jason Bythell and his team for the first time. The team included the new Detachment Commander, WO1 (selected for commissioning) Dean Sprouting. The SO2 presented LCpl Gurung with his AGC(SPS) belt and cap badge following his successful transfer into the Corps from The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

Congratulations are due to Capt Steve Lewis, the old Det Comd who has recently graduated as a pilot; Cpl Simpson on the birth of her daughter Eadie; SSgt Buist, LCpl Rhodes, Pte Al Mamun and Pte Bell-Bailey on their marriages; Privates Rhodes and Hopkins both attended and successfully passed their PNCO Cadres and are now LCpls. Pte Bell-Bailey has also been selected for LCpl and will attend her PNCO Cadre later in the year.

LCpl Jones has been flying the "Soldier First" flag by being seconded to A Company as a taster for a possible transfer into the Infantry.

Although the Detachment has been busy "working hard", they have been equally busy "playing hard", enjoying nights out in Inverness, as well as bingo and bowling.

Welcomes: Sgt Alderson, Sgt Robertson, LCpl Gurung, Pte Bballe, Pte Robertson, Pte Bell, Pte Al Mamun and Pte Rai.

Goodbyes: Mrs Jackie Smith, Capt C Scott, Cpl Robb, Pte Ritchie.



Major Jason Bythell presents Lance Corporal Gurung with his AGC SPS belt and cap badge.

## KIRK OF THE BLACK WATCH

By Padre Stewart A Mackay, Chaplain

One of the challenges chaplaincy faces in today's Army, as indeed Christianity faces within the unceasing onward march of time within the world, is maintaining its spiritual connection with people. Church attendance is down but people remain spiritual. Indeed, trends across the country show an increase in spiritual expression and searching as a whole, less the religious packaging and faith commitment. That said, the Kirk, as many knew it in the not too distant past, no longer functions like it did. Scale A parades for religious gatherings are no longer permitted. There is no longer a Kirk Session of the Black Watch within the battalion, though there is at least one Elder about. Also, it appears that we are being tasked more now than in recent history, and so the pace of life can be frenetic. This means that spiritual needs, being less obvious and less measureable, can be easily overlooked.

Within the Battalion there are many Commonwealth and British Christians practicing their faith by joining local churches in Inverness. This is great as it gives them non-military friendships within the community. It is good that local churches can be reminded by their presence to hold us up in prayer. It also means, however, that there is less call to run Sunday services for the unit.

Whatever the case may be, it is my responsibility to address spiritual needs within the Battalion, and to ensure there is adequate spiritual sustenance provided for our soldiers. As such we are evolving the practice of the Kirk to remain abreast of the times, whilst, as ever, maintaining the core Gospel message that salvation and eternal peace is offered to all through Jesus Christ. On Sunday 29th October 2017 we will hold our first multicultural Christian service for The Black Watch, 3 SCOTS, in our Community Centre in Inverness. The inspiration for this has come from some of our Commonwealth soldiers and so we have appointed a Leadership Team to help run with this event.

One spiritual aspect of this I am excited about is simply to see people from many nations join together for worship, for this is always a glimpse of heaven as the fulfilment of the promise initially given to Abraham comes ever closer. In this God says to Abraham, "... Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the Father of a multitude of nations." (Genesis 17:4). And through Christ the way is opened up for British, African, Caribbean, Antipodean and others to come together in His name on October 29th for a service of worship and praise.

## BATTALION ARTICLES

*Duke of Rothesay's Patrol Competition 2017 (DRPC 17)*

DRPC 17 is a Battalion level patrol competition that took place at Fort George Barracks and the surrounding areas of Glenmoriston

and Cawdor Estate during the week of 19-23 June 2017. The aim of the competition was to develop the Battalion's leadership, navigation and military skills and increase Section level esprit de corps through a shared experience of a demanding but achievable set of Section tasks. The main effort of the DRPC 17 was to allow Section Commanders training time with their teams and to test and adjust with the new issue VIRTUS Load Carrying Equipment.

The competition was broken down into three phases;

Phase 1 was a five mile speed march and this was conducted at Glenmoriston through wooded areas on forestry tracks. A great opening event for the Section Commanders to lead their Sections from the front. The faster they finished would allow them more choice of the start time for Phase 3. A time of 58 min 48 sec secured the win for Callsign B10 commanded by Cpl Brogan of B Company.

Phase 2 was a two mile best effort march and shoot on the Fort George Ranges finishing at the Individual Battle Shooting Range (IBSR). The Sections would be equipped with Combat Equipment Fighting Order weighing 15 Kg, helmet and weapon exclusive. The shoot was broken into two parts. Delta Fire team would conduct a defensive shoot using the range furniture and different pieces of cover. Immediately after this, Charlie Fire Team would conduct the offensive phase moving up the range using Fire and Movement. A total of 160 points were available. Some outstanding shooting was conducted with some Sections dropping as few as three shots. A combined time of 19:04 and a score of 156 ensured the win for callsign B40 commanded by Cpl Carter of B Company.

Phase 3 was an Assurance Patrol. This patrol was conducted on Cawdor Estate over a distance of 25-27 Km dependent on the route selection of the Section Commander. The Sections dealt with a number of tasks including Medical (MATT 3), Arty/Target, Catering, CBRN, CPERS and a Section Fighting Withdrawal under fire. Results were of a high standard, but also revealed areas of training to work on. This Phase was won by call sign D20 commanded by Cpl Smith of the Sniper Platoon.

The overall Competition was won by B10. Commanded by Cpl Brogan of 5 Platoon, B Company, the Section was presented with The Duke of Rothesay's Dirk by the Commanding Officer in front of the entire Battalion.

The Section Commanders used the time spent on the DRPC 17 to their best advantage and demonstrated excellent Section level drills. The patrol phase was arduous but achievable and was also a good run out to use the new VIRTUS Load Bearing System.



Lance Corporal Withington briefing his Section prior to entering a CBRN environment during the patrol competition.

## SPORT

In June, twenty six members of the Battalion departed Fort George in the hunt for silverware. The rugby and football teams set off to compete in the La Manga Festival of Sport in the south east corner of Spain. The teams departed the Fort and spent their first night in Glasgow where they were put through their paces and started to develop as teams. With an early rise the next day the teams moved onto Spain where they found

their accommodation significantly upgraded. The teams quickly settled in and attempted to adapt to the heat with some short training periods prior to the competition beginning properly.

The festival of sport began with a welcome pool party in which the football team quickly established a fan base. The heat however had started to take its toll and many had to gracefully retire early to ensure they were able to compete the next day. The following day the fixtures began with the football team doing very well and moving into the upper echelons of their competition. Concurrently the Rugby team fought hard to compete against some strong sides but unfortunately were not quite able to convert opportunities into points. Our efforts were frustrated by the loss of Cpl Taroga who opted for a trip to the hospital following a dislocation of his elbow. Capt "Top Gun" Smyth rose to the occasion and demonstrated his ability to provide shade and comfort for him whilst waiting for the Ambulance to arrive. Thankfully Pictionary is a recognised form of communication in a Spanish speaking hospital and Cpl Taroga was released that night.

The second day saw the football team compete well but unfortunately they were not able to break the deadlock against some very strong teams. The Rugby team suffered similar frustrations but both teams endeared themselves with the other teams and officials such that they were commended for their sportsmanship and example at the awards dinner. With the competition complete the teams embraced the work hard, play hard attitude and whilst they may not have been the number 1 team in their respective sports they most certainly led the way at the awards function.

As the team came together on the final day to reflect on what they had achieved it was clear to see that individuals had enjoyed the experience and had caught the desire to work towards touring again. Our junior commanders demonstrated yet again their ability to step up and be counted when it mattered, making difficult decisions both on and off the field.

The teams returned to the Fort on the Monday morning, slightly delayed but just in time to compete in the Duke of Rothesay Patrol Competition.

## BATTALION LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

In January the battalion embarked upon a twelve month leadership programme. Leadership has been CGS' enduring main effort for a number of years now and for good reason. Our profession, which is so fundamentally a human endeavour, is all about interacting with others. Our warfighting doctrine of mission command requires leaders at all levels who are able to make decisions and seize opportunity where it arises and our ability to retain our existing manpower and recruit the next generation of red hackle wearers stems from our skill at leading. The aim of the programme has been threefold. First, and perhaps most obviously, is for all ranks to study leadership in greater detail for as General Slim famously said, "there is no-one who cannot improve their leadership through study". Second, the programme was designed to invoke debate, to inject some intellectual diversity and to nurture the entrepreneurial spirit so necessary for success in any systems based organisations such as ours. It was also to be fun and interesting! Last, we hope to validate the Army leadership doctrine and to understand how as individuals and as a battalion, we can get a little bit better, in every way, every day.

The programme is designed and executed by a committee of Private soldiers and JNCOs. Each month we have one or two external speakers who are invited to present on different aspects of leadership. As a battalion we then conduct our own exploitation, working out how what we have heard can be translated into our own lives within Fort George. To date we have had some fascinating speakers. The Army Leadership Centre has presented on the underpinning doctrine behind the Army Leadership Code; Geoff McDonald, the former Global Vice President of UNILEVER spoke powerfully about his fight with mental illness; the former head of communications for Tony Blair, Ruth Turner, talked about how to improve as communicators and Sir Alex Ferguson was interviewed brilliantly in front of the battalion by CSgt Eddie Nichol about sustaining high performance. From the military we have heard from the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, the Army Sergeant Major, the Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Scotland (and Military Secretary) Major General Bob Bruce and Major General Patrick Marriot. All have been exceptionally candid about some of the challenges they have faced during their careers and we have benefited from each and every one of our guests.

The programme will endure into 2018 and the committee already have a number of great speakers lined up. Changing attitudes, and for changed

attitudes to manifest in changed behaviours, takes time. As a battalion I do not think that there is anything inherently wrong with our leadership but as Sir Alex Ferguson told us, to be consistently great you need to constantly work at the skills required for your profession. As soldiers, maybe above and beyond all else, leadership is of paramount importance.



*Colour Sergeant Nichol interviews Sir Alex Ferguson as part of the Leadership Programme.*



*Sir Alex Ferguson with some members of the Battalion at Fort George.*



*Sir Alex Ferguson looks at some of the Assault Pioneer equipment used by the Pipes and Drums.*

## CRIEFF REMEMBERS – CRIEFF TO PASSCHENDAELE CYCLE RIDE

*By WO1(RSM) Stacey*

2017 marked the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele, a battle which involved most Scottish Regiments and which had a particular resonance for the 6th (Perthshire) Battalion The Black Watch and many men from Crieff and surrounding area took part in this historic battle.

As part of the commemoration the battalion was asked if there were any cyclists who might take part in the nearly seven hundred mile ride

from Crieff to Passchendaele. We were to follow the route that the 6th Battalion The Black Watch took to the battlefield but would return to Crieff by vehicle ready to take part in a parade on 30 July 2017.

We sent four cyclists (RSM, Sgt Wedgewood, LCpl Mackie, Pte Clark) and a chef (LCpl Kara McCallum). Three members of 51 Highland/7 SCOTS and a further ten members of the City of Edinburgh University Officer Training Corps made up the remainder of the group with Captain Neil Beattie (formerly 51X RAPTCI) heading up the whole trip. Both LCpl Mackie and Pte Clark thought it would be an easy ride, little did they know of what was to come.

We travelled down on Tuesday the 18th July 2017 to RV with the remainder of the team at the CEUOTC's drill hall next to Redford Cavalry barracks. I must add that we had forfeited one week of summer leave to be able to attend.

**Day One** Wednesday 19th July – This involved an early start to transport the team to Crieff. We started off as one big group to gauge riding abilities and fitness levels. The distance covered on the first day was 57.2 miles with some 3425ft of climbing. We spent the night in the CEUOTC drill hall. We very quickly established two riding groups, a quicker more experienced group of five, lead by the RSM and a slower less experienced group of eleven lead by Captain Beattie.

**Day Two** Thursday 20th July involved a cycle from Edinburgh to Otterburn enjoying some cracking terrain and seeing some excellent scenery. Distance covered was 86.4 miles with some 5269 ft of climbing done.

**Day Three** Friday the 21st July involved quite possibly the hardest day in the saddle with a very strong headwind all the way to Newton Aycliffe. We travelled over the North Pennines which was a rollercoaster of undulating, very steep hills. Some excellent free speed gained. We did 61.7 miles with 5085 ft of climbing done. This is the day that all cyclists realised the enormity of the journey that we had embarked on.

**Day Four** Saturday the 22nd July and we were glad to see the back of The North Pennines. We travelled to Leeds Reserve centre. Cycling in Leeds was very interesting with the busy traffic of a large English city. Whilst in Leeds overnight we went to watch a new film at the IMAX that had come out aptly named Dunkirk. This set the scene as we were travelling to France via Dunkirk. Distance covered was 74.8 miles and 2123ft of climbing. Our bodies were becoming hardened to the saddle.

**Day Five** Sunday the 23rd July we left Leeds for Nottingham, we decided to act like tourists and detoured via Sherwood Forrest before dropping into Nottingham, we thought we might as well see the place en route. Distance covered 84.1 miles and 2979ft of climbing done.

**Day Six** Monday the 24th July took us from Nottingham to RAF

Wittering on the A1, our cycle computer took us onto a dodgy couple of miles sprint on the A1, it was a case of head down and peddle hard to get off the busy road. Exhilarating and frightening at the same time. We also detoured via Melton Mowbray for one of the world-famous pork pies which were delicious. Distance travelled 51 miles and 2657ft of climbing was done.

**Day Seven** Tuesday the 25th of July we cycled from RAF Wittering to Cambridge. This was by far the best day so far, as our bodies were used to the routine of cycling and we took a 14 mile, smooth as butter, cycle path which lead us all the way into the centre of Cambridge. We also decided to take a beer or two in the town before going for a punt on the river.

**Day Eight** Wednesday 26th July was broken down into two parts; part one was the cycle to Tilbury ferry crossing, 69.2 miles (2848 ft of climbing) and part two was a ride into Rochester a distance of 9.3 miles (594ft). We were visited by CEUOTC CO and RSM.

**Day Nine** Thursday the 27th July saw us leave Rochester for the final leg on British soil to Folkestone, a short one of 45.7 miles and 2247ft of climbing seemed like an absolute breeze. We made excellent time into Folkestone.

**Day 10** Friday 28th July – we transported by minibus onto a ferry from Dover to Dunkirk. Once in Dunkirk we dismounted the bikes to then cycle to Passchendaele some 46.4 miles and a measly 686ft of climbing. We arrived at the Menin Gate just as rehearsals for the BBC commemoration of the Battle of Passchendaele were finishing. A couple of appropriate pictures were taken and we moved on to the final few miles to the battlefield memorial. Needless to say, Belgium was excellent riding on wonderfully smooth roads. We combined as a large group for the final leg. Our cycle fitness by this stage was excellent and at one point we crested 30 mph as a peloton which is tremendous. We only spent a couple of hours at Passchendaele as we had to make our ferry back to Dover and then overnight at RAF Wittering.

**Day 11** Saturday 29th July saw us take the long journey back to Edinburgh UOTC drill hall prior to parading the next day.

**Day 12** Sunday 30th July – Crieff Remembers parade saw a large marching contingent of veterans, Cadets and Black Watch/3 SCOTS soldiers in the form of two guards of 42 soldiers and a Colour party, commanded by WO2 Taylor. Lieutenant Colonel Hedderwick was the parade commander. The cyclists also cycled through Crieff onto parade and were warmly received with a large turnout of townsfolk being in attendance.

The whole trip was a once in a lifetime opportunity for those involved. Each morning OCdt Cunningham carried out a 15 minute presentation on what the 6th Battalion were doing on the same date 100 years ago.



*The cycle team visited the Menin Gate in Ypres as part of their cycle route from Crieff to Passchendaele.*

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



## BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel DM Sheldrick
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 1 (RSM) D Carter
Second-in-Command:	Major A Rose
Training Major/XO:	Major MJ Pearson
Quartermaster:	Major R Whyte
Adjutant:	Captain SDA McCauley
Regimental Administration Officer:	A/Major PJ Ward
Regimental Operations Support Officer:	Captain AG McEwen MBE
Regimental Operations Support Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer Class 2 L McDowall
Regimental Career Management Officer:	Captain BS Baxter
Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant:	Warrant Officer Class 2 (RQMS) S Lawrence

## HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major I Bunce
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 J McColl
Motorised Transport Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer Class 2 D Swash
Regimental Signals Officer:	Gapped
Signals Permanent Staff Instructor:	CSgt D Dempsey
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	CSgt S McGregor

## COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

Through a considerable amount of hard work, long hours and endless determination the battalion continues to increase its numbers. The focus throughout the last few years has been to raise the battalion's profile within the local community and with employers, advertising what the Army Reserve calls "The Offer". Whilst maintaining the inflow of new entrants, be they ex-Regulars or new to the Army, the emphasis will be placed on providing enjoyable and captivating training, as well as developing the battalion's junior leadership as the backbone and future of the organisation.

As always, the programme of events for 7 SCOTS has been extremely varied with a wide span of activity ranging from the cadre camp in Benbecula, the Pipes and Drums tour to Hong Kong, Adventure Training to Cyprus and the many excellent Company level events. Close pairing with The Black Watch/3 SCOTS has helped the battalion to develop its support weapons capabilities, and as many of our Regular counterparts head overseas next year, we will hopefully continue to work closely with those still in Fort George.

The summer period saw the turnover of several key battalion headquarters appointments welcoming a new CO, RSM, QM and Adjutant. Major Jimmy Pearson moved from QM to XO and Major Alec Rose, after a considerable period of time at the helm of C Company has moved to Battalion Second-in-Command. New blood at Company level sees the arrival of Captain Stevie Rae as PSAO for HQ Coy and Captain Pete Marshall as PSAO C Coy from his previous guise as Training Officer in The Black Watch/3 SCOTS. The battalion is in good shape and is keen to prove its worth.



*The Battalion Headquarters Command team including Lieutenant Colonel Matt Sheldrick, the new Commanding Officer.*



*Lieutenant Colonel Sheldrick with Provost Melloy of Perth and Kinross Council signing the Armed Forces Covenant.*

## ALPHA (FIRE SUPPORT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major A Cameron
Second-in-Command:	Captain K W Rehman
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 Woods
Anti-Tank Platoon Commander:	Second Lieutenant A Caddick
Mortar Platoon Commander:	Vacant
Rifle Platoon Commander:	Second Lieutenant R Hand
PSAO:	Captain A Langdale
RSUSO:	Captain M Dunnigan
SPSI – Dundee:	Sergeant Mortley
PSI – Aberdeen:	Sergeant M Barr
CQMS (FTRS):	Colour Sergeant Twine
CQMS (Res):	Colour Sergeant McKenzie

It has been a busy summer for the Company. Our main effort has been the battalion cadre camp in Benbecula, where 11 members of the Javelin Platoon (Aberdeen) completed their gunner qualification. We also had five members of the Mortar Platoon (Dundee) complete their numbers cadre and are now preparing for an integrated live firing package in Otterburn in September with our paired regular battalion. We are also looking forward to participating in the battalion live firing and platoon level collective training fortnight, taking place at Barry Buddon in October.

The Company has taken part in a huge array of events across the North East of Scotland that has enabled us to maintain a regular presence within our communities and support to veterans, cadets and general outreach events. Capt Mike Dunnigan and his recruiting team continue to look for innovative ways of engaging with potential recruits and advertising the incredible scope of what is available to a soldier in the Reserves. The recruiting environment remains challenging; however, inflow is fairly constant.

The opportunity to work with our partnered battalion (The Black Watch/3 SCOTS) continues to be vital in the development of our Support Weapons qualifications. We have also used our excellent relationship with The Black Watch/3 SCOTS to prepare our soldiers for career courses including Section 2IC and Senior and Junior Brecon. It has also helped to ease our soldiers into working with their regular counterparts as they all attend parts of the same course in a slightly more condensed package. High quality pre-course training is still critical to our success and ability to develop our soldiers. Where possible, some Reservists have managed to make time to attend a full 'Regular' course and Pte Bruce from Kirkcaldy, deserves a specific mention as he is currently completing the full Section 2IC course.

As is always the case, Company personalities come and go. We wish 2Lt Seb Adkin all the best as he leaves us to attend the Regular Commissioning course at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He has been replaced by 2Lt Angus Caddick, who recently commissioned from RMAS with a very strong performance report. 2Lt Caddick will assume command of the Javelin Platoon in Aberdeen whilst studying at the university for his MSc. Capt Kalim Rehman has finally joined us after a painfully long administrative period and assumes his appointment as Second-in-Command of the Company. Sgt Gordon Clarke enters the ranks, having recently transferred in from the Scottish and Northern Irish Yeomanry bringing with him a wealth of experience.

We say farewell and thanks to WO2 Bustard, who, after 37 years of service with the Reserves, will finally 'hang up his boots'. LCpl Nisbet has decided to return to regular service with The Black Watch/3 SCOTS. The Company would like to thank him for his commitment, especially his recruiting efforts, in the Kirkcaldy area.

In summary, the Company is in good spirits and has achieved a significant amount over the summer period. It is impressive to see such commitment from so many of our people.



*A Company's team, lead by Sergeant Naughton, winning the RSMs patrol competition 2017.*



*Private Morrison and Private Lawrence practicing navigation on a training weekend in Inverness.*

### **EXERCISE NORTHERN TARTAN DIVE (17th June-2nd July 2017)**

Ex NORTHERN TARTAN DIVE was a two week diving expedition to Cyprus which took ten qualified divers and two novice divers to experience the temperate waters of the Mediterranean. It focused not only on exploring the infamous Zenobia, one of the world's top ten diving wrecks, but training and expanding the knowledge of the group which had a wide range of experience from untrained to First Class Diver. Our diving requirements were looked after by the Military Approved Centre, Dive-In Larnaca, who proved to be extremely professional and helpful accommodating the broad range of interests and levels of diving.

Due to the expedition having two novice divers, Pte Kara Teague and Pte Heather Lyon the group had to be split for the first 7 days, the two novices would successfully complete their PADI Advanced Open Water course, a qualification akin to the BSAC Sports Diver award. This allowed the group to dive collectively to 30m which increased the area one could explore on the Zenobia. The diving over the two weeks was progressive and showed clear improvement each dive. The transi-

tion from Ocean to Sports Diver required practical use of a range of apparatus, thorough knowledge of rescue drills and a series of lectures delivered by Capt Ken Scott all of which would be completed over the first seven days diving and supplemented with post-diving classroom work. On the first dive in Green Bay, CSgt Mars Marsden and Sgt Kev Bradford were overwhelmed by the visibility which proved to be much greater than that in the North Sea and a turtle was spotted from afar by 2Lt Rory Hand and Maj Jimmy Pearson!

Subsequent diving got really interesting as we navigated our way through tunnels and caves and expanded on previous experience. Capt Mike Dunnigan even managed to find his way back to the exit point which would prepare him well for diving the Zen. The Zenobia is a 140m long ship that sank in the 1980s with many vehicles and original furnishings still on board, the highest part of the ship stands at 17m with the bottom pushing past 40m. Although this provided a 3m window to explore for many of the divers, it did not disappoint. An abundance of marine life now inhabits the wreck including Barracuda, Jacks and Grouper fish. Every dive was accompanied with a different buddy for the sake of variation and so everyone could benefit and learn from each other. Maj Ian (the gas guzzler) Bunce actually managed to dive longer than his standard 30 minutes despite suffering from bouts of vertigo due to the good visibility.

On the last day we managed a night dive in and around the jetty near the camp. A unique experience reliant on the all-important torch and of course a backup! This added limited visibility to the array of diving conditions. A lot has been achieved, not only in terms of qualifications attained but greater experience and confidence in sub aqua diving. The expedition left Cyprus with two new PADI Advanced Open Water divers and five new BSAC Sports Divers all of which I'm sure are looking eagerly to the next opportunity.

### **20th ANNIVERSARY HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TATTOO 13-15 July 2017 HONG KONG REVISITED**

*By Captain A McEwen MBE*

Pure undiluted adrenalin pumped waves of sheer delight and utter excitement in equal measures through me the instant Captain Tommy Blair, Adjutant 7 SCOTS said to me "are you available, and would you like to go to Hong Kong for the 20th Anniversary International Military Tattoo along with The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and the Pipes and Drums of the 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland.". "Haud me back" (absolutely yes in Black Watch speak). I was to go in the capacity of Tour Officer alongside Major David Barringer BMus (Hons), Director of Music, SCOTS Band and Pipe Major Darren Walker.

Loads of amazing memories immediately came flooding back to me as along with a great many other men of The Black Watch, I was hugely fortunate to have served in Hong Kong with the Battalion during the accompanied 1992-1994 tour. Stationed in Stanley Fort, the camp was situated at the top of a hill overlooking the sleepy coastal village of Stanley, which lies at the southern tip of Hong Kong Island looking out across the vastness of the South China Sea. Less than three years later I was "Proud and Privileged" (the easily remembered strapline which was known to all ranks and widely used during this tour) to have had the opportunity to return for a five month unaccompanied tour between early February and the 30th of June 1997. This was for the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from Britain to China (the official transfer of sovereignty date is actually the 1st of July 1997) at the end of a 99-year lease. This event marked the end of British administration in Hong Kong and is often regarded as the watershed of the British Empire.

The following countries were represented in the Hong Kong Coliseum on the nights of Thursday 13th, Friday 14th and Saturday 15th of July 2017; People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Mongolia, Netherlands, Russia, United States of America and United Kingdom and the 20th Anniversary Hong Kong International Tattoo was declared a hugely entertaining and resounding success, attracting a full house during each nightly performance. As you would expect, the combined marching bands (fifty nine musicians in total) of The Royal Regiment of Scotland performed their awe inspiring routine with utter professionalism, musical excellence and traditional Highland swagger.

During the after performance party on the last night of the Tattoo (apparently tradition within 'military tattoo performers' circles), it was great to talk with Patrick Dunn, an artiste with Hong Kong Television Broadcasts Ltd, who along with Janis Chan were the Tattoo co-hosts

throughout. And during our conversation, we very quickly realised that when Patrick had carried out his short two week long Territorial Army Commissioning Course at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1991, while a serving soldier with the Royal Hong Kong Regiment, I had the great pleasure of being his Platoon Colour Sergeant in Old College. Now, I wonder what the odds would have been on this chance meeting happening some twenty six years after the first and only time we had ever met and trained with one another.

There were a number of other public engagements which we either attended or at which we were represented, only two of which I will mention. Firstly, a number of the SCOTS Band, PM Walker and I attended a very moving and memorable Service of Remembrance at Sai Wan (Chai Wan, Hong Kong) War Cemetery, which commemorates soldiers from both the First World War and the Second World War, including The Battle of Hong Kong 8-25 December 1941 (also known as The Defence of Hong Kong or The Fall of Hong Kong). A great many Hong Kong Chinese and British Servicemen, many of whom were Scottish have been laid to rest alongside many more Commonwealth and Allied Forces Servicemen; 1,528 in total. This service was attended by a large number of ex Hong Kong Chinese and British Servicemen and presided over by Brigadier (Retired) Christopher Hammerbeck CB CBE, late Royal Tank Regiment, President of the Royal British Legion, Hong Kong and China Branch and the Officiant was The Reverend John Chynchen, Honorary Chaplain, Royal British Legion. It was at this service that I met a very dear old friend of The Black Watch, Mr Peter Choi, Honorary President of the WW2 Veterans Association of Hong Kong. Peter had worked in the Hong Kong Defence Estates office for many years during which spanned both these tours and I was first introduced to Peter Choi by Major (Retired) Jimmy Williamson MBE, when Jimmy was Quartermaster during the handover tour of 1997. Secondly, a number of 7 SCOTS Pipes and Drums, the SCOTS Bandmaster and I attended a musical workshop at the Hong Kong Sea School, a voluntary youth organisation in Stanley, whose purpose it is to offer personal and musical development, including Highland bagpiping and drumming to the Hong Kong people. The workshop provided a unique opportunity for our pipers, drummers and bugler (SCOTS bandmaster) to work with the Hong Kong Sea School Pipe Band. It was an amazing experience all round and we were all given the most amazing and heartfelt send off from these extremely talented musicians when we eventually had to take our leave.

We stayed in the Novotel, Nathan Road, Kowloon during our eight day trip and when not rehearsing or performing, I seized the opportunity to get out and about and visit a couple of old haunts and catch up with one or two old friends. As soon as I had some free time I caught the Star Ferry across the harbour to Hong Kong Island and hopped on a bus to Stanley, and I am delighted to report that absolutely nothing has changed in Stanley; okay the only pub of the half dozen or so on the beach waterfront which still sports the same name from 'the old days' is Smugglers, but the culture, people, sights, sounds and smells were all exactly as I remembered them. I then took an emotional journey down (up 'illegitimate hill', which aptly named, physically destroyed even the most fit of Black Watch Jocks during the daily and torturous early morning PT sessions) memory lane to Stanley Fort, stopping off en route at what was the Stanley Services Boat Club (SSBC). This had been a well-equipped water sports centre with its own stretch of private beach for which the resident Battalion in Stanley Fort was required to staff and offer a selection of water sport activities to all British Armed Forces personnel, their dependants in addition to all UK Civil Servants and their dependants; all at no cost. As the Colour Sergeant in charge of this unique facility (an offer which I clearly couldn't refuse) I inherited the seafaring title of 'Bosun' (from the outgoing Battalion) which to tell you the truth, I actually quite liked; even the CO and RSM would say to me when I picked up the office phone – "is that the Bosun". But once again it pleases me to report that this was still a water sports facility and continues to offer a wide range of water sport activities to the people of Hong Kong. Sadly however, due to the lie of the land you can't actually see into Stanley Fort from outside the now very unwelcoming front gates, and I was nowhere near brave enough to ask either of the two armed PLA soldiers on guard if I could have a wee look inside for old times.

An old friendship which I was hugely keen to rekindle was with Bonny and Johnny Yuen, two local Hong Kong Chinese born brothers who ran a civilian tailors shop in Stanley Fort during the 1992-1994 tour. And although they were required to leave Stanley Fort when The Black Watch marched out for the last time in 1994, I knew that they had opened a tailors shop in Central District on Hong Kong Island shortly afterwards; I had caught up with them during the handover tour of 1997.

I went over to visit them in their tailor shop in Des Voeux Road the first night I arrived in Hong Kong and had a good catch up. I was delighted to get another opportunity to see Bonny before I left Hong Kong when he and his daughter attended the Tattoo.

Corporal Alan McDougall (an ex Black Watch piper (one of three brothers who served in the Black Watch (now a piper with 7 SCOTS)) and I also arranged to meet up with Don McNeil (call sign 'Pieman'); although he has now been living and working in Hong Kong for many years, served with The Black Watch during both of these tours. Don and his family also attended the Tattoo on the opening night and it was great to talk with them all before they had to take their seats for the start of the performance. Alan and I had another chance to see Don, Shirley and their daughter on our last day in Hong Kong; we had a delicious dim sum breakfast together before walking the short distance to the colonial styled Kowloon Cricket Club (the KCC was established in 1904), of which Don and Shirley are members, where we spent a few hours in each other's company chatting over drinks.

In terms of the British Military Barracks, which a great many readers will have vivid and fond memories of, the vast majority of these iconic pre-30th of June 1997 barracks such as Stanley Fort, Stonecutters Island, Erskine Barracks, Gun Club Hill Barracks, Osborne Barracks, Victoria Barracks, HMS Tamar, Headquarters British Forces (HQBF) located in the The Prince of Wales Building (more affectionately known as the upside down Gin Bottle) are now either Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government buildings or Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Barracks, all of which demonstrate a visibly strong and armed security presence.

When I stepped off the aircraft right behind Lieutenant Colonel Alasdair Loudon, Commanding Officer 1st Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) at Edinburgh airport on the evening of Tuesday 1st July 1997, I never thought for one minute that I would ever get the opportunity to return to Hong Kong, and so I was thoroughly delighted to have been proven wrong. I have deliberately not stated any political facts or points of view in this article but instead have chosen to write about those memories, thoughts and observations which is 'my Hong Kong'. And although Hong Kong is now very much the jewel in the Chinese crown; it remains a fascinating multicultural and vibrant region, which continues to offer the most fantastic experience to anyone who spends some time getting to know her.



*51st Highland/7 SCOTS Pipes and Drums outside the Hong Kong Coliseum against the backdrop of Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong Island.*



*Lance Corporal Stanley – We welcomed Stanley into the ranks from the outgoing Battalion (The Royal Regiment of Wales) at the beginning of the 1992-1994 Stanley Fort tour. Everyone loved Stanley and Lieutenant Colonel Nigel Lithgow (CO) promoted Stanley to Lance Corporal with a seniority date of 1st April 1993.*



*Lieutenant Colonel Alasdair Loudon and RSM Alan McEwen after another long hot sticky day in the office during the 1997 handover tour.*



*Mr Peter Choi, Honorary President of the World War 2 Veterans Association of Hong Kong pictured alongside Captain Alan McEwen at the Sai Wan Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery.*

## HMS MONTROSE

*By Lieutenant Commander Hugo Floyer*

HMS Montrose, one of the Royal Navy's thirteen Type 23 Frigates, returned to sea in July 2017 for the first time in three years, following an extensive refit to keep her at the cutting edge of technology. The new lease of life has extended her service well into the future, before she is finally replaced by the brand new Type 26 Frigates.

£36 million pounds and 750,000 man hours went into the ship's refit along with 5km of new piping, 10km of electrical wiring and 1000 patches of steel plating to replace worn out areas after her 25 years of service. Her most impressive new capability however, is Sea Ceptor – a newly developed local area air defence missile system, which allows her to not only protect herself from air attack but an entire task group.

Bringing a ship out of refit and back into the Fleet is a well established process, but still one that offers a unique set of difficult challenges for the Ship's Company to overcome. The newly formed crew moved onboard in March 2017 and worked hard alongside Naval Base personnel and industry partners to get HMS Montrose to sea as scheduled in July. The ship's first 48 hours at sea was crammed with exercises including man overboard recovery drills, proving the ability to deal with engine room fires and floods, undertaking navigation training, and live gunnery.

At the time of writing HMS Montrose is nearing the end of her sea trials programme and has successfully completed a number of complex marine and weapon engineering trials. The ship's engines have been pushed to the limits, propelling the vessel to its top speed whilst undertaking intense manoeuvring to simulate warfighting conditions. Weapon systems and sensors have been tested against aircraft, ships and underwater targets simulating an array of likely modern threats. However, not only was this the first time the ship had been to sea since 2014 with many new systems, it was also the first taste of life at sea for many of the junior sailors on board. Steward Tanya Moore from Northern Ireland said "People said I looked a little green at first, but you soon get over it and get on with the job".

While the programme focus has been on establishing that the Ship's equipment is all working correctly, there's still the need to ensure the ship is able to defend itself at sea. The warfare department has conducted a number of weapon shoots, firing 28000 rounds of ammunition, and the operations room has been manned 24/7 helping keep watch at sea around the UK. Highlights have included monitoring foreign task force ships travelling through the area en route to the Baltic Sea, conducting live firing of the 4.5 inch gun, and conducting helicopter operations.

The logistics team have provided a wide and varied menu over the period, ranging from the classic cheesy hammy egg – a traditional naval delicacy – to lamb tagine and roast dinners. To produce a fit-fighting force, a variety of healthy options are always available, including fruit

and yogurt as a breakfast choice, and all this is done with a budget of just £3 per person per day.

It's not all work though, the ship's physical training instructor, Melanie Haslam has conducted daily circuit training onboard on the flight deck. Even in rougher weather the training takes place and personnel can always use the gym but it can just become a little bit more challenging with the ship rolling from side to side. Lt Matt Bowden, a leading player in the RN rugby team said: "the new gym onboard is great; it combines a wide range of functional fitness equipment and the crew love it. It's definitely one of the most comprehensive gym set ups across the surface fleet".

Having nearly completed her sea trials period, *HMS Montrose* will shortly rejoin the Fleet ready to commence the next part of her programme on the way to becoming a fully operational warship. After a short maintenance period, two months of Basic Operational Sea Training and a subsequent multinational, tri-service exercise called Joint Warrior, the ship will have been brought to a suitable level of readiness. This will allow her to be deployed anywhere in the world at short notice to meet foreign and defence policy objectives, be they diplomacy and disaster relief or dealing with conflict and instability in the maritime domain.



*HMS Montrose sails back to Plymouth after refit and before undertaking her sea trials.*



# The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada

The Black Watch is truly an influential Regiment, and not just for the reasons that we usually assume. The 2nd Canadian Division has decided that The Black Watch will be one of two units in the Division to be granted the responsibility of generating an Influence Activities capability for domestic and international operations. Beginning in September 2017, we will officially stand up C Company as an Influence Activities sub-unit composed mostly of officers and NCOs specifically trained in Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and/or Psychological Operations (PSYOPS). Members from across the entire Brigade, who have the right qualifications, will begin transferring into our unit in the fall and will typically serve two year terms with C Company prior to returning to their home units for career progression. For Black Watch members, they will now simply walk across the hall from A Company to C Company when they are interested in expanding their experience set with this important and war-winning enabler. C Company will specifically train an Influence Activities Coordination Centre capability that will be able to plug into a Brigade or Task Force HQ in operations.

The Black Watch has had a successful year recruiting new members with a total of two officers and 31 other ranks joining the Regiment before the end of the fiscal year on the 31st of March 2017. Our recruiting success exceeded the quotas we were assigned at the outset of the year and bode well for the year to come as our quota has been drastically increased to three officers and 52 other ranks. The recruiting team in B Company and the leadership of Vimy Platoon all deserve hearty praise for their efforts over the past year – keep it up!

The Black Watch put on a tremendous show this past April in honour of the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and also in recognition of the 150th anniversary of Canada and the 350th anniversary of the City of Montreal. On Saturday, April 8th 2017, the Regiment held the Black Watch Military Tattoo at the Bell Centre in downtown Montreal. The event was a huge success and extremely well received by both the Mayor of Montreal and the Commander of 2nd Canadian Division – not to mention the people of Montreal who turned out in great numbers for the event. Congratulations must go out to the organizing committee, the Pipes and Drums, and all the members of the unit who participated in putting on a great show.

Our 2016/17 training year has ended in exciting fashion with a deployment of unit personnel on Operation LENTUS, in support of the Montreal population, stricken by severe flooding. Torrential rain in April led to water levels not seen in over a century and the Provincial Government became quickly overwhelmed and called upon the Army for support. The Black Watch quickly deployed a platoon to serve in the Pierrefonds neighborhood of Montreal, assisting with the erection of dykes and other emergency services. All members of the unit who deployed on the operation and those who supported the deployment are congratulated. The Black Watch has a tradition of helping our community in times of crisis that goes back to our founding, and this latest demonstration was in keeping with that fine tradition.

NEMO ME IMPUNE LACESSIT



*Black Watch personnel during OP LENTUS in April 2017 in Montreal.*



*Some members of The Black Watch of Canada who deployed on Op LENTUS.*

## ARTEFACTS FROM THE BLACK WATCH OF CANADA COLLECTION BENGAL ARMY QUEEN'S COLOUR, 1857

*By Earl John Chapman*

This Monarch's Colour, measuring approximately 72 by 83 inches (183 by 211 cm), was presented to the Officers' Mess of The Black Watch of Canada in November 1932 by Lieutenant Colonel William Stewart Mackay MacTier. An accompanying plaque tells the story: "...this Union Jack was the Colour of one of the Sepoy regiments prior to the Indian Mutiny and the Sepoys continued to carry it after they had mutinied. During the Siege of Delhi in 1857 this particular regiment suffered a reverse and left the Jack on the ground where it was picked up by the Surgeon Major WF MacTier of the Indian Army."

Born in Montreal, Canada, in 1895, Colonel WSM MacTier qualified for his lieutenant's commission during the winter of 1914 while assigned to the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch, then training at Aldershot Camp; he eventually served with the 13th Battalion, Royal Highlanders of Canada (wounded twice and awarded the Military Cross for gallantry). After the war, he served as Regimental Commandant of Canada's Black Watch from 1932 to 1934, "the last of the pre-war officers to go from junior subaltern to Colonel-Commandant." It was his grandfather, Dr. William Fullerton MacTier "of the Indian Army," who had served with distinction as a surgeon during the Siege of Delhi in 1857 and had allegedly recovered the Colour. While some believe that it is a generic Great Union flag, there is a strong argument for the flag being what it purports to be – the consecrated Queen's Colour of one of the Bengal Native Infantry Regiments. Dr MacTier was surgeon to the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army during the Mutiny and until 1853 he had been surgeon to the 9th Bengal Native Infantry Regiment. As a regimental officer, well acquainted with the design of Regimental Colours and the veneration accorded them, and as a highly-educated gentleman with a scientific mind, it seems unlikely he would pretend this flag was something it was not. He may not have known to which regiment it belonged but he apparently accorded it the honour due to such a captured trophy, passing it eventually to his grandson, who, in turn as Regimental Commandant, passed it to The Black Watch of Canada. Whether a Sepoy Regimental Colour, or a British Governmental Ensign (used to establish British sovereignty), "there is no question that it was taken by the mutineers in the occupation of Delhi, and liberated in the British capture of the city." As such, its historical significance remains unique, calling to mind "a time when this colour fluttered in the breeze, unsullied by airs of mutiny." The MacTier flag is a fitting legacy of gallantry and service, proudly displayed in the home of Canada's Black Watch.



*Bengal Army Queen's Colour (Image Credit: Black Watch of Canada Museum and Archives, photo by Peter Ferst).*

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# Black Watch Battalion The Army Cadet Force

Honorary Colonel:	The Reverend Professor Norman Drummond CBE FRSE
Commandant:	Colonel C G Hubbuck
Deputy Commandant:	Lieutenant Colonel S Rae
Adjutant:	Captain M McCluskey
Officer Commanding Alma Company:	Major K Douglas
Officer Commanding Burma Company:	Vacant
Officer Commanding Korea Company:	Major N Murdoch
Officer Commanding Ypres Company:	Captain R Scott
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Regimental Sergeant Major Instructor T Cameron
Permanent Staff:	
Cadet Executive Officer:	Major A C M Potter
Quartermaster:	Captain R G Hallum

The Battalion continues to provide the Cadet Experience through both Military and Adventurous Training. Once again we are in demand supporting Public Events throughout Fife and Perthshire. This included the Royal visit to Dunkeld when Cadets provided an Honour Guard for Prince Edward when he visited the Royal School of Dunkeld who were marking their 450th anniversary. In particular our Pipes and Drums and Military Band have been busy. They had the recent honour of playing at the ACF Scotland Beating Retreat at Edinburgh Castle Esplanade in April. Our Pipes and Drums also played as part of the ACF Pipes and Drums at Horse Guards on the evening before Trooping the Colour.

As a Battalion our main challenge this year is to encourage more young people to join the Army Cadet Force. We have recently witnessed a drop in Cadet numbers particularly from the Fife area. This has been evident in the numbers we have been taking to Battalion Camps. We are now using our continued presence at public events to promote the Army Cadet Force and the benefits it can give to young people.

## SPRING CAMP

The Battalion conducted Cadre Training in line with the APC syllabus over eight days in Barry Buddon in April. This is the business end of our Battalion training, testing Cadets on subjects such as Fieldcraft, Shooting and Expedition Training. The majority of Cadets departed Barry Buddon having achieved their Star Awards and in some instances promotion to the next rank. We were supported throughout our Camp by 3 SCOTS on our Expedition Phase who provided Expedition Assessors. We were also supported by the Regimental Recruiting Team who provided subject matter experts during our Fieldcraft Training. This support is vital in enhancing the training experience for our Cadets and Adult Volunteers.

## WW100 SCOTLAND

The Deputy Commandant Lt Col Hubbuck and Cadet CSM Findlay-Hunter from Kinross Detachment represented the Battalion at the Arras 100 Years commemoration which took place in the Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery in Arras in April. This had been arranged by

51st Infantry Brigade and WW100 Scotland with Cadets and Adult Volunteers from every Scottish ACF Battalion travelling to Arras for the ceremony. It was conducted by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland Dr Russell Barr supported by the Standard Bearers from Legion Scotland. Representatives from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, France and Britain laid wreaths.

## ANNUAL CAMP

This year the Battalion travelled to Otterburn. This was a new experience for the majority of the Cadets and Adult Volunteers as the Battalion had not trained in Otterburn for over 20 years. It soon became apparent to the Cadets that there was a severe lack of a mobile phone signal which became interesting as Cadets attempted to negotiate the public phone boxes outside the Tri-Bar. Possibly a future Command Task? The Camp Programme allowed for a more relaxed seven days without the pressures of Training and Testing on APC subjects. In particular we made good use of the Scout Centre at Kielder Lake who provided watersmanship activities supported by Pte McGuire from The Black Watch/3 SCOTS. Having six Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) recently qualifying on mountain biking we also put the Cadets through their paces on the mountain bike trails at Kielder Castle. Otterburn Training Area was also put to good use with Company Fieldcraft Exercises taking place. The Cadets were also given the opportunity to practise their SA80 A2 and LSW Weapon Handling skills on the ETR. An Inter-Company Competition also took place using various Command Tasks.

## CRIEFF REMEMBERS

The Battalion supported the Crieff Remembers Parade to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele. Following behind The Black Watch/3 SCOTS, our Military Band lead the Cadet Contingent through the streets of Crieff to the Market Park where a Drumhead Service was held. Major General ML Riddell-Webster, Governor of Edinburgh Castle, took the salute.

## SALUTE TO PERTH

Cadets and CFAVs from Alma and Korea Companies marched through Perth, accompanied by the Battalion Military Band to support the Salute to Perth Event in August. The Band then played in the main arena supporting Bands from the Indian Army and Japanese Defence Force who had been invited to attend from their performances at the Royal Military Tattoo.

## CHANGE OF COMMAND

The Battalion said farewell to Colonel Jamie Erskine after nine years as both Deputy Commandant then ultimately Commandant of the Black Watch ACF. Colonel Erskine has now retired from the ACF. A number of presentations were made to him on behalf of the Battalion during our Camp at Barry Buddon. This included a framed Pipe Tune composed by our Executive Officer Major Potter. Colonel Erskine has now handed over command of the Battalion to Colonel Craig Hubbuck.



*Battalion at Otterburn July 2017.*



*Mountain biking at Kielder Castle.*



*Cadets and CFAVs representing all the Scottish Battalions with the Moderator of the Church of Scotland at Arras in April 2017.*



*Band marching through Crieff during the Crieff Remembers Parade.*



*Colonel Erskine receiving a presentation from Major Rae.*



*Command tasks during the Military Skills Competition at Otterburn.*

# Association News

Royal Patron:	HRH The Prince Charles Duke of Rothesay KG KT CB OM
President:	Mrs Georgiana Osborne CVO, Lord Lieutenant of Angus
Vice Presidents:	Mr Robert Balfour FRICS, Lord Lieutenant of Fife Brigadier M S Jameson CBE, Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross Councillor Ian Borthwick, Lord Lieutenant of the City of Dundee
Chairman:	Major General J M Cowan, CBE DSO
Vice Chairman and Trustee:	Lieutenant Colonel R M Riddell
Secretary and Trustee:	Major R J W Proctor MBE
Trustee:	Major J M K Erskine MBE
Trustee:	Major J D Monteith MBE
Trustee:	Major A A L Watson LVO
Trustee:	Captain B M Osborne
Trustee:	Mr G Hay LLB CA
Executive Committee:	Lieutenant Colonel F L Beattie MBE Lieutenant Colonel M Smith MBE Captain A McEwen MBE Lieutenant Colonel J A Menzies Lieutenant Colonel R I Rose TD Mr R Scott, JP Mr G Kennedy
Welfare Committee:	Lieutenant Colonel R I Rose, TD, Chairman Major R J W Proctor MBE, Secretary Mr J Devlin Major G Grant MBE, MM Captain T Graham Mr R Scott, JP Mrs I Shivas Captain A McEwen MBE Mr W Barr Major B Dickson Major C Gray Mr A Stott

## ANGUS BRANCH

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

A busy period has followed since the last edition of Branch notes and members have been involved in activities at both home and abroad.

Some of our Branch members, their wives and members of the Tayside Branch of the Western Front Association took part in a battle field tour which was organised by our Branch Secretary, Tom McCluskey and his wife Anne.

Nothing was left to chance and after meticulous planning we set off to take part in what was a most enjoyable, interesting and fairly relaxed tour which was appreciated and enjoyed by all.

Our Branch President, Lieutenant Colonel Fred Beattie gave a short, concise and humorous account of his time as a recruit at Queen's Barracks during the official unveiling of the memorial to commemorate the association of The Black Watch and the Barracks both as a station and as the Regimental Depot.

Fred was also the Lance Corporal in charge of the fatigue party furnished by the Mortar platoon which moved the artefacts and property from the barracks to Balhousie Castle in 1962.

The Annual Reunion followed the Queen's Barracks Memorial unveiling and again the Branch was well represented with the Branch Standard being carried at both events. The following

week the Branch Chairman packed his kit bag again and he and Sonia headed off to Italy to attend the unveiling of the memorial to commemorate the Battle of Monte Scalari.

The Blue Bonnets and medals were out once again on the 19th of June in Forfar and the 1st of July in Dundee to take part the respective Armed Forces Day Parades. The Dundee veterans' contingent included a good number of Branch members, with John Glen carrying the Dundee Branch Standard and Brian Smith carrying the Standard of the Angus Branch. Major Colin Gray, Dundee Branch President commanded the veterans and ensured that the parade was up to the normal high Black Watch standard. Favourable comments were made by the seated dignitaries, on the turn out and bearing of the Black Watch veterans who were on parade.

Passchendaele commemorations were next on the agenda and our Branch Secretary travelled over to Belgium and represented the Regiment and his notes are shown elsewhere. A bus was laid on jointly with the Dundee Branch and Branch members and their wives took part in the Crieff Remembers Parade where the day's outing was enjoyed by all.

The annual Branch Standard Rededication Ceremony this year was linked with the centenary of the Battle of Istabulat where Private Charles Melvin from Kirriemuir won the Victoria Cross. This conformed to the previous Association Chairman, Colonel Murdoch's suggestion that each Branch should choose to commemorate a Great War battle.

Sixty Association members and guests including Mr David Melvin and his wife (the great nephew of Charles Melvin) attended the Rededication Service which took part in Kirriemuir Old Parish Church and was conducted by the Reverend Linda Stevens. Standard bearers from the Dundee and Fife Branches were also in attendance. At the end of the church service a move to the town cemetery followed where a short service and wreath laying ceremony took place at Melvin's grave. Bob Inglis laid the wreath, the Branch Secretary and Chairman read the exhortations, Branch Piper Peter Snadden played the Regimental Lament and the Reverend Stevens gave the blessing.

Then the Airlie Arms hotel in Kirriemuir was the venue for a most enjoyable three course lunch where after the Branch Chairman's welcome, Commander Jim Smith late RN gave a rendition of the excellent poem which he composed to commemorate Charles Melvin winning the Victoria Cross. He then gave a printed copy to all those present and presented Mr Dave Melvin with a framed copy of the poem.

Guests and members made their way home after what was a most enjoyable day. Both Tam McCluskey and Bob Mitchell are to be thanked for all their hard work which has gone in to making the day the success that it was.

We are currently in the process of organising our annual El Alamein Dinner which is to take place in the Royal British Legion Clubrooms, Forfar on the 14th October. Plans are also being made for attendance of Branch members at the various Remembrances throughout the county and the distribution of the Christmas "Comfort" Boxes, to pensioners and widows. The Burns supper is not too far away on the horizon and speakers are currently being sought to compliment the regulars at this event.

Doug Cunningham who annually donates a couple of trays of his famous pies at both our Christmas and AGM meetings in December and March respectively recently held a fundraising fete in his home village Balbeggie. He successfully raised £409 which he donated to the Association General Fund.

Sadly we have lost Dave Mitchell from Arbroath, John Campbell from Newtyle and Bruce Cowie from Kirriemuir who have all died recently. They were great supporters of the Branch and the Association and will be sadly missed. We extend our sympathy to their families.

Lastly we welcome as an Associate Member, John Davie from Dundee and Willie Rennie from Letham as a full member, we hope that their stay will be long and enjoyable.



*Doug Cunningham presents Major Ronnie Proctor with a fundraising cheque for £409.*



*Some of the Angus Branch members and wives who took part in the Western Front Association battlefield tour pictured at Black Watch Corner.*



*Some of the Association members who attended the Melvin VC commemoration in Kirriemuir (by kind permission – Ian Mutch Angus Herald).*



*Association Branch Standard Bearers and members of The Black Watch Battalion salute the memory of Private Melvin VC (by kind permission – Ian Mutch Angus Herald).*

## DUNDEE BRANCH

President:	Major Colin Gray
Chairman:	Mr Willie Barr
Secretary:	Mr Colin Adam
Treasurer:	Mr Len Mitchell

On the 24th March, Col Alex Murdoch, Lt Col Roland Rose, Colin Gray, Colin Adam, John Smith, Joe Barton, Chris Thomas, Dave Ritchie, Jimmy Kidd and Bill Adamson attended the Fife Branch, Rhine Crossing Dinner at the Victoria Hotel, Kirkcaldy. The organisation, the menu, the hospitality, the banter and the entertainment were all first class. A huge vote of thanks to Bob Scott, George Wood, and all members of the Fife Branch who contributed in ensuring we all had a fantastic evening.

The Branch members who attended the Dedication Service for Charles Melvin VC held in Kirriemuir on Friday 21st April were delighted to support the Angus Branch especially as they were able to tuck into a fantastic buffet after the service.

The Branch monthly meeting on 30th April was immediately followed by a Service in the Congregational Church, Constitution Road, Dundee to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the City of Dundee Ex Services Association of which Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin is the President, Willie Barr is the Chairman and Colin Gray is the Secretary. As well as numerous Branch members we also had Major Ronnie Proctor and the City of Dundee Lord Provost, Bob Duncan in attendance.

Friday 5th May saw the Black Watch Club overflowing as over 100 friends and family of John J Smith MBE gathered to celebrate his 75th birthday. Although this was not an Association event it was greatly supported by many Association members.

On Saturday 6th May, the Edinburgh, Lothians' and Borders' Branch Al Basrah Dinner was attended by Lt Col Roland Rose, Willie Barr, Colin Gray, Chris Thomas, David Ritchie and Joe Barton. Another great night of fantastic food, banter and merriment both in the Scots Guard Club and the Apex Hotel.

The Regimental Reunion on 17 June was another event greatly supported by the Dundee Branch with many making it a full weekend of meeting up with auld pals and enjoying a wee drink or two.

On Saturday 1st July, Dundee held its Armed Forces Day with a substantial number of Branch members joining veterans from other Service Associations marching down Reform Street and taking part in the Parade on the City Square. Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin and the newly appointed City of Dundee Lord Provost, Ian Borthwick took the salute and inspected the veterans and cadets.

The Crieff Remembers Military Parade and Drumhead Service marking the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele was held in Crieff on 30 July and many Branch members proudly marched through the town before taking part in the Drumhead Service.

Saturday 2nd September saw Alfie Docherty, Colin Gray, John Smith, Chris Thomas and Stef Wojnarowicz representing the Dundee Branch at the Inter-Branch Games Day held in the Perth Ex-Servicemen's Club. Now Stef never actually represented the Branch as he volunteered to make up the numbers for the Highland Branch team who eventually won the event. We could say that they would never have won it without

one of our Branch members however, Stef's loyalty has been brought into question and he is still taking flak for it.

Branch members were in attendance at all of the Commemorative Services held at Balhousie Castle and again at our annual Battle of Loos Commemorative Service held in the Congregational Church, Dundee on Sunday 10th September. The Reverend David Taylor (Branch Chaplain) conducted this service.

The Angus Branch Standard Re-Dedication Service and Commemorative Service for Charles Melvin VC was held in Kirriemuir on Sunday 24th September and was supported by Branch members Col Alex Murdoch, Willie Barr, Jimmy Herd, John Smith and Colin Gray. Both the church service and graveside service were well attended by Association members and we were all treated to a fantastic lunch in the Airlie Arms Hotel.



*Some of the Dundee Branch members who attended the June monthly meeting.*



*The Dundee Branch Secretary, Colin Adam at the Fife Branch Rhine Crossing Dinner.*



*The Recce and Signals Platoon held a Reunion in the Queen's Hotel, Dundee on 16 June 2017.*

#### **EDINBURGH, LOTHIAN'S 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

The Edinburgh Lothians' and Borders' Branch have been very fortunate to be invited to represent The Black Watch at the Great War centenary events taking place at the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh Castle. On 8 April 2017, members attended the Battle of Arras Commemoration Service followed by Beating Retreat on the Castle Esplanade and Reception in the Great Hall. The presence of Association Branch Standard Bearers was very much appreciated and their steadiness on parade in very challenging weather conditions was admired by all.

The Royal British Legion Scotland hosted the ANZAC and Gallipoli Day Service on Tuesday 25 April 2017. Readings by representatives from Australia, New Zealand, Turkey and the Royal British Legion Scotland, set the tone for a very memorable and moving ceremony.

On 6 May 2017 Branch members and guests gathered in the Apex Hotel Haymarket for the annual Al Basrah Dinner. Lieutenant Colonel Julian McElhinney gave a short talk on his experience as Mortar Platoon Commander with the Black Watch Battle Group during Operation TELIC. Guests very much appreciated Pipe Major Alistair Duthie playing Regimental and Company tunes, which included the tune "Al Basrah" composed in Iraq and played for the first time as the Battle Group crossed the Line of Departure on Sunday 6 April 2003. The support from fellow Association members from Dundee, Fife and Perth was also very much appreciated and their company made the evening that little bit extra special.

Taking part in the annual Edinburgh Armed Forces Day Parade has now become a popular event. On Saturday 24 June 2017, Regulars, Reserves and Veterans marched from the Castle down the Royal Mile. On completion of the parade all in attendance were invited to a reception in the City Chambers, hosted by the Right Honourable Frank Ross, Lord Lieutenant and Lord Provost of Edinburgh.

Looking forward to future events, members will be attending the opening of the Garden of Remembrance in Princes Street Gardens followed by Wreath Laying at the Black Watch Monument on Sunday 12 November 2017. Planned social events for early in the new year are: Red Hackle Party on Saturday 13 January 2018 and the Al Basrah Dinner on Saturday 28 April 2018.



*Tam Dick, Micky MacDonald and Kenny Grant pictured at the Al Basrah Dinner.*



*Jim Dalrymple, Rory McIntyre and Phil Horwood enjoying each other's company.*

## FIFE BRANCH

Since the Rhine Crossing Dinner, the Branch has had a few engagements but nothing hectic. The obvious events such as Armed Forces Days were attended by members of the Branch with the Branch Standard to the fore. A special mention has to go to Rob Young who at the drop of a hat will represent the Branch both at home and abroad; he is a stalwart member of the Branch. In June we joined the unveiling of the plaque in the area of the old Queen's Barracks. We then formed up and marched to Balhousie Castle, where the annual festivities were celebrated. In July some Branch members supported the people of Crieff with their celebrations to commemorate the Battle of Passchendaele. From there it was back to our home in Perth the following day where The Great War Memorial Service was held and poppies added to the already decorated wall. Apart from the normal meetings of the Branch, we had a sad meeting in the village of Newtyle where we said our goodbyes to a dear friend and loyal member John Campbell. It was a sad day for the Branch.

In September we enjoyed our seventh Ladies Alma Lunch and it was celebrated by sixty of our members and their ladies. Rob Scott welcomed everyone and asked George Wood if he would lead the toast to the Ladies followed by Charles Quin who said Grace. The Lunch was finished when Mrs Sarah Young presented a bouquet of flowers to Mrs Florence Scott.

The Branch will have its bi-monthly meetings as normal and will continue to support other Branches with their events.

**Rob Scott**



*Fife Branch Members enjoying the Alma Lunch.*



*Mrs Florence Scott was presented with a bouquet of flowers by Mrs Sarah Young at the Alma Lunch.*

## HIGHLAND BRANCH

President:	WO1 (RSM) Kevin Stacey
Chairman:	Mr Joe Barbour
Vice Chairman:	Mr Donald Etherington
Secretary:	Mr Gordon Kennedy

The Branch has had a quiet spell but once again the Commanding Officer and the RSM kindly gave their permission for our annual Aberfeldy Dinner to be held in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess with 38 seated this year. It was a pleasure to have members of the Dundee Branch in attendance.

Unfortunately we have had to say goodbye to the following serving members who have left on postings, K Dowdles, R Tollan, G Cruickshanks and to P Trikovick who has completed his service and moved south.

Early September saw Gordon Kennedy and Alec Beattie travel to Perth for the inter Branch Games Day. Despite being two men short they recruited Alan McEwen (Chairman of the Perth Branch) and Stef Wojnarowicz (Dundee Branch) to make up the four man team resulting in a win for the Highland Branch. (Perth Branch is questioning their Chairman's loyalty). It was a great day out and we must give a special mention to Ally Alcorn who was superb in organising the day and evening.

October will once again see Donald Etherington and Alec Beattie climb aboard their trusted Harleys and make the long journey from Inverness to the National Memorial to participate in Ride to the Wall and lay a wreath on behalf of The Black Watch Association.

On functions it is hoped that we will soon be able to arrange a games night against other Associations in Inverness along with families from the Battalion although so far setting a date is proving difficult. December will be our last function of the year with the Christmas party being held on Saturday the 9th in the Community Centre Wimberley Way.

Monthly meetings continue to be held on the second Friday of each month commencing at 18.30 hrs in the Community Centre.



*Members of the Association including Lt Gen Sir Alistair Irwin, President of Royal British Legion Scotland pictured at Edinburgh Castle at the commemoration of the Battle of Arras on 8 April 2017.*



*The Highland Branch were the winning team at the Inter Branch Games Day held in Perth but needed the active support of Alan McEwen and Fred Wojnarowicz.*

### LONDON BRANCH

President:	Major General A L Watson CB
Chairman:	Major A A L Watson LVO
Vice Chairman:	Lieutenant Colonel T A Coles MBE
Secretary:	Lieutenant Colonel M Smith MBE

### Introduction

With the passing of the black months of winter it's refreshing to get a sniff of the warmer weather which brings a change of mood to the Branch members in London and the South. By the time these notes are published the Branch members will have had the opportunity to attend some of the more prestige events in and around London namely; Founders Day at the Royal Hospital and The Not Forgotten Society Garden Party in Buckingham Palace. It is very encouraging to see the Branch members rally to the muster ensuring that Red Hackles are in attendance at these prestige events.

### Royal Hospital Chelsea Founders Day Jun 17

HRH The Princess Royal was the Inspecting Officer at this year's event her last duty in this location being in 2008. It is a grand affair giving all attendees that opportunity to dress to impress; top hats and ladies floral arrangements are plentiful, and of course the regimental blazers are much in attendance. Founder's Day commemorates the day when Charles 11 created a hospice for his old soldiers who had been instrumental in restoring him to the throne. On December the 7th 1681 he issued a Royal Warrant for the foundation of a hospital for the relief of "such land soldiers as are; or shall be old, lame, or infirm in the services of the crown". The Hospital was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and took ten years to complete; the buildings were modelled on the Hotel des Invalides in Paris. Following his death the development work was continued by his son King James 11. It was James who commissioned the now familiar Scarlet Coat for the occupants of the Royal Hospital.

King Charles is remembered today as the founder and on this occasion the King's statue which stands in the centre of figure court is decorated with oak leaves to commemorate his escape from the Battle of Worcester in 1651 when he took refuge from his pursuers in an oak tree. On this day all In Pensioners also wear oak leaves; these are normally presented by the inspecting member of the Royal Family. On parade was our remaining In Pensioner John Nicol (wee Nick ex Mil band). In attendance was Frank and Mabel Siggers.

The invitations for this event normally fall to The London Branch however London Branch are more than happy to organise invitations for any regional Branch member who may want to attend this event.



*The Princess Royal was the Inspecting Officer on Founders' Day.*

### The Not Forgotten Association Garden Party Buckingham Palace

"The Not Forgotten Association" is a unique national tri-service charity which was founded in 1920 by Marta Cunningham CBE for the Ex Service Disabled and is active nationwide. The highlight which is when the Sovereign permits the use of the Palace grounds for the annual Garden Party. This year the veterans were hosted by Prince Harry who delighted all by talking to so many guests; the Association was represented by Chick Mackie and family and Bill Parr.

May I again extend an invitation to any Branch member who would like to attend this event; London Branch would be delighted to facilitate the administration to enable an invitation to be arranged.



*Bill Parr attended the Garden Party and met up with some Parachute Regiment friends.*

### The Association Albert Lunch 10 Aug

On 10 August twelve members sat down for lunch on a warm day for the annual Albert late summer lunch organized by the Branch Secretary. It was another enjoyable event.

### Looking Forward

The latter part of the year is always busy with the Act of Remembrance and our Branch annual dinner.

A large contingent will march at the Cenotaph this year with the hope that it is a precursor to the 2018 parade which will commemorate the end of the Great War.

### NEWCASTLE BRANCH

Chairman:	Mr Nick Turnbull
Secretary/Treasurer:	Mr Malcolm Dunn

On St Patrick's Day, a parade was held in Eldon Square at the Cenotaph. This had been organised by the Tyneside Irish Brigade Association and gave an opportunity for representatives of the governments of a number of countries involved in the Great War to pay their respects to the fallen. The Brigade, fighting as part of the Northumberland Fusiliers fought valiantly, particularly at the Somme. Following the ceremony refreshments were provided in the Irish Club.

The Branch was well represented at the Reunion in Perth. It was a little disappointing to see that only three Association members pre-

sent were wearing Korean medals. One of these, former Piper Bob Batchelor, had carried our former Chairman, Harold Dunn, to a dressing station when he received his first wound in July 1952. Given that this year will see the 65th anniversary of the Battle of the Hook, perhaps we should not be surprised by the sparsity of veterans capable of travelling to the Castle for a day of festivity.

We will be holding our Annual Dinner on the anniversary of the Battle of the Hook, the 18th November, and will commemorate that action as well as the end of the Battle of Passchendaele.

On 19th July, in response to an invitation from the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, our Secretary attended a reception hosted jointly by the Lord Mayor and the Acting Ambassador of the United States of America. The occasion was a commemoration of the centenary of the entry of the United States of America into the Great War. It was explained by the Ambassador, that the USA had spent a long time in the earnest consideration of which side in the conflict was on the side of righteousness and, having made that decision, lost no time in fulfilling their moral obligation.

Minden day is celebrated in Newcastle by the Fusiliers; naturally, the Tyneside Scottish Association, making use of their WW1 association with the Fighting 5th, paraded their Standard in support. We, as advocates of elasticity, extended the Tyneside Scottish/Black Watch connection to provide our own support and naturally partook in the ensuing festivities. Our members were made very welcome and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. Ian Alexander won one of the places in a group selected to "drink a rose".

Peter McAughy, one of our oldest members at 96, has been billeted in a care home for the last three years and has recently had a spell in hospital, following the contraction of a nasty infection. Massive doses of antibiotics got him out of his immediate problems and he is now back in his familiar accommodation. No doubt this will have taken a lot out of our old friend and he will have problems for some time as he struggles to recover. Tom Dignam, no spring chicken himself, having served in Korea, has been visiting Peter on a weekly basis ever since he had to give up his own home. He has reported that Peter is on oxygen and in very low spirits. Tom has taken on the role of maintaining contact with our sick members and has an extensive telephone network. Every Branch needs a Tom Dignam and we are indebted to ours.

**Malcolm Dunn**



*Bob Batchelor (on left), Tom Dignam and Jim Turpie enjoying the sun at the Regimental Reunion.*



*Bob Batchelor and Malcolm Dunn, two Korean War veterans who attended the annual Reunion.*

## PERTH BRANCH

President:

Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell

Chairman:

Captain Alan McEwen MBE

Secretary:

Ally Alcorn

Treasurer:

Frances Sandilands

Over the last few months the Perth Branch has had a very busy calendar both attending and organising Regimental events.

Firstly the Branch and its members would like to congratulate our Chairman, Captain Alan McEwen on being awarded the MBE; it was thoroughly deserved and we are very proud to have him as our Chairman.

The Branch and the Committee have been busy, organising the night before the Reunion Concert on the 16th of June and also the Annual Games Day event on the 2nd of September and also a Branch outing to the Highland Military Tattoo at Fort George. These events are run to build comradeship and to pull all Branches and veterans together and hopefully raise a few pennies for various charities; however the most important one for all of us is the Regimental Association. Both the Concert and Games Day events raised a total of £660. The Regimental Association will receive the majority of the money raised, however £100 has been donated to the Fire Brigade charity on behalf of the Perth Branch.

The Reunion Concert was held in the Perth Saints Club and providing a first class entertainment were Jock Menzies and Lee Fitzpatrick with a little help from Ally Alcorn. This gathering really gets the weekend of the Reunion started and for those who arrive early and stay over it is a focal point for everyone to gather and catch up; long may this continue.

We held the Games Day in the Ex Servicemen's Club in Perth and hopefully the next Branch to hold this event, can bring us together next year for what can be a great day of celebration and camaraderie. The Highland Branch won the event however to be fair they did have a couple of ringers in their team such as our Chairman and Fred Wojnarowicz of the Dundee Branch. Congratulations go to them and now we need to find a Branch to volunteer to do the event next year. I would like to thank everyone who donated to each of the events as well as Roy Brown, Winky Greer and Eddie Kulik for their assistance.



*Ally Alcorn and Eddie Kulik pictured at the Association Games Day held in Perth.*



*Mr Kenny Forbes presents a cheque from the Perth Branch to the Fire Brigade for their help in moving the 51st Highland Division Statue.*

### Highland Military Tattoo – Fort George

A number of Perth Branch members, their partners along with Anne Amos and Heather Edment from The Black Watch Association, Willie Barr (Dundee Branch Chairman) as well as a lively group of Royal Navy Association members had a great day out at the Highland Military Tattoo in Fort George on Saturday the 9th of September.

Thirty four of us departed from the Ex Servicemen's Club, Perth by coach at 9.00am and arrived at Fort George in good time for the gates opening to the public at 12.30pm. This allowed us to have a nice lunch in the Hospitality Marquee (included in the cost of our tickets) and have a wander around the Tattoo Village (traders' stalls) in the Fort. The Black Watch Battalion had a number of Infantry displays set up in front of the Officers' Mess for the public to interact with and so it was great to talk with Black Watch soldiers and get hands-on their tools of the trade; this included vehicles, equipment and weapon systems.

Taking our seats in the East Stand (the best seats in the house) the Tattoo literally exploded into life at 2.30pm. The Tattoo is fast becoming a 'must-see' event in the Scottish tourism schedule. 2017's Highland Military Tattoo offered a unique opportunity to immerse ourselves in the heritage and culture of the Scottish Highlands and Moray against the stunning backdrop of the spectacular 18th century fortress of Fort George.

In VisitScotland Year of History Heritage and Archaeology, the Tattoo programme celebrated the rich military heritage of Fort George, the Highlands and Moray. The tattoo not only showcased Scotland's rich culture and heritage but the work of our Armed Forces through the ages. We enjoyed an excellent mix of traditional and more contemporary acts, including, massed pipes and drums, highland dancing, competitions, vignettes and flypasts.

Alasdair Hutton, Highland Military Tattoo commentator said during his opening introduction that there was a slight risk of light rain during the performance...what he failed to mention was that there would be torrential driving rain sweeping in from the Moray Firth for the last forty five minutes of the Tattoo. Those of us who have lived and worked in Inverness and Fort George and experienced the

all year round weather pattern have come to learn that you rarely spend the day in Fort George and leave without getting rained on. So it was that soaking wet through but with high spirits that we bid a fond farewell to Fort George and the Highland Military Tattoo 2017 and headed back down the A9 towards Perth in search of a hot bath and a large dram.

'Haste ye back,'...but with an umbrella next time.

The Perth Branch also attended the dedication of the 51st Highland Division Memorial in May at Balhousie Castle as well as the unveiling of the Memorial to the old Queen's Barracks in June on Reunion day. The Branch attended the Passchendaele Parade in Crieff on 30th of July and memorial Service at Balhousie on the 31st. It has been a busy few months for the Branch and with the Croix de Guerre dinner coming up in October our Christmas festivities and our annual Burns Supper on the 10th of February 2018, we have so much to look forward to.

Sadly we lost a loyal member of the Branch as Dennis Gilzean, who was very active within the Branch died unexpectedly.



*Perth Branch members attended the Highland Military Tattoo at Fort George in September 2017.*



*The Massed Pipes and Drums at the Highland Military Tattoo.*



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