
No. 142

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November 2014

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*



His Royal Highness The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay meets soldiers of the Black Watch Battalion at the official opening of the Museum on 22nd July 2014.

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



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Editorial

May the 3rd 2014 was a day to remember for the over 300 members of the Regimental family who were able to attend the Service of Dedication at Black Watch Corner in Belgium. Serving and retired officers and their families and many Association members and their families, friends of the Regiment, Regular and Reserve soldiers of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, cadets and our Lord Lieutenants and Provosts all made a great effort to travel to Ypres and to join hundreds of local Belgians watch Major General AL Watson CB unveil the statue.

We are in no doubt that we have left behind a memorial that will be enjoyed by the many thousands of visitors to that sector of the Western Front but most importantly that The Black Watch Association has been true to the aspirations of its founding fathers. We have created a lasting memorial to the men of the Regular, Territorial and Service battalions of The Black Watch who gave their lives in the Great War.

At home, the culmination of seven years' work was celebrated on 22nd of July with the visit of His Royal Highness The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay to the redeveloped Balhousie Castle and Museum. As the Patron of the Appeal he had come to officially open the Museum, to unveil a specially carved commemorative stone and to plant the first of a number of trees to mark both his visit and to form a memorial Great War grove. The sun shone and several hundred people enjoyed a relaxed and memorable visit.

Running throughout the period the Black Watch Battalion has had as its main focus the delivery of training to the Libyan Armed Forces. Based at Bassingbourn Barracks in Cambridgeshire a large contingent of the battalion has been called upon to use tact, intelligence, maturity and cultural sensitivity to deliver the training programme. Running concurrently, the battalion has supported the Commonwealth Games, recruiting and other infantry battalions' overseas training.

The Museum, shop and café have had a busy summer and the Friends have been active organising events and outings in support of the Museum and just recently the Museum has been awarded Visit Scotland 5 Star Status.

This edition focuses on recording the detail of the event at Black Watch Corner so that those who were not able to go, can read the speeches and the address, so that whatever happens in the future there is an historical record of the day.

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

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

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

From 1 January 2013, bulk orders are supplied at a rate of £7 per copy. Individual copies are sent out to permanent subscribers, both in the UK and abroad, at a subscription rate of £14 annually for UK subscribers, £14 annually to Europe and £16 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, Home Headquarters, The Black Watch, 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 2014/2015

2014		
20 November	London Branch Nonne Boschen Dinner Victory Services Club	London
30 November	Stoke Branch to Birmingham Tattoo	
1 December	Angus Branch Christmas Drinks	RBL Forfar
20 December	Officers' Regimental Ball	Errol Park
2015		
10 January	Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Branch Ceilidh	Edinburgh
24 January	Angus Branch Burns Supper	RBL Forfar
30 January	Dundee Branch Red Hackle Dinner	Dundee
7 February	Perth Branch Burns Supper	Perth
11 March	London Branch AGM & Lunch	Wellington Barracks
20 March	Fife Branch Rhine Crossing Dinner	Kirkcaldy
26 March	Curling HLBCB Bonspeil	Perth
11 April	Angus Branch Spring Dance	RBL Arbroath
18 April	BW Association AGM	Perth
18 April	WOs & Sgts Dining Club AGM and Dinner	Inverness
9 May	Highland Branch Aberfeldy Dinner	
9 May	Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Branch "Al Basrah" Dinner	Edinburgh
22 May	Friends' Cocktail Party	Perth
27/28 May	HBC Spring Meeting – Golf	Panmure
6 June	Angus Branch Armed Forces Day	Arbroath
15 June	Officers' London Ladies Lunch	
	Caledonian Club	London
16 June	Golf v A&SH	Roxburghe
19 June	Regimental Golf Competition	Muckart
20 June	Regimental Reunion	Perth
21 June	Regimental Muster "Waterloo 200"	Aberfeldy
13 September	Fife Branch Alma Lunch	Kirkcaldy
13 September	Angus Branch Standard Rededication	(tbc)
25-27 September	Loos Centenary Weekend	Dundee
24 October	Angus Branch El Alamein Dinner	Perth
30 October	Officers' Gathering Dinner	Perth
6 November	Balhousie Castle Remembrance Service	Perth
14 November	Op BANNER Dinner	Perth
19 November	London Branch Dinner	
	Victory Services Club	London
19 December	Officers' Regimental Ball	(tbc)

CAPTAIN NIGEL LAUGHTON

Captain Nigel Laughton has recently been appointed as CEO of Pentathlon UK before the next Olympic Games in Brazil. He had previously been in charge of the British Skeleton Team in the recent Winter Olympic Games.

COMMISSIONING

Second Lieutenant Andrew Atterbury was commissioned into the

Royal Regiment of Scotland in May 2014 and William Kelly and Angus Bullen were commissioned in August 2014. They have all been posted to the 3rd Battalion.

BLACK WATCH CORNER STATUETTE

Readers are reminded that they can order a bronze resin copy of the Black Watch Corner Statue. It will be approximately 10 inches high and will cost about £250 plus VAT and postage and packing. To order a statue phone Kerry Caster at the Powderhall Bronze Factory on 0131-552-5999.

BATTALION SUB EDITOR

Major C M B Broadbent handed over the role of Battalion Sub Editor of the Red Hackle Magazine to Major J R P Bailey having been involved in preparing three editions of the magazine.

THE BLACK WATCH REGIMENTAL TRUST AND WAVELL TRUST

The Trustees for both Trusts are:

Chairman:	Brigadier G C Barnett
Trustees:	Major General M L Riddell-Webster
	Major General J M Cowan
	Colonel A Murdoch
	Major D J McMicking
	Captain C P Arbuthnott

The Regimental Trust was set up in 1957 with the purpose of applying funds to improve the efficiency, benefit or welfare of the Regiment. Since then a number of amendments have been made which give the Trustees the power to use the Trust Funds more widely. During 2013/14 the Trust expenditure included a grant to the Commanding Officer of The Black Watch Battalion's Private Fund, Red Hackle magazines for soldiers of the battalion, and final payments in respect of The Black Watch History and Pipe Book. The Trust also made a grant and a loan to The Museum Trust. In the future the Trustees plan to continue to support The Black Watch Battalion and make grants to the Museum Trust until the end of the period 2014/2015. Thereafter support to the Museum will depend upon income and capital available.

The Wavell Trust was set up in 1962 with the purpose of accommodating the Regimental Museum of The Black Watch and the Black Watch Association and using the premises as a Regimental Centre for the benefit of serving and past members of the Regiment and their friends, including a kitchen, cafe and lounge bar. There were not sufficient Funds to achieve this. Since then a number of amendments have been made which give the Trustees the power to use the Funds more widely. During 2013/2014 the major Trust expenditure was for grants to the Museum Trust. In the future the Trustees plan to support the Museum with the income from the Wavell Trust.

THE BLACK WATCH MUSEUM TRUST

The Trustees for the Trust are:

Chairman:	Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin
Trustees:	Major General M L Riddell-Webster
	Brigadier G C Barnett
	Lieutenant Colonel G Couser
	Captain Jamie Montgomery
	Captain James Watt
	Captain Angus Fergusson
	Mrs Emma Niven
	Mr Sean O'Reilly

The purpose of the Trust is, quite simply, to preserve the heritage of the Regiment by caring for and displaying the artefacts in our possession, by acquiring additional artefacts as appropriate and by caring for and making available for study the Regimental archives. The Heritage Appeal launched in 2008 led to the fulfilment of the ambitions of the Wavell Appeal launched in 1962. After a full year of operating, the redeveloped Museum, with its imaginative programme of events for all ages, together with its associated shop and café, has made an excellent start. The business plan forecast that we would run at a deficit for the first year or so and so it has proved. For the time being this is not a cause for alarm: the Trustees are confident that the future of the Museum (and therefore of the Association offices) is secure. But all concerned will have to continue the excellent work that has brought us this far. The bottom line is that if people come to visit and to spend money all will be well, so we encourage all members of the Regiment to do what they can to help, not least by encouraging friends and acquaintances to call in.

These notes are written in the wake of two highly significant events: the Royal Opening by HRH The Duke of Rothesay in July, putting the final seal on all that has been done since the launch of the Appeal six years ago; and the announcement in September of the award by Visit Scotland of 5 Star Status as a visitor attraction. This latter is an extremely difficult standard to achieve and everyone at Balhousie deserves a round of applause for this notable achievement. Well done to them all.

CONGRATULATIONS

To **Lieutenant Colonel N K G Tomkin** on his selection to command The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland in August 2016.

To **Major (for Lieutenant Colonel on assumption) J R McElhinney** to command 52nd Lowland, 6th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland in July 2016.

To **The Reverend Professor Norman Drummond** on the award of the CBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours List.

To **Dr Tom Renouf MM** on the award of the Legion d'Honneur.

LEGION D'HONNEUR

This French Order was established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte and is the highest decoration in France and is divided into five degrees. The order's motto is "Honour and Fatherland" and awards are made for excellent civil or military conduct.

Technically, membership in the Legion is restricted to French nationals. Foreign nationals who have served France or the ideals it upholds may receive a distinction of the Legion, which is nearly the same thing as membership in the Legion.

The Insignia of the Legion d'Honneur was presented to Dr Tom Renouf MM by Francois de Gaalen in the small village of Grandchamp in Normandy in the presence of the British Ambassador and many local dignitaries.

Monsieur de Gaalen was made a Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur in 1944 in recognition of courageous acts of sabotage he carried out when fighting with the French Resistance.

In August 1944, 5th Black Watch fought a bitter battle and suffered heavy casualties in capturing the twin hills of Grandchamp during the breakout by the Highland Division from Caen to Lisieux and Tom Renouf served with the battalion during this critical phase of the 2nd World War.

BLACK WATCH ASSOCIATION GOLF MEETING

By Major AM Stewart BEM

The annual Black Watch Association Golf Meeting was held at Muckhart Golf Club this year on 20th June. We had a very successful day with 37 players signed up although two were unable to attend. The number included 6 members of The Black Watch Battalion with whom we maintain good contacts. Some of our members travel considerable distances to take part. One from across the Irish Sea, one from England and one who had just returned from civil security duties in Afghanistan and took time out from his precious break to take part. The turnout was pretty much at capacity and it was great to see so many old and bold as well as some new members playing for the first time.

The competition was fierce as always but played in good spirit with a healthy amount of 'banter' (some might say abuse) thrown in. We were fortunate that the weather was tremendous and this helped enormously no doubt in producing some fine scoring. On a day like this, there are quite literally no losers. Everyone attending had a great time meeting up with old pals and enjoyed a fine days golf in the beautiful surroundings of the Ochils. Nevertheless, there are of course prize winners; the main winners this year were Billy Whytock (Best Gross), Stuart McCrae (Best Net) and Dave Smith (Best Stableford). In the afternoon, we played a 9 hole team Texas Scramble and the winning team was Mark Shearer, Craig Peters, David Jeffrey and Beab Laing. There were, of course, some novelty prizes but most worthy of mention was Mark Shearer who achieved a hole in one on the 4th hole on the Arndean Course. A great achievement, all the more remarkable given that it was his second this year!

There are, of course, people to thank for their support with the Regimental Golf. Firstly, the Regimental Association Trustees who



Dr Tom Renouf is presented with his Legion d'Honneur by Francois de Gaalen.



Stuart McCrae, Billy Whytock, Col Alex Murdoch Chairman of the Black Watch Association, Mr Simon Dunn from Sidey Ltd, Dave Smith, Major Alex Stewart Golf Convenor.

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 our sponsors. Sidey Ltd has been our headline sponsor for a number of years now and it is hard to imagine us going forward without them – their support has been invaluable and enables us to provide the prizes for the competition. Thirdly, a more silent, but just as welcome sponsor is Falcon Food Services who are based in Stirling. And finally, the golfers themselves. As stated previously, many travel great distances to take part and a few (quietly in the background) provide additional prizes to support the day. All are welcome, and if they come bearing gifts, even more so!

The event has become 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 19th June 2015. This is an excellent days golf with full catering and can be enjoyed by Black Watch Association members and serving members of 3 SCOTS. Full details are contained at <http://www.societygolfing.co.uk> by going to Access your Society area and entering the username 'blackwatch' and the password 'fortytwa'. Anyone who is not already listed as a member on this site, but would like to play, or just to be added for future years should get in touch with Maj (Retd) Alex Stewart at akstewart42@btinternet.com.

HIGHLAND BRIGADE GOLFING SOCIETY AND BLACK WATCH GOLF

By Captain Bruce Osborne

The highlight of 2014 was the Society Two day Spring Meeting held at Panmure Golf Club in June. On the first day The Black Watch fielded 11 golfers split into two teams for the Martin Holt Cup which the Black Watch "A" team won. On the second day the Fort George Cup was contested in foursomes which was won by the Highlanders' team.

On the 17th June, 19 golfers assembled at Kinross to play in the annual match between The Black Watch and The Argylls, which was won for the second year running by The Argylls. Their win was some-

what influenced by the presence of Alexander Stewart, son of David who playing with Iain Satterthwaite accumulated 46 Stableford points, playing off a combined average handicap of 8.

In 2015, The Argylls match is moving by invitation of the Argylls to the Roxburghe Club and is to be held on 16 June 2. The Roxburghe will be a new experience to most Black Watch golfers and it is hoped that some new and may be younger faces will be seen.

In 2015 the Society meeting will be held at Panmure on 27/28 May and for the first time the Lowland Brigade antecedent regiments have been invited to play a composite team and it is hoped that serving officers from the Royal Regiment of Scotland will want to play as well. Inevitably, as time goes by the number of golfers may dwindle unless there is an injection of younger players to the Society. In addition to the Spring Meeting, the Society holds matches at St Andrews, Panmure, Montrose, Nairn, Prestwick and in England at The Berkshire and West Sussex. The full fixture list is issued by the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Club and anybody wishing to play in any match is encouraged to contact the respective match managers.

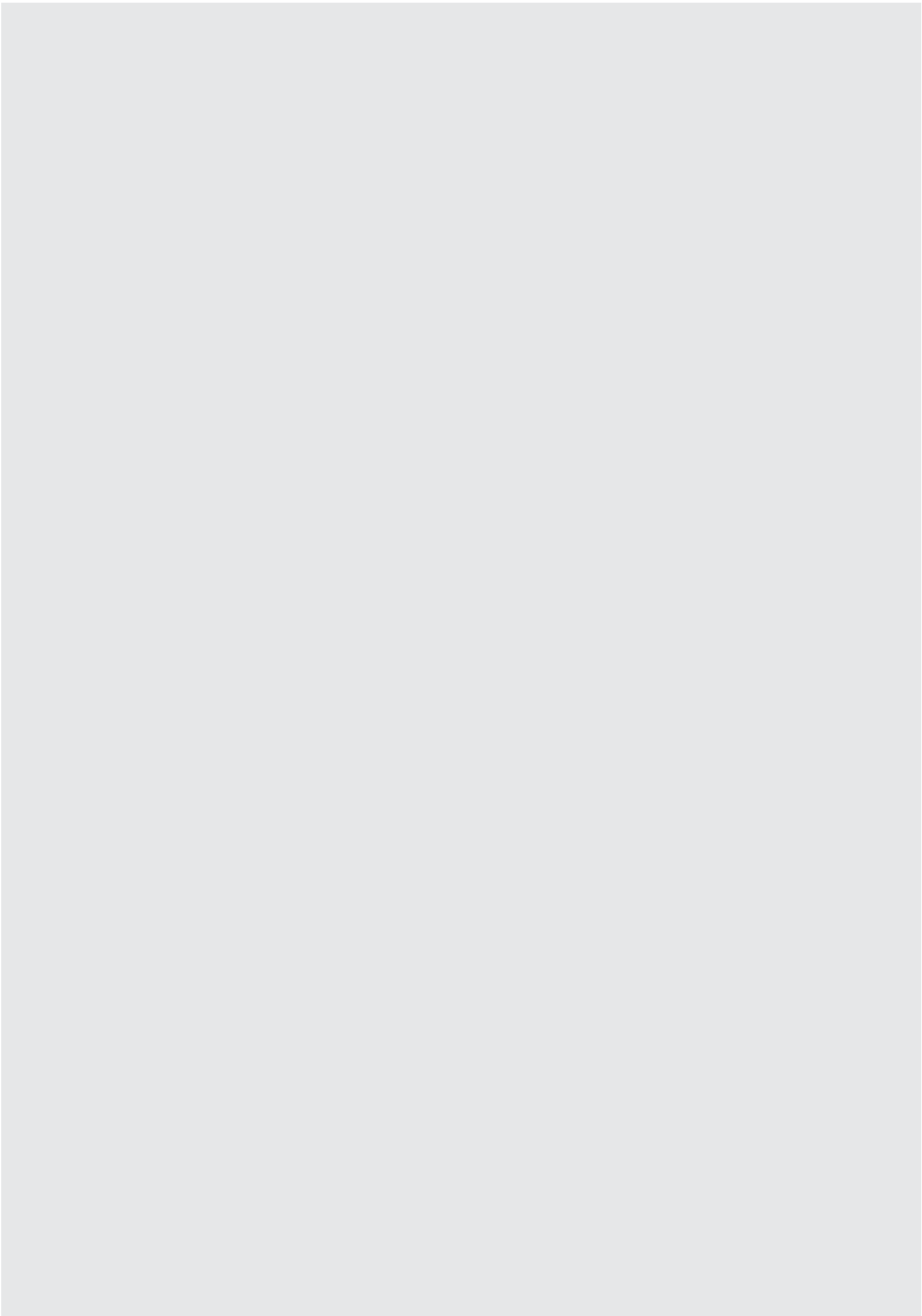
CURLING

By Major JMK Erskine MBE

The summer months are quiet as far as curling is concerned but the reminder by the editor to submit articles for the November edition of the Red Hackle acts as a spur to start planning the forthcoming season.

The Regiment has a number of regular curlers but new ones are always welcome. It is a sport in which people of any standard can join in and so anyone who is interested in curling is asked to inform Jamie Erskine. While the Regiment plays its matches to win, there is another equally important reason to curl. It is a very good way of seeing old friends from the Regiment, from other Scottish regiments and elsewhere. This season the matches are:

14 Nov 14 – BW v A and SH (3 rinks)
 Jan 15 (date tbc) BW v HLDERS (2 rinks)
 4 Feb 15 – HLBCC v The New Club
 12 Mar 15 – HLBCC v QBGS (RCA)
 26 Mar 15 – HLBCC Bonspiel (3 rinks).



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

FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH

By Sarah Riddell-Webster

The staff of Balhousie Castle and The Friends have had a busy six months since I last penned an article for the Red Hackle. Our membership numbers continue to grow steadily with many of our newer Friends coming from Perth and with no previous connection to The Black Watch. It is great to see the Friends organization fulfilling its role of giving those who are interested in The Black Watch Castle and Museum a chance to be involved and supportive in a way they could not have been in the past. Despite attracting Friends with no Black Watch connections, we still very much welcome those from within the Black Watch family. Those who have served with the Regiment have so much to offer to the Museum and the Friends. You are the 'living history' of the Museum and I am sure our newer Friends would welcome the opportunity to talk to you about your time in the Regiment and to hear firsthand about the campaigns you were involved in wherever that may have been.

The Friends continue to give financial support to the museum on a regular basis, mainly through the financing of the Special Exhibitions. The 'Artist in the Archive' was one of the most interesting and innovative exhibitions that I have seen. I was lucky enough to attend the lecture given in August by Richard McKenzie, the museum archivist and Robin Leishman the artist, about the Artist in the Archive project and exhibition. I had assumed that Robin would look through the many artefacts kept on the rolling racking in the archive store and be inspired to paint from the objects he saw. How very wrong I was. It never occurred to me that he would spend weeks with Richard reading letters and being inspired from single lines in some of those letters. We have all heard the expression 'Artistic License', but it does not apply to this project. Richard and Robin are both sticklers for detail and accuracy. Having got the inspiration for a picture from a line in a letter, and following some

initial outline sketches, Richard and Robin would start working out the detail. How many buttons can you actually see on the cuff of a sleeve when a man is writing a letter by a dying candle? What pose does a weary soldier have when sitting in the bottom of a trench having a cigarette? With the use of uniforms, rifles and other objects from the archive, along with a modern day camera and a couple of willing volunteers, they pieced together the detail so that the pictures you saw in the exhibition, although painted this year, are absolutely real to the terrible time that they depict. The pictures tell of the side of war that is often captured by camera but rarely expressed on canvas. Some of Robin's paintings are still available to buy from the Museum. I was delighted that The Friends were in a position to be able to support this inspired exhibition.

It is difficult in one article to be able to tell you all that the Friends have been doing this year. However, the Friends' newsletter, which is published each autumn, is full of articles telling of our busy and varied year. The newsletter can be seen in Balhousie Castle or read on line at www.the-blackwatch.co.uk. If you are a member of the Friends, you will receive a copy through the post. As an organization the Friends is now entering its fifth year. The membership fee has not changed in all that time and there is now a very full programme of events run by both the Friends and the Museum for you to attend. Remember your membership fee, which if you are a signed up member of The Black Watch Association is only £12 per year, gets you a third off ticket prices for most events and a 10% discount in the café and shop. For a full program of events for the coming months look at the website or pick up a calendar from the museum.

MUSEUM NOTES

FIRST WORLD WAR COMMEMORATIONS

Our First World War commemorations began with the well-received *Artist in the Archive* exhibition, which ran until September. Artist



Commemorative mural created by visitors.

Robin Leishman was on hand during our Festival of Museums event in May to lead a mural-making session in the Education Room and the result is a lasting testimonial to the War created by our visitors.

An integral part of the First World War commemorations at the Museum is a Memorial Wall in the grounds. The Black Watch First World War Memorial Wall project will focus on the heritage of The Black Watch in the First World War, and the ramifications of that War on the Regiment, specifically that we – as a Nation, as a community – now remember those who fell in battle, and recognise the contribution they made. From 3 September 2014 and throughout the First World War centenary, a cross will be hung on the Wall for each soldier killed on that day. The names will be read out and the crosses hung during a ceremony at 11am every day during the rest of the centenary period. The Memorial Wall project has been made possible through funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for Scotland, and the support of The Black Watch Association, the Lady Haig Poppy Factory and the Guildry Incorporation of Perth.

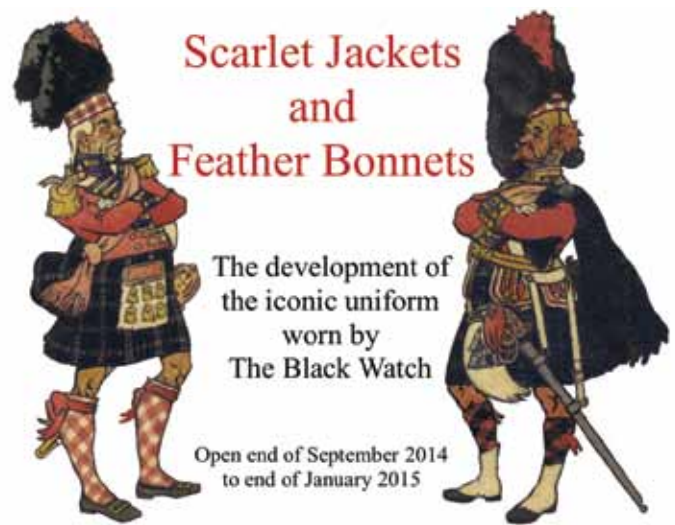
As well as almost daily memorial services, we'll be running numerous other events throughout the centenary period – keep an eye on our events pages on the website for full details.

ROYAL OPENING

The seven year project to redevelop Balhousie Castle came to a right royal culmination on 22nd July 2014 when HRH The Duke of Rothesay, the appeal Patron, came to see for himself the result of all the hard work by so many people. On a baking hot day over two hundred invited guests assembled at the Castle to greet His Royal Highness. Amongst them were the Provost and Chief Executive of Perth Council, especially generous donors, representatives of the architects and builders, members of the Association, Friends and the staff and volunteers, as well as near neighbours of the Castle in Hay Street. It was particularly good to see in uniform so many serving members of the Royal Regiment of Scotland and the Army Cadet Force. His Royal Highness was welcomed on his arrival by the Lord Lieutenant of Perth & Kinross and by Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin, Chairman of Trustees of The Black Watch Museum Trust. Led by Major Steven Small and Pipe Majors Alistair Duthie and Scott Taylor the Duke moved through the Wavell Gates to the Museum entrance through a crowd of well-wishers including children from a local nursery school. After meeting the Trustees, the Chief Executive and members of staff, the Duke toured parts of the new Museum and its visitor facilities. Expertly guided by Emma Halford-Forbes, the Museum Manager, the Royal Colonel passed from gallery to gallery, meeting museum staff and volunteers. Of perhaps particular interest were the collection's artefacts relating to his Bowes-Lyon relatives, who served and were killed during the First World War. Towards the end of the tour of the galleries the Duke met our artist in residence, Robert Leishman, and viewed his exhibition. The tour concluded with a brief inspection of the education room where young visitors were keen to show off their activities. His Royal Highness then spent some time meeting invited guests both in the café and outside in the bright sunshine. He seemed to make time for everyone and all of us greatly appreciated the obvious interest that he took in meeting us all. As the visit came to its end the Duke, to great applause, unveiled the commemorative stone at the Museum entrance, newly carved to mark the occasion. Pipe Majors Duthie and Taylor then presented the Duke with Copy No 1 of the special de-luxe edition of *The Collection of Black Watch Pipe Music*. With time now getting very short, the Duke was invited to plant a tree to mark both his own visit and the start of the Great War centenary commemorations. The tree, a Sorbus aria (Whitebeam) was kindly provided by Captain James Hepburn-Scott and will be joined by four others during the course of the centenary years to form a memorial Great War Grove. To plant the tree His Royal Highness used the spade first used by HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother to plant a commemorative tree in Montgomery Barracks Berlin in July 1987 to mark her 50th anniversary as our Colonel-in-Chief. A memorable visit came to end with the Royal Colonel being given three cheers called by Major Ronnie Proctor and being piped away to his next engagement by Pipe Major Grisdale of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland. For all those privileged to have been there it was a very special occasion which will long be remembered by us all.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

Our latest temporary exhibition – *Scarlet Coats and Feather Bonnets* – opened at the end of September. The exhibition will look at the development of the iconic uniform worn by the Regiment through uniform, art and photographs.



Scarlet Coats and Feather Bonnets – the latest Museum exhibition.

LEARNING AND EVENTS

The Pipes and Drums of The Black Watch played at the Castle and Museum in May this year in the Copper Beech Cafe. It was a terrific event, the proceeds of which raised funds for the framing of the Sid Lunn medal collection. The Museum is extremely grateful for the generosity of Pipe Major Richard Grisdale and the pipers and drummers of the Battalion in giving their time for this cause.

The Museum learning programme has received fantastic interest from schools in the Regimental area as the First World War Centenary begins. This winter will bring learning opportunities for people of any age in the form of family workshops, lectures and more with a focus on the events of 1914-18.



The Pipes and Drums concert in full swing.

Royal Opening of the New Museum

22 July 2014







Poppy Magnet

£ 3.25



Poppy Mug

£ 9.99



2014 Christmas Card

Picture on front is "The Highlanders' Farewell"
by Hugh Cameron RSA (1835-1918)

£ 0.65 each

Red Hackle Whisky

£ 25.00



Glen Moray 16yr Single Malt

£ 39.95

10 % off all orders*

Enter **rh1014** as a discount code in our web shop ,
quote it over the phone or at point of sale in store.

* Not including postage costs, friends memberships pipe book, or museum admissions.

Prices were correct at time of going to print.

The Passion Poppy Collection



Large Brooch

£ 20.95

Medium Brooch

£ 18.95



Small Brooch

£ 11.95

Necklace

£ 19.95



Classic Tote Bag

£ 120.00

Officers Regimental Tweed Collection



iPad Mini Case

£ 26.50



Buckle Bag

£ 110.00



iPad Case

£ 48.00



Mini Messenger Bag

£ 180.00

The Peace Poppy Collection

Large Brooch

£ 20.95



Medium Brooch

£ 18.95

Small Brooch

£ 11.95



Necklace

£ 19.95



Correspondence

Brian Stewart CMG
Crieff

Dear Editor

RAURAY VISIT 2014

In July 2014 I found myself, at ninety-two years old, once again in the middle of a field near Rauray in Normandy where, seventy years ago on July 1st 1944, I was fighting with the 1st Battalion Tyneside Scottish, The Black Watch (RHR), during a day-long battle, which defeated a formidable Panzer Group bent on charging through between the 49th and 15th Divisions.

The Tyneside Scottish, already battered in previous actions, suffered huge casualties but held the 'line' and the Regiment received a Battle Honour. The Rifle Companies did magnificently and our six anti-tank guns destroyed at least ten German tanks during the battle, earning a Military Medal for Sergeant Watson who, after the rest of his gun crew had become casualties, manned his own gun single-handed until he ran out of ammunition. He was credited with five 'kills'.

At 0500hrs on 1st July 1944 I had watched the Panzers advancing through the morning mists and, since the Anti-tank Platoon commander had been badly wounded, I was now in command, busy visiting our six guns, delivering ammunition, evacuating casualties and so on. Occasionally I bumped into my friend Ken Buchanan whose 3" mortars fired over two thousand bombs that day; the mortar barrels were almost red hot.



The author at the Fontenay-le-Pesnel War Cemetery.



French Veterans at the 49th Division Fontenay-le-Pesnel Memorial.

When I returned this July it was difficult to believe that this peaceful field, with its remaining bocage (hedges), had seventy years before been the scene of a savage battle; bloated carcasses of cattle all round, Rauray village a blackened ruin behind the crash of shells, the crump of mortar bombs, the rattling of machine guns and the din of battle all round.

But this day was memorable for different reasons. There were French and Black Watch elements in the party assembled to commemorate the battle. The French brought four local Mayors displaying their tricolour sashes and twelve heavily bemedalled French veterans, survivors of French battles in Vietnam and Algiers, proudly carrying banners. The British party included officers and men who had once served in the Tyneside Scottish and a large contingent of Cadets, all wearing their Red Hackles, and two pipers. It also included my family party of my son Rory who once, like me, was the proud possessor of a commission in The Black Watch, and is now a MP and Chairman of the Defence Select Committee, together with my wife and daughter.

The event owed much to the effort of Kevin Baverstock whose father was at the Battle of Rauray. Kevin has for fifteen years tended the flame of remembrance and nourished the links between us and the Normans. We owe him a huge debt of gratitude, not least for his successful book "Breaking the Panzers" which, mainly using the memories of all ranks and lavishly illustrated with some outstanding maps, gives so effective an account of the battle that the book is on the shelves of the Anglophone military staff colleges of the world.

I was proud and humbled to be present, as the last surviving officer and possibly even the last survivor, who had taken part in the Battle of Rauray and delighted to hear on my return to Scotland that the French are going to award the Legion d'honneur to veterans of the Normandy invasion.

Brian Stewart

Arthur Simmonds
28 Wain Drive
Trent-Vale
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire ST4 5LY

Dear Editor

MONTE CASSINO

You may be interested to see a photograph taken in May 2014 when I joined a visit of veterans to Monte Cassino. His Royal Highness Prince Harry joined British and Polish veterans commemorating their bravery and sacrifice during the capture of Monte Cassino.

Arthur Simmonds



Arthur Simmonds in a group meeting His Royal Highness Prince Harry at Monte Cassino in May 2014.

Peter White
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Of those Members
Of "The Watch"
Who took the low road
Home to Scotland

Dear Editor

BLACK WATCH CORNER

I have just returned from a visit to Ypres where I was delighted to see the newly erected statue at Black Watch Corner. It is absolutely stunning and those who visualised it and were responsible for its creation and erection in Ypres should be congratulated. It was sheer genius to place the figure at the top of such a tall plinth as it is now unmissable. Indeed my last sighting was from some distance away from the motorway when en route to Amsterdam and the ferry home.

On a visit last year we endeavoured to find Black Watch Corner but were unsuccessful. Now we know that we had actually parked on the opposite side of the road without being aware of it. This year it was unmissable and mini buses, cars, cyclists and walkers stopped to admire the statue and to read the information recorded.

The Committee and of course the sculptor deserve many congratulations for creating such a wonderful memorial to the men of the regiment who made the supreme sacrifice a century ago.

Peter White

PS: I have for some time been intrigued by the idea expressed in the song "Bonny Loch Lomond" where the man sentenced to death addresses his friend who has been freed:

Oh ye'll take the high road
And a'll tak the low road
And a'll be in Scotland afore ye

Indicating that any Scot will return in spirit to home. So on the cross that we placed at the foot of the statue we wrote:

In Fond Memory

Balhouse Castle
Perth

Dear Editor

CAPTAIN GEORGE OGILVIE

Over the past few years I have been privileged to correspond with Captain George Ogilvie CD who lives in Canada. I cannot remember how our letter writing came about but we exchange letters around three or four times per year.

George who celebrated his 93rd birthday earlier this year tells me that he had a good birthday and enjoyed steak, lobster and all the trimmings.

George enlisted into the Regiment before WW2 and was posted to the Second Battalion; he served in Maryhill Barracks and then moved to Palestine and remained with the battalion throughout the war and was Pipe Corporal in the Pipes and Drums under Pipe Major Rab Roy serving in Somaliland, Crete, Syria, Tobruk, India and Burma and latterly in the Indian Sub Continent.

He later emigrated to Canada where he settled and joined the Canadian Armed Forces.



Captain George Ogilvie, a Black Watch veteran enjoys his 93rd birthday in his local Royal Canadian Air Force Club.

R J W Proctor

Obituaries

MICHAEL BRETHERTON

The Daily Telegraph recorded the death of Michael Bretherton who died on the 15th of March 2014. He was granted an Emergency Commission in September 1946 and he relinquished it in 1953. He served with the 2nd Battalion in Pakistan and later served in 21st SAS/Artists Rifles.

MAJOR GEORDIE COX

Major Geordie Cox, a veteran of the Battle of Monte Cassino veteran, died in August 2014 and an obituary will be published in the May 2015 edition of the Red Hackle

LIEUTENANT IAN ROBERT GRANT-SUTTIE

Ian was born on 3rd December 1926 the son of Colonel H F Grant-Suttie, CBE, DSO, MC, RA whose ancestor was Major George Donald Grant-Suttie who was commissioned into The Black Watch in January 1899 and was Adjutant of the 1st Battalion in March 1909 and served in the regiment until retirement in 1920.

Ian was educated at Wellington College where he was a Dormitory Prefect and was Captain of Fencing for the years 1943 and 1944, and leaving in that year to enlist. He gained an Emergency Commission in the regiment on 28th September 1945 and soon thereafter joined the 4th Battalion at Swansea prior to sailing on 6th December 1945 by troop ship to the Middle East.

He served in Egypt and Palestine with the battalion until its disbandment at Kassassin on 19th March 1946 and then volunteered to serve in Palestine with the 6th Airborne Division (in the hope, like eight brother officers, that this would facilitate acceptance by the airborne 2nd Battalion in India). Three of these officers as potential regular officers – Critchley, Grant-Suttie and Cowper-Coles- were released in early 1946 to embark at Port Said on a troop ship for India. On board they joined Captain Irwin, MC.

Ian was always intensely interested in the places he visited especially their geography and history. He was fascinated by General Allenby and made great efforts to “walk his course”. He wanted to swim in the Dead Sea and cross the Jordan – he achieved the former but was prevented from attempting the latter.

In Cairo, Ian suggested that three of us should climb a pyramid. The one at Giza has a flat stone on top and is therefore unclimbable – however, he, I and Geoffrey Cowper-Coles started to scramble up the lower “sugar cube” reaches (dressed in the kilt, short sleeves and Sam Browne belts). We were followed by a bus-load of WRAF girls on a tourist trip to see the sights. The “sugar lumps” of stone are some four or five feet cubes and proved a fatiguing climb and an indecorous descent. Imagine our shame on reaching ground level to find the Colonel of the Regiment, General Wauchope watching us moving forward to speak to us, with his guide for his visit, Major “Tiny” Burton who was in the British Military Mission to the Egyptian Army. They were charming and chose to ignore our hackle-coloured cheeks.

Ian joined the 2nd Battalion in Karachi on 19th April 1946 and served in Peshawar, Cherat and Malir; he was trained in peace-keeping duties and hill warfare. He viewed the Khyber Pass and the North West Frontier Province. On leaving for demobilisation, he went on an attachment to the Viceroy’s House and because his troop ship was delayed for engine troubles, he was appointed a temporary ADC. The day of his departure the vice-regal cortege escorted him and his belongings down to the ship causing quite a stir as everyone thought it was someone of importance coming on board! The bearers’ faces fell as they went from deck to deck until they found Ian’s hammock way below!

He was awarded the 1939-1945 War Medal and the General Service Medal with Clasp “Palestine 1945-1948”.

After demobilisation, he studied at the Sorbonne (and was awarded a Diploma in French Culture) and at New College, Oxford, gaining a Master’s Degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics. When Rowley Tarleton and I were in Duisburg with the 1st Battalion we made frequent visits to Paris and realising that Ian was at the Sorbonne decided



to look him up. Where to start? We went to the student quarter and accosted likely looking girls and were pointed to a garret window high above us. Several stones later Ian’s head appeared shouting “qui va la”? Pigeon French “La Garde Noir, mon vieux” and we were on his bistro guided tour.

He then spent nearly ten years with the International Monetary Fund and was made an Officier de L’Ordre de Merite Centrafricain. In 1951 Ian married Juliet Sutton, whose grandmother was a Munro of Lindertis, joined Stewarts and Lloyds in Glasgow and then Calcutta. They had two sons and two daughters. After a short time back in London they left in 1956 for Southern Rhodesia to farm but as an academic rather than a farmer he returned to industry before becoming Economic Adviser to the Bank of Rhodesia and Nyasaland until it was disbanded living in what is now Harare.

Soon after returning to London in 1967 he joined the International Monetary Fund in Washington as an economist with special knowledge of Africa.

On retirement they moved to Woodstock, Vermont having always thought he would return to Scotland. He had recently returned to Washington where he died on 5th March 2014.

This gifted man of the Regimental family served with an Emergency Commission, at a turbulent period, in operations in the Middle East and in India and benefitted from the experience, his education and his ability to make lasting friends. He was sad that he couldn’t attend Regimental functions in Scotland but was always proud of his service.

Colonel I R Critchley

MAJOR STEWART HAMILTON

Stewart Hamilton died on 5th May 2014 aged 69. He had joined the 6th/7th Battalion aged 17 and eventually commanded K Company 1st/51st Highland Volunteers. He completed his TA Service as OC Edinburgh UOTC.

Tim Usher recalls; I first met him when he was a newly joined subaltern in 6th/7th Battalion, The Black Watch and I was his Adjutant. He was one among a splendid body of erudite young men reading, variously, law and classics at St Andrews and other universities. Stewart was doing chartered accountancy and was no less erudite than his classical companions.

I remember him as an energetic enthusiast with a good, strong personality and voice and as someone who constantly sought challenges. One such was to visit Poland, while the Iron Curtain was still up and where he had the misfortune to fall down some steps and break his leg. I can vaguely remember contacting the appropriate military authority about this and the net result was that he was quickly spirited back to UK.

Some years later, when I was no longer a soldier and was working in Edinburgh, I received a nasty letter from the Inland Revenue threatening dire financial penalties for not submitting a tax return. Being a wage earner under PAYE and having no other source of untaxed income, I had thought that the Revenue already had its share of my income and that was all there was to it.

Panic set in, so I sought out Stewart who, by then, had his own accountancy practice. He was marvellously unconcerned by my woes, telephoned someone in the Revenue while I was sitting in front of him. Briskly (politely) told whoever it was to back off and that he, Stewart Hamilton, was now handling the matter.

A few days later, he summoned me, told me that the Revenue owed me rather more than the penalty with which they had threatened me and advised me to pay more attention in the future. “However”, he said, “I owed you that for getting me back from Poland so quickly. I thought that they would lock me up”.

His parting shot was, “There is as fine, charming and courageous a body of men who, almost without exception, in my short experience, go jelly-kneed when in the presence of the Revenue.” “Who?” I asked. His reply was “Regular Black Watch Officers!”.

As his life went on, he gradually abandoned private practice to concentrate on European Tax Laws in which subject he became a visiting lecturer at IMEDE, the Business School in Switzerland. The fact that



he attained the rank of Professor and finished up with the resounding tag of "Emeritus" is proof enough of a life of high endeavour.

Tim Usher

MAJOR SANDY WHITE

Major Sandy White died on 3rd May 2014. He was a National Service Officer who served with the 2nd Battalion in British Guiana and then joined the 6th/7th Battalion. Tim Usher became Adjutant in 1964 and recalls that Sandy was OC Headquarter Company along with the other company commanders, Andrew Wedderburn-Bethune, Ian Macrae, Malcolm Gomme-Duncan and David Murdoch all under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Fortune who was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel Colin Stroyan.

He was, I believe, managing director of Eliot Automation in Glenrothes at that time and thereby hangs a tale.

For our last camp as a Territorial Army Battalion, Colin Stroyan and Bruce Hamilton, who was the Training Major, planned a most ambitious wind-up exercise which involved sending the Rifle Companies across the grain of the mid west of Scotland, attacking defended positions up steep hills and finding some way across the lochs which lay between the mountain ridges. We all met up on the Mull of Kintyre and at least half the battalion were given a ride down the coast in Hovercraft before carrying out a battalion attack at dawn on Machrihanish Airfield.

Into the middle of this advance and with all the companies separated by mountains came our Brigadier who just happened to be another illustrious Black Watch man, Nigel Noble. He came to Battalion HQ where Sandy was in charge. The Brigadier looked at his map, saw the topography and enquired if he could speak with Andrew Wedderburn whose D Company were toiling through a glen some miles to the north. He knew very well that the "31" sets in use at the time had no capability for going over or around mountains but was surprised when Sandy gave him earphones and a speaker saying "Andrew is on the line".

Sandy had deployed some bits of equipment from his own workshop which, if they ever did, would not have been due for military use for years to come!

It was very nice for me that Sandy, along with a few others of 6th/7th Battalion Black Watch were regular attendees at the Perth dinner. I never really followed Sandy's further career other than to be aware of a continuing spirit of entrepreneurship, not all ventures being a howling success but he always seemed cheerful and relaxed when I saw him. He will be missed.

Tim Usher

ROBERT BELL

Bob Bell was born on 13th January 1915 and died on 1st August in his 99th year.

He was Chairman of the Dundee Branch of the Association at a difficult time when the Red Hackle Club was closed. He oversaw the move of meetings and functions to The Royal Naval Association in Dundee where they enjoyed a friendly welcome and full use of the premises. Eventually differences with The Black Watch Club were resolved and the Branch meetings and functions moved to Arthurstone Terrace where a mutually beneficial relationship has endured.

He was a pupil at Morgan Academy, then during the 2nd World War he served in The Black Watch. He was then an accountant with Wallace Land o'Cakes at their Dura Street office until he retired in 1980.

His connection with The Black Watch continued after the war when



he served on the Committee and as Treasurer at the Red Hackle, The Black Watch Association Club in Dundee, and he served on the Association's Executive Committee at Balhousie Castle.

Through his work at Wallace he became Treasurer for many years of the Scottish Bakery Students' Association and was made a life member of their English equivalent.

As a member of the Bakers' Incorporation, the premier of Dundee's Nine Trades, he was elected Boxmaster (Treasurer) and then Deacon of the craft and was also a member of the Tailors' Craft.

He was Scoutmaster with the 44th St Salvador's Church Troop and he married Dorothy in 1939. He was also a Dundee supporter. Robert is survived by his daughter Dorothy who lives in the USA, son Kenneth in Perth and daughter Anne, in New Zealand.

Alex Murdoch

RONALD CAIRNS

Ronald Cairns died in Australia on the 27th August 2014 aged 76.

Born in January 1939 in Errol, Perthshire Ron attended the local school and on leaving was employed as a fisherman however his ambition had always been to join the Army and he enlisted into The Black Watch in March 1958. On the completion of his training at Queens Barracks he was posted to the 1st Battalion which was then stationed in Cyprus and attended a Pipe Cadre where his natural talent for playing the instrument shone through. At the end of the cadre he became a member of the Pipes and Drums and took part in many engagements throughout the world including Turkey, Greece, Canada and USA.

On return to UK in 1961 the battalion was stationed at Warminster as Demonstration Battalion and it was from there that the Pipes and Drums, Regimental Band and Dancing Team prepared for their trip to North America in 1963.

The bands visited Canada and USA and played to packed audiences throughout in high profile places such as Madison Square Gardens and then they were invited to play at the Whitehouse. The concert for some 1,700 underprivileged children was hosted by President J F Kennedy and the First Lady, Mrs Jaqueline Kennedy.

Ron was greatly impressed when President Kennedy accompanied by the Secretary of State Dean Rusk hopped on their bus and thanked them all for their excellent performance and shook everybody by the hand. Little did the pipers think that they would be called back to play at the President's funeral some ten days later.

The First Lady was so impressed by the performance at the Whitehouse that she personally requested that Black Watch Pipers play at her husband's funeral and this was the first and only time that non US Forces have taken a leading part in a President's funeral.

Only nine pipers were selected out of the twenty four on the tour and Ron was one of the nine. Of that group of nine only Bruce Cowie, originally from Dundee but who now lives in Kirriemuir, is still alive.

The Pipes and Drums continued their hectic schedule with performances on the Edinburgh Tattoo and other high profile events but in 1964 Ron decided to leave the Army for a more settled life but joined the TA where he served until 1966.

In 1966 Ron and his wife Florence and their five boys decided to emigrate to Australia where their daughter was born. He found employment straight away and worked his way up the promotion ladder to become a foreman and eventually retired in 1987.

He continued his piping and was Pipe Major of the Elizabeth Pipe Band and later helped form the Gawler Pipe Band. Ron and Florence enjoyed travelling around Australia in their caravan and made many overseas trips including Scotland.

Ron was a kind, thoughtful and gentle man who will be missed by all those who had the pleasure of knowing him. Our sympathies are extended to his family.

R J W Proctor

ROBERT ALEXANDER HARRIS

Bob Harris died on the 11th of August aged 80. He joined the Regiment in May 1953 and after completing his basic training at Queens Barracks he was posted to the 2nd Battalion who were stationed in Dortmund. He then served in Crail, British Guiana and Edinburgh where the Second Battalion was amalgamated with the First in 1956. On completion of his service Bob joined the 6/7TH Battalion at Cupar and settled down to civilian life during the week and attended military training at the weekend. In 1965 Bob married Margaret and then went back to British Guiana to work in a civilian capacity and by 1969 their son Richard was born.



Bob was always very proud of his service in the Regiment and enjoyed meeting up with his former comrades; he kept his son Richard and grandson Scott enthralled with his tales of life in The Black Watch.

A loving husband, devoted father and grandfather he will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

PETER JOHNS

Peter Johns was born in Bristol on the 20th of January 1927 and died on the 29th of September 2014, aged 87. He had been unwell for some time.

His parents moved from Wales to Bristol to find employment and his father died when Peter was five years old through injuries sustained during the Great War. His mother remarried and Peter's stepfather was a farrier with the RHA and life became peripatetic for the family.

On leaving school in 1941 when the family were stationed in Derby, Peter obtained work with Coles Cranes and the following year he enlisted into the RAF, training as a tail gunner in Lancaster Bombers. His service with the RAF was short lived as his mother advised the authorities that he was only 15. His elder brother was killed in Normandy in 1944 and a few months later Peter had heard that recruits into Highland Regiments could join aged 17 so he visited the Bristol Recruiting Office and joined The Black Watch as a young soldier.



After training, Peter was posted to the Second Battalion which was stationed in India as part of 44th Indian Airborne Division and with many others of the 2nd Battalion was one of the last to leave the Indian Subcontinent in 1948. He served in places which are topical today such as Landi Khotal, Landi Khana and others between Peshawar and the Afghan Border and although he often expressed a desire to revisit and explore the region he thought that discretion was the better part of valour.

Peter joined the First Battalion on the disbandment of the Second Battalion in 1948 and served with them in Duisburg before being posted to Warminster Garrison. It was during this time that he met Pearl; they were married on the 9th of February 1952 and had over sixty happy years together. Their wedding caused quite a stir in post-war Bristol with Peter in his Black Watch uniform and Pearl as the resplendent bride.

Their period of married life was short lived as Peter re-joined the First Battalion which was en - route for Korea in May 1952. As Signals Platoon Sergeant, Peter was second to none and established a reputation for getting things done and could obtain anything which would make life better for his men. Stories of his exploits such as pulling Joe Hubble out of the Imjin River are legion and it was during this time that he was nicknamed "Striker" a name which stuck and added to his reputation.

Although he had been Signals Sergeant for some time he was sent to Hythe on a Signals Course and re-joined the battalion in Kenya where the battalion was to serve for the next twenty months.

During their time in Berlin, daughter Karen was born and Peter managed to forge close link with many US families who became close lifelong friends. A two year posting to Dunfermline as PSI with 6/7 BW followed, before re-joining the battalion in Cyprus in 1960. During his time in Dunfermline he broke his spine and spent some six weeks in a plaster cast.

I first met Peter when I joined the battalion at Warminster and he was the Signals Platoon Colour Sergeant. Although he was a firm disciplinarian he was very fair and looked after all members of the platoon in a father like fashion, passing on his wealth of knowledge in signalling to all.

His final posting with the battalion was to Minden in West Germany from where he was selected for Long Service. He and the family were stationed in Aden during the troubles, Hounslow where the family were quartered at New Malden and then a long tour in Munster Garrison during the time of Dubcek's "Prague Spring" and heightened tensions between the Warsaw Pact Countries and the West. A move to Cyprus came next and this coincided with the Turkish invasion of Northern Cyprus where he was involved with the evacuation of many thousands of British tourists and residents.

After 31 years' service in the Regiment, Peter retired to Bristol and he and Pearl drove home in their much loved Renault 5 TL. Completing his "demob course" at Bulford he became a well-respected member of his civilian employers United Dominions Trust in Bristol.

A visitor to Balhousie Castle on numerous occasions and Regimental Representative in Korea where he befriended the Prime Minister David Cameron. Peter was great regimental character who classed The Black Watch as his family and will be sadly missed by all those who had the privilege and pleasure of knowing him.

R J W Proctor

ALEXANDER KINNAIRD

Eck as he was known to all in the Black Watch, was born on the 2nd of January 1955 and died after a brave fight against illness on the 29th of August 2014 aged 59. He was one of the four Kinnaird brothers who served in the Regiment.



He was brought up and educated in Kirkcaldy and decided to join the Army as a Junior Soldier and enlisted into the Royal Artillery. Life in the Royal Artillery did not suit him so he returned to Kirkcaldy for a short time before re-enlisting and joining his Uncle Alex's regiment, The Black Watch who were shortly to move to Hong Kong.

On completion of his basic training at the Scottish Infantry Depot Glencorse he proposed to his future wife Margaret and after she accepted he told her that they would get married when he returned after serving two years in Hong Kong! True to his word they were married at St Brycedale Church in Kirkcaldy and set up home in married quarters in Colchester where the battalion was now stationed. His maturity, reliability and hard work ethic were soon recognised and he was selected to join the Signals Platoon.

On return from the battalion's accompanied tour in Ballykinler he was promoted to Lance Corporal and then attended a Regimental Signals Instructor's Course at Warminster. He was then deployed with the battalion as a Company Signals Detachment Commander in Belize. By the time the battalion had moved to Werl in West Germany as an Armoured Infantry Battalion, Eck had earned his second stripe and was appointed the Detachment Commander of A (Grenadier) Company. This was an onerous task as he was responsible for the maintenance of a large amount of expensive radio equipment within the large fleet of tracked armoured personnel carriers and ensuring that communications worked during the many training exercises which took place in the BAOR. He was also a talented footballer and played for his Company and the Signals Platoon on numerous occasions.

In 1982 the battalion took part in the overseas test exercise at Suffield in Canada where his organisational and signalling skills came to the fore. This was followed at the end of the year by an unaccompanied tour back in West Belfast. Shortly before the battalion returned to Kirknewton in 1985, he decided to leave the Army and returned to Scotland for the last few months of his service where he was employed in running signals cadres for the TA soldiers of K Company at Hunter Street, Kirkcaldy.

A hard worker throughout his life, he soon found employment and remained employed until serious illness stopped him from working.

A quiet and reserved man, Eck was a staunch Black Watch soldier who will be greatly missed by all those who knew him.

CLIFFORD (CHALKY) LATIMER

Chalky Latimer died suddenly at work at Holtz Wickede on Tuesday the 8th of July 2014 aged 55. He originally came from Burntisland in Fife and joined the Regiment in 1978. After completing his training at the Scottish Infantry Depot Glencorse in November 1978, he joined the 1st Battalion in Catterick and was posted to Bravo Company who had returned from Ballater as the Royal Guard Company. After Christmas leave and with the remainder of the Battalion, he began to train for the unaccompanied tour in Belize in January 1979 amid the snow and wintry conditions of Sennybridge in Wales.



Chalky's marksmanship skills were soon spotted and he was selected to be a member of the Battalion Bisley Shooting Team. Apart from being an excellent shot he was always smart and well turned out and joined the Regimental Police not long after the battalion moved to Werl. He also trained as a Ferret Scout Car driver and eventually drove the RSM (WO1 Proctor) on the numerous training exercises. On the last exercise in which the RSM took part prior to being commissioned, Chalky was driving without lights on a track which joined the main road. Unfortunately the headlights of the traffic on the main road blinded Chalky and he toppled the Ferret into a ditch; both driver and commander managed to get out unhurt, however the vehicle was lying on a live electric cattle fence and when they tried to retrieve items they both received a nasty shock. Needless to say the RSM was not too pleased.

He was also a member of the Commanding Officer's Rover Group during the Battalion's Op Banner tour in West Belfast in 1982-1983.

He was selected to attend the Regimental Junior NCOS Cadre; through his hard work and leadership qualities he passed out as top student and had he remained in the Army I am sure he would have had a bright future ahead of him.

Chalky met and married Jutta, a local girl and he decided to settle down in Werl, leaving the Army when the battalion returned to Scotland in 1985. His German language skills were impeccable and he soon found work with a local engineering firm in Holtz Wickede where he worked his way up to a managerial position in which he was employed up until the time of his sudden and unexpected death.

Although living in Germany, Chalky kept in touch with his former regimental friend Stephen Dench through the internet and of course his close friend Eddie Seymour who also lived in Werl. Both he and Eddie attended the unveiling of the Memorial at Black Watch Corner in May 2014 at Zonnebeke.

Chalky was a fine Regimental character who will be missed by all those who had the privilege of knowing him.

R J W Proctor

JAMES MCDUGALL MCCUTCHEON

James McCutcheon died on the 8th of August aged 89 at Washington, Tyne and Wear which was where he emigrated to from Scotland aged 88! He was born in Glasgow on the 4th of July 1925, the youngest of five children all who saw active service in World War Two.

James enlisted in November 1943 and after completing his basic training at Queens Barracks he had a further period of training at Newbattle Abbey near Dalkeith. He joined the 7th Battalion and took part in the Normandy Landings arriving in France on D Day plus five. Like all the young men who took part in the hard fighting around Caen it left an impression which was to remain with him for the rest of his life. During the fighting around Caen, James' best friend from school Cornelius (Nellie) Conway was killed whilst James was badly wounded, suffering a gunshot wound and shrapnel in the legs. The shrapnel remained in his legs for the rest of his life. He was evacuated to Buxton Hospital and was then transferred to Kinfauns Castle where he completed his recovery before re-joining his battalion. He was discharged from the "Colours" in 1947 with an exemplary record and report and was discharged from the Reserve in 1954.

Before leaving the Army, James met Elizabeth who came from Arniston in Midlothian. They were married in 1950 and set up home



together in Newton Grange where they lived throughout their married life. He found employment as a coal miner and worked in that occupation until he retired in 1985.

Daughter Rhona was born in 1956 and was the apple of her dad's eye. When Rhona married and in turn had children, this made James a happy man as sadly his wife Elizabeth predeceased him in 1986 and the grandchildren helped fill the void.

He returned to Normandy seven years ago and made an emotional visit to his friend's grave in Ranville Cemetery. It was the first time that he had been back to Normandy since the war. James was a quiet man who lived for his family and was very proud of his service in The Black Watch and will be missed by all those who had the privilege of knowing him.

R J W Proctor

JOHN MCNIVEN

John McNiven died on 8th May 2014 aged 59. He served with the Queen's Own Highlanders and 2/51 Highland Volunteers, 1/51 Highland Volunteers and latterly with the 3rd (Volunteer), Battalion The Black Watch.

He was a positive and friendly character who had a great deal of influence on the younger soldiers in A Company in Dundee.

For the last 5 years he was Branch Treasurer of the Dundee Branch of The Black Watch Association.



R M Riddell

ERNIE MORRIS

I first met Ernie when the 1st Battalion was stationed at Catterick in 1978 and he impressed me as being a real character as well as being an excellent drummer in the Stoke-on-Trent Pipe Band.

A founder member of the Stoke-on-Trent Branch and Branch Pipe Band, he was a great supporter of the Regimental Association. After the death of Lily, Ernie made the annual trip to the Reunion at Balhousie Castle with other Branch members and attended most Branch and Regimental functions. He was always well turned out in his kilt and he wore his Blue Bonnet at the same jaunty angle as he wore his Tam O' Shanter during war time.

Ernie was born in Sunderland in 1919 and moved with his family to the Potteries. He told me that he was originally in the Staffordshire Regiment and with many others he was transferred to the 6th Black Watch after Dunkirk. The fact that he was proficient in reading and sending Morse Code made him a natural candidate for the Signals Platoon. He served in North Africa and Italy, including the Battle of Monte Cassino; later he was wounded and hospitalised in Italy. He was then transferred to the RASC in March 1945 just before the war ended.

Ernie worked as a pipe fitter and welder at the Michelin Tyre Company (Stoke-on-Trent) up until retirement. He was predeceased by his wife Lily and his son Clive whose son Andrew is carrying out the family service tradition as a Petty Officer in the Royal Navy.

Ernie was a great regimental character and one of a fine body of men from Stoke-on-Trent who served the Regiment with great loyalty.

R J W Proctor

JAMIE NISBET

Jamie passed away at his home in Glenrothes on Saturday 26th of July 2014. He was born on the 13th of August 1973; a Methil man, Jamie not only lived in the area but attended the local schools until leaving at the age of fifteen. He joined the Army on the 4th of October 1989 as a Junior Soldier and found himself on his way to Ouston Camp near Newcastle. On completion of his training he was posted to the Battalion in Ballykindler in early 1991. Bravo Company was to be his new home and by all accounts he became a



first class soldier; he was a rugged and dependable field soldier who was soon considered to be a sound member of the Platoon.

Jamie served in Canada, the USA and Hong Kong, where he was part of the parade that handed Hong Kong back to the Chinese.

On leaving the Regiment in 1995 he became a long distance lorry driver, as well as spending spells as a taxi driver and coach driver. He was a keen supporter of the local Ice Hockey Team the Fife Flyers. After various tests and an MRI scan Jamie was told he had cancer. The news gave him an initial shock but he was soon fighting his corner bravely; even after his treatment he knew his time on this earth was to be short lived. His humour remained until the end, at one stage saying, I wonder if the Big man needs a Lorry Driver? He will be missed by his family and all who knew him.

R M Scott

JOSEPH FREDERICK ROBERTS

Joseph Frederick Roberts, known to all as Joe, was born in Hackney, East London on 19th September 1933. After leaving school Joe worked as an apprentice carpenter in London before starting his National Service in the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders, the Regiment his father had served in. He transferred to 1 BW to go to Korea, remaining with the Regiment until demob in 1953. While on his demob leave in November 1953 Joe met and fell in love with Margaret. They were married in 1957 and raised a family of five children: three sons and two daughters.



After leaving the Regular Army Joe continued his training as a joiner; the trade he remained in throughout his working life. He also joined the Territorial Army and served with the London Scottish TA for several years. Joe was always extremely smart and well turned out and he was a staunch supporter of London Branch events, often bringing along his pipes to give us a 'blaw'. Although he had learned to play the pipes as a Rover Scout, Joe did not join the Black Watch Pipes and Drums but he resumed playing some time after leaving the Army. He was one of the founder members of the Waltham Forest Pipe Band. He later moved to the East London Pipe Band, in which his three sons also became members, two as pipers and one a drummer.

Joe died peacefully at home in Hackney on 27 May 2014 aged 80. He had not been in the best of health for some time but despite this, continued to attend every Branch event he could get to. He was par-

ticularly disappointed when ill health forced him to withdraw from attending the Black Watch Corner ceremony.

Jim Keating

ANDREW THOMSON

Andrew Douglas Thomson who was known as Andy or "Napper" due to his ginger coloured hair, died suddenly on the 7th of June 2014 at the Royal United Hospital Bath, aged 76.

Andy who was originally from Dundee joined the Regiment on the 2nd of August 1955 and after completing his training at Queens Barracks was posted to the 1st Battalion in Berlin. He remained with the 1st Battalion for most of his service with the exception of a tour at the Depot as a Training NCO. He served in Cyprus including being detached to serve in Libya for two months; there followed tours in Warminster, Germany and Cyprus in 1966. This was a six month unaccompanied tour as part of the UN Peace Keeping Force. Kirknewton, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Colchester and three tours in Northern Ireland rounded off a career of great variety. In July 1977 he moved from Ballykinler to Warminster where he joined his wife and family who had already settled there.

On completion of his twenty two year engagement Andy found employment working as a civilian at the District Workshop at Warminster where he worked until retirement in 2003.

R J W Proctor



The following deaths have also been recorded:

Mr Bobby Brown a resident of the BLESMA Home in Crieff. He was a 2nd World War veteran.

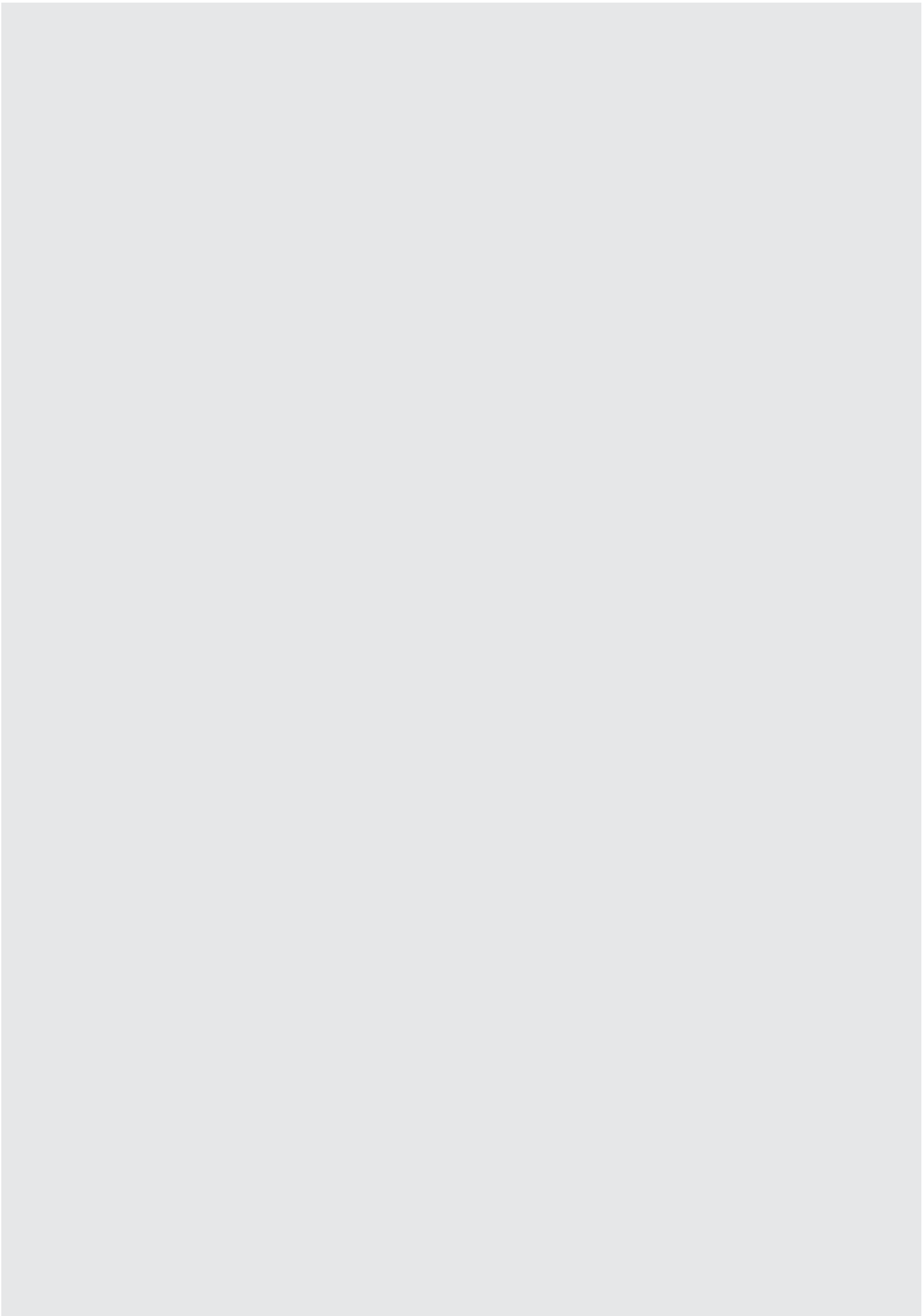
David Gardiner who served with the Regiment in the 1950s. He rose to the rank of Chief Inspector in the Lancashire Police Force.

Mathew McGill Donaldson McMillan aged 81. Mathew served in the Regiment in the 1950s and settled in the Lancaster area.

Johnny McShane who served for 22 years in the Regiment. He was a great sportsman and spent most of his time as a PTI both in the Battalion and at "E" keeping the fitness levels of members of the Regiment at the highest levels.

His son Wilfred (Wolfie) followed his father into the Regiment and continued the family tradition.

George Miller who died on Saturday 30th of August after a long fight against illness. George joined the 1st Battalion in Minden and left after completing his engagement when the battalion was in Colchester.



BLACK WATCH CORNER 3RD MAY 2014

"Some Corner of a foreign field that is forever Black Watch Country"

By Lieutenant Colonel R M Riddell

On the 3rd of May 2014, after three years of planning, the magnificent statue at Black Watch Corner in Belgium was unveiled by Major General AL Watson and dedicated by The Reverend Alex Forsyth, the Association Chaplain. The Service of Dedication was enjoyed by over 300 members of the Regimental family and many Belgians.

For months, the small Association team lead by Brigadier Edward de Broë-Ferguson and consisting of Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell, Major Ronnie Proctor, Mr Tom McCluskey, Mrs Maureen Brace and Mrs Janet Telford had worked hard to bring to fruition this day. The selection of the artist, the acceptance of his artistic idea, careful budgeting, encouraging as many of the Regimental family as possible to join the visit, arranging accommodation and buses, carrying out the research and preparation necessary to produce a Memorial Brochure and a Service of Dedication that was fitting for the occasion had all to be managed and completed on time.

We were helped enormously by Mr Erwin Ureel, an ex Belgian Army Warrant Officer and First World War tour guide, without whom the project would have been infinitely more difficult. He supported us and acted as a liaison officer with the local Belgian authorities in Zonnebeke.

Association members and their families from across Scotland and England travelled with the centrally organised bus parties via Hull and Zeebrugge to arrive in Belgium on the morning of Friday 2 May. The London Branch arrived slightly later and worked to a different but successful programme. As well as the bus parties, many others including all the Lord Lieutenants and Provosts or Depute Provosts, travelled independently to take part in a battlefield brief, a visit to Tyne Cot cemetery and an optional visit to the local museum in Zonnebeke. The battlefield brief was run by Brigadier de Broë-Ferguson, Mr Tom McCluskey and Erwin Ureel and brought to life some of the chaos of the battlefield and how close the BEF had been to being defeated. Whilst we used Lyn Macdonald's quote from her book "1914, the Days of Hope" in the memorial brochure it is worth repeating it here; The battle of Nonne Bosschen – It was here that the battle was won. It was here that the battle – and the war itself – was very nearly lost."

We gathered on that evening in the main square of Ypres to march to the Menin Gate. Led by Association pipers and those of the Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, about 200 Association members were on parade. We do not think that the Menin Gate

Committee had seen a show of strength such as The Black Watch displayed for many a long year and it was a very special and poignant event.

We next gathered on Saturday 3 May at a restaurant near Black Watch Corner to enjoy lunch before the Service of Dedication. The sun was shining and after lunch, the marching Association troops were joined by serving officers and soldiers from both the Regular and Reserve Army as well as by some excellent local Pipe Bands. Erwin Ureel had encouraged them to attend both our parade as well as a Tattoo in the evening that was being hosted by the village of Gheluvelt.



The statue is kept under wraps – 1 May 2014.



The bus party that set out from Perth.



An example of one of the plaques placed on the benches presented by Angus, Fife, Perth and Kinross and the City of Dundee Councils.

After WO 1 (RSM) Shaw was presented with the MSM by Major General Cowan, the newly appointed Colonel of The Regiment of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, the parade was brought to attention by RSM Shaw and stepped off to arrive at Black Watch Corner in good time for the Service to begin at 3 pm. After the arrival of the official Belgian representatives including the Minister for Tourism Geert Bourgeois and the First Alderman Sabine Vanderhaeghan, Colonel Alex Murdoch made a speech of welcome;

“Minister, First Alderman, Councillors, Lord Lieutenants, Generals, Provosts, Member of Parliament, Commander of the Belgian Barracks in Ieper, The Commanding Officer and men from The Black Watch Battalion and the Commanding Officer and men of the 51st Highland Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, Black Watch Cadets, Association members and friends, welcome to this very special event.

Following the Great War the Black Watch Family looked forward and decided that the best tribute to those who had fallen was to care for those remaining. In 1919 it was decided that the Regiment’s War

Memorial should take the form of a “Holiday Home by the sea for women and children of men who had served or were still serving in the Regiment”. Dunalistair was purchased and opened in 1921.

During its time it proved a very worthy form of War Memorial. Some twenty years ago this was disposed of but the Association continues to provide holidays for widows and dependants and to care for Regimental veterans and dependants in need.

This care will continue and is secure for as long as it is needed.

There are many memorials that recognise the Regiment’s sacrifice but the absence of a dedicated Black Watch Memorial on the Western Front is something that the Association felt should be addressed.

Choosing a location and then a suitable memorial was a challenge but under the leadership of Brigadier Edward de Broë-Ferguson, this location where the First Battalion stood firm was chosen.

‘ It was here that the battle was won.

It was here that the battle – and the war itself – was very nearly lost.’

We were fortunate to identify an artist who was Scottish and had experience and enthusiasm for creating a “Highland Monument” in a foreign field. Alan Herriot has created a remarkable sculpture of a Black Watch Sergeant in the uniform of the period.

The local authorities of the Black Watch recruiting area: Angus, Dundee, Fife and Perth and Kinross have each provided a memorial bench.

We as a Regiment are indebted to the Zonnebeke Council who have provided and prepared this magnificent site for our regimental monument at Polygon Wood, overlooking the scene of action of Nonne Bosschen; later on this afternoon, at the reception, we will be able to witness the ownership of the monument transferred by The Black Watch for safe keeping to the People of Zonnebeke.

I know you would wish me to say how impressed we of The Black Watch are by the excellence of the Belgian Pipes & Drums who have led the parade this afternoon.

Finally, we have received a message from our Royal Patron, Prince Charles, The Duke of Rothesay. The message reads:

I hope that all members of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) Association, veterans and their families, serving soldiers of both the Regular and Reserve Army and Cadets, gathered together on



Erwin Ureel and Tom McCluskey at the Battlefield Brief.



The Chairman is interviewed whilst at Tyne Cot.



Major Jamie Erskine looking thoughtful.



Four members of the Royal Company of Archers kept in order by Mrs Erskine.



Some of the Association group who marched to the Menin Gate – 2 May 2014.



Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Maitland and Colonel Nigel Lithgow at the Menin Gate.



Major General Andy Watson spoke to the buglers after the Menin Gate Parade.



One of the three plaques fitted to the granite base of the statue.

the occasion of the Service of Dedication, held at Black Watch Corner near Ypres in Flanders, on Saturday 3rd May, 2014, have a most memorable day.

I also send my good wishes to the people of Zonnebeke as the monument is gifted to them for safe keeping.

Charles

Welcome to this Service of Dedication."

This was followed by the "Call to Worship" made by the Reverend Alex Forsyth TD BA Mth who was Chaplain to the 3rd (Volunteer) Battalion The Black Watch (1995 – 1999) and a long-time friend and supporter of the Regiment. Led by WO2 Stewart Malcolm playing his clarinet and dressed splendidly in the uniform of a Queen's Trumpeter for Scotland, the congregation then sang, The Soldiers's Psalm (Psalm 121).

Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell read the Old Testament reading from the book of the Prophet Micah (Chapter 4) and was followed by Major Ronnie Proctor reading from the New Testament and the Gospel of Matthew (Chapter 5). The Reverend Alex Forsyth then addressed the congregation.

"Even after all the media attention and publicity several colleagues asked me – why? Why are you going to Belgium?

My answer? – First World War memorial, Relatives and Regiment!

Like many of you here, my grandfather fought in this war. His brothers fought in this war. My grandmother's brothers fought in this war. They served in the Highland Light Infantry, The Seaforth Highlanders and *intelligent* one served in The Black Watch.

With one notable exception not one of them ever talked about it.

My maternal grandfather was a fine man. Well oriented, a talented football player, a hard worker and an enabler.

I was his eldest grandson (He had six grand-daughters!) and I was close to him. I saw him several times most weeks. We had good times together. We did things together. I still miss him.

Save for one notable exception I never ever heard him swear in front of his grandchildren and certainly never in front of granny.

And that's why I remember the one notable exception. I was ten years old. It was the annual family gathering at granny's house to bring in the New Year.

My father and grandfather and one of my granny's brothers were on their second bottle of Bell's.

In the middle of an alcohol enlightened discussion about politics, Sam, my granny's older brother, asked my grandfather a question. It was a conversation stopper. "Well Bob what do think about that war we fought in all those years ago. My grandfather paused and looked into his dram. There was a long pregnant silence. And then he said just three words. "It was hellish!"

This was the only time he ever said anything about the First World War and it was the only time, I ever heard him swear – 'It was hellish!'

Years later I read Siegfried Sassoon's Poem 'Memorial Tablet,' ... it runs –

"Squire nagged and bullied till I went to fight,
(Under Lord Derby's Scheme). I died in hell –
(They called it Passchendaele). My wound was slight,
And I was hobbling back; and then a shell
Burst slick upon the duck-boards: so I fell
Into the bottomless mud, and lost the light."

My grandfather hadn't been swearing. He was describing his experience. He was right – "It was Hellish!"



RSM Shaw, Major General Riddell-Webster, Major General Cowan and Lieutenant Colonel Reilly.



Delta Company 1974, 40 years on! Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Maitland, Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell, Brigadier Garry Barnett, Major Dick Parata and Lieutenant Colonel Tim Coles.



Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies, WO1 David Stacey, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Maitland, WO1 Billy Whytock and Major Alex Stewart were all members of 13 Platoon in 1974.

We have come here to honour relatives and we have come here to honour and remember members of our regiment. Our grandfathers were here! Soldiers wearing the red hackle fought and died here.

And it was hellish!

In the summer of 1914 the powder keg that was Europe blew up.

They called this conflagration the Great War. So named: not because of quality but because of quantity, not because of majesty but because of magnitude, not because of grandeur but because of geography - because of the enormity of the conflict.

The Great War was brutal.

It was the bloodiest mess, the worst conflict, in the history of the world. It was literally greater in size and scope than any war ever waged before.

It was fought on land, at sea and in the air across Europe, the European colonies and the surrounding waters. The consequences of this 'Great' war were definitive for generations to come.

The First World War lasted four years. 66 million men were mobilised. 18 million were killed.

That is an average of around 6,000 deaths for every day of the war.

21 million people were scarred for life - physically wounded, psychologically damaged, spiritually maimed and socially broken.

The Black Watch lost the 8,960 officers and men and over 20,000 Black Watch soldiers were wounded or injured.

Martin Luther was right - "Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved." And it is here that the loyalty and courage of our grandfathers was demonstrated.

Churchill described Flanders as "the most sacred place on earth to the British people, (the place)... where over 250,000 soldiers of the British Empire died."

At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month 1918 it was all over. The sudden eerie stillness of the battlefields and trenches seemed strange. The guns were silent all along the western front. The air was still and there was a light fall of snow.

The Scottish infantry regiments gathered around their commanding officers and padres and together sang metrical psalms. And they sang 'I to the Hills will lift mine eyes' Psalm 121 - the 'Soldier's Psalm' - with its poignant third and fourth verses,

"The Lord thee keeps, The Lord thy shade/on thy right hand doth stay;/the moon by night thee shall not smite/nor yet the sun by day.

The Lord shall keep thy soul; he shall/preserve thee from all ill./ Henceforth thy going out and in/God keep for ever will."

According to Pericles, the Greek statesman, "The whole earth is the tomb of heroic men - and their story is **not** given only on stone over their clay - but abides everywhere without symbol - woven into the stuff of other men's lives."



Part of the information panel at Black Watch Corner.



RSM Shaw addresses the parade before the Service.



The Reverend Alex Forsyth leads the Service.

We are here because of relatives and regiment and we have come to remember them and honour their sacrifice that is as Pericles says, "woven into the stuff of other men's lives."

We slight those who served and suffered if we fail to remember them and honour the sacrifice they made. Pericles was right, their story "... is woven into the stuff of our lives."

The price they paid for our freedom lays a solemn obligation, a debt of honour, on us all to work for justice and peace.

Today we read from the book of the prophet Micah. Written around 700 BC Micah is hopeful for the future.

Micah prophesied against a background of violent instability created by a superpower's aggression.

In spite of the Assyrian Empire he sees a time when nations will come together in peace and concord instead of war and confrontation.

Micah never lost his faith in God. He had vision. He saw a time when the instruments of war would be turned into the implements of peace.

'God will judge between many peoples,' Micah prophesies, 'and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide.

And they will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they study war any more.

Working for peace and justice begins with a thankful remembrance of the sacrifice and service of others. This reveals how much we value human life.

Working for peace and justice involves learning from history.

It means demanding that our politicians don't rush to war and take fateful, hasty decisions based on lies, half-truths and political expediency.

It means getting the politics of international relationships, and economics right. Fair trade should mean exactly that – 'Fair Trade.'

It means participating in exchange schemes for young people. It means working at personal, national and international relationships.

It means working for reconciliation and it means sharing the faith we have in Christ.

Micah tells that this is what the Lord requires of us. "Do justly," he declares. "Love mercy and walk humbly with your God."

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God."

According to Albert Einstein we should, "Learn from yesterday, live for today, and hope for tomorrow."



The memorial is unveiled by Major General Watson.



Mr Alan Herriot the Sculptor pictured beside the monument.



Councillor Jim Leishman (Fife), Bob Band (Perth and Kinross) Helen Oswald (Angus) and Bob Duncan (Dundee).

Ghandi, was right: "Peace is not something that you wish for. It is something that you make, something that you do..."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, made the point, "More than an end to war, we want an end to the beginning of all wars."

If we do not learn from the past, how can we nurture peace and justice in the future?

In 2004 the poet Joolz Denby was asked to write a poem for a new war memorial. She called her poem 'So Many Names Are Lost Now.' And she ends her poem with these moving words,"

"... let the battlefield dead
take our hands in theirs and illuminate in the sweet blue twilight of our memories the most precious truth we can ever learn
– let there be peace;
learn this if nothing else: Let there be peace
– listen, can't you hear
their voices clamouring in a thousand tongues – let there be peace
for all of us and let all the fallen, all of them, truly rest in peace at last.
Read the names and call them home; chant a litany of remembrance.
Read the names and call them home.

We are here because of relatives and regiment and we are here to remember them.

So we, "Read their names, in our regimental records. All 8,960 of them and we call them home."

Pie Jesu Domine Dona eis requiem
Lord Jesus Give them rest. Amen."

There then followed the Introduction to the Unveiling given by Brigadier de Broë-Ferguson;

"As a regiment we are endowed with a number of fine memorials to commemorate our fallen comrades in arms but this monument at *Black Watch Corner* surely ranks amongst our best. The Waterloo Highlander in London, the Boer War memorial on the Mound in Edinburgh and the Powrie Brae on the Forfar Road out of the City of Dundee come to mind but of all of them, this monument – in a Flanders Field – sculpted by Allan Herriot, captures the spirit of our motto and proud boast – "No-one provokes me with impunity".

Black Watch Corner, at the South West corner of Polygon Wood, marked on maps since 1915 when the official records were written, dominates the ground where the remnants of the 1st (Guards) Brigade, supported by three batteries of 41 Brigade Royal Field Artillery of the British Expeditionary Force – the 'Contemptible little Army' – stood its ground against overwhelming odds from the might of the German Army – determined to break through to the Channel Ports. The result was astonishing. – According to German records the two regiments (or six fresh battalions) of the renowned Prussian Guard, confronted by the 1st (Guards) Brigade, were all but destroyed.

But victory came at a terrible cost. It is difficult for us to even contemplate but in August 1914 the 1st Battalion left Aldershot a 1,000 strong; only three months later – after taking continuous casualties on the Marne and Aisne and the two earlier Ypres actions at Langemark and Gheluvelt – when the Battle of Nonne Bosschen had been fought and won it mustered a mere 109 Jocks under the command of Captain Victor Fortune. As shocking, perhaps, was the casualty list for this final action of the First Battle of Ypres recording only 18 killed and

52 wounded – but 49 missing. That the names of those 49 missing are either buried amongst the many un-named soldiers of the Great War who, in Rudyard Kipling's words are 'known only unto God' or inscribed on the Menin Gate, tells its own story. The relentless artillery fire that they endured was quite simply unimaginable.

To the counties of Angus, Fife and Perthshire and the City of Dundee the news must have come like another Flodden.

When our Colonel-in-Chief, His Majesty King George V, visited Tyne Cot cemetery in May 1922 he said: "In the course of my pilgrimage, I have many times asked myself whether there can be more potent advocates of peace upon Earth through the years to come, than this massed multitude of silent witnesses to the desolation of war."

Major General AL Watson as the senior retired Colonel of The Regiment stepped forward and made a speech before the Union Jack was removed from the imposing granite base of the statue to show the plaques. He said

"We are standing here close to the corner of Polygon Wood where a decisive battle was fought on 11 November 1914 which ended the German attempt to push through to the Channel Ports; a battle which, if lost, would probably have ended the war. This was the crucial phase in the 1st Battle of Ypres, which lasted over three weeks. Both sides were exhausted after three months of heavy fighting and the BEF had suffered heavy casualties. The original Expeditionary Force of 120,000 was on its last legs exhausted, depleted and very short of ammunition. The Kaiser himself thought he saw a weakness in the Allied line where a successful breakthrough would cut off the Lines of Communication to the Channel Ports, outflank the Allied armies and pose a direct threat to Paris. He gave this task to two elite divisions of the Prussian Guard.

This sets the scene for the fighting at *Black Watch Corner*; it was here that the 42nd were major players in this battle – the final engagement of the 1st Battle of Ypres. As a tribute to the courage and endurance of the Regiment, this corner of Polygon Wood has always since been known as *Black Watch Corner*. It is on the maps to this day for all to see.

About ninety years later a retired *Black Watch* officer with his two sons and two grandsons were spending a few days in the Ypres area visiting the battlefield sites, including Polygon Wood; when they went to the Memorial Chapel in Ypres, every square inch of its walls was covered with memorial plaques for literally hundreds of British, Commonwealth and Imperial Corps and Regiments but there was no *Black Watch* memorial although our Regiment in World War I had been at the forefront of all the battles and had lost 8,960 dead and over 20,000 wounded. His two sons, keen students of the War, and who also had been regular officers in the Regiment, were outraged that there should be no acknowledgement of our crucial part in the battle at *Black Watch Corner* and its critical importance at a key moment in the whole War.

They sent a letter to Stephen Lindsay, then in charge of the museum, and also an article on the battle to insert in the *Red Hackle* magazine. When it was published in May 2006 it was picked up by Edward de Broë-Ferguson, the then Chairman of the Association, who made it a personal crusade to ensure that the gallantry of our predecessors should be honoured forever in a place where so many had died. Through his enthusiastic and unwavering determination and the wholehearted sup-



George MacDonald and his grand-daughter.



Some of the congregation.

port of Roddy Riddell and Chopper Proctor, a distinguished Scottish sculptor was found and the Belgian authorities were approached with a view to having a monument at *Black Watch Corner*. Our host's most generous and enthusiastic support has been remarkable; indeed they have undertaken to maintain the monument and this magnificent site.

This has been a large and expensive project which could never have got off the ground without the help of many. I have mentioned Edward and his dedicated team but you will all want to thank our sculptor Alan Herriot for this impressive statue. But also and very specially the Mayor and people of Zonnebeke for their generous support.

And finally it is marvellous that so many of the Black Watch family have made the journey here, many with the help of the Secretary of the London Branch Jim Keating. Talking about the family, any of you who have read the brochure will have seen that Victor Fortune was the only officer fit for duty at the end of the day and Guy Rowan Hamilton was the Adjutant; many of you will have served with their sons or grandson and David Fortune is here today; a representative of the Bowes-Lyons is also here; Charles Bowes-Lyon, cousin of the Queen Mother and serving with the battalion, was killed earlier in the battle and her own brother Fergus was killed serving in the 8th Battalion at Loos in 1915. The Linklater family are also with us - with his father Eric's tin hat with the bullet hole in it! Eric who served in the Regiment in France as a Jock and was severely wounded, wrote an excellent history of the regiment, which was finished by his son Andro (I remember well Eric's visit to 1 BW in Berlin in 1950). Perhaps we should also remember that in 1917 at Zonnebeke near Ypres, Lieutenant Colonel Curly Evans of The Black Watch won a particularly gallant VC in command of the 1st Lincolns.

I think that with the dedication of this memorial here today, we should be satisfied that the exemplary courage and sacrifice of our Black Watch kinsmen here and in the many other battles of WW1 has at last been commemorated in this fine statue."

The act of Dedication was led by the Padre.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now dedicate and set apart this memorial that it may honour the memory of and bear silent witness to sacrifice of the soldiers of The Black Watch whose lives were given and taken in the service of their country in the First world War

Here in this sacred place at the rising of the sun and under the shadow of the moon

We will remember them.

Here in this sacred place in the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter;

We will remember them.

Here in this sacred place beneath the cirrus clouds and in the warmth of summer;

We will remember them.

Here in this sacred place in the rustling of leaves and in the splendour of autumn;

We will remember them.

And so long as we live, they too shall live on in us;

For we will remember them."

Wreaths were then laid and this was followed by Lieutenant General

Sir Alistair Irwin reciting "In Flanders Fields" and The Exhortation "For the Fallen".

Last Post was played by WO2 Stewart Malcolm and Pipe Major Alistair Duthie then played the Regimental Lament. The Silence was followed by the playing of Reveille and then Padre Forsyth led the congregation in The Soldier's Prayer, the prayer of Ignatius Loyola.

"Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deservest;
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labour and not to ask for any reward,
save that of knowing that we do Thy will. **Amen.**"

The Evening Hymn was the final hymn and was very moving and was followed by the Regimental Collect, the Benediction and Dismissal and the National Anthem. Lord Lieutenants, Provosts, Association Branches and families were then invited to lay wreaths.

It was a near perfect Service and we owe a debt of gratitude to Padre Alex Forsyth.

We then had a chance to look at the statue in more detail and to chat to friends before we walked the 600 yards to the reception at the Nonnebos Restaurant. Good food, coffee and teas and some excellent Belgian beer was enjoyed before Sabine Vanderhaeghen, First Alderman for Tourism, Museum and Remembrance 1914-1918 welcomed The Black Watch to Belgium.

Honoured guests in all your functions, dear guests

Since a couple of years, the community of Zonnebeke adopted the baseline "Where the future has a past" in its communication. You will forgive me that, on this memorable day, I took the liberty to mix this expression with another motto, which might ring a bell with you, into the saying "No-one forgets history with impunity". In combining the mottos of the legendary Black Watch Regiment and Zonnebeke, we encapsulate the essence of today's events.

At the occasion of the moving unveiling ceremony of the memorial some moments ago, The Black Watch Association generously donated the impressive statue of a Highland soldier to our community. It is a precious and highly symbolic gift, for which we are extremely grateful. Not only does it do right to all those of The Black Watch who served in the Great War in general and to the officers and men of the 1st Battalion who gallantly fought over this ground in November 1914 in particular, but also because it reaffirms the strong bonds of friendship between our countries.

As you would expect from an NCO, the Royal Highlander at Black Watch Corner will remind the many people who will pass by the crossroads in the forthcoming decennia about the fighting spirit and sacrifice of the Scottish soldier. In the unlikely event the sergeant wouldn't manage to achieve this effect with his impressive looks, the striking pointed bayonet might do the job.

"Black Watch Corner" was already a household name in the area before this day, but from now on it will be "some corner of a foreign field, which is forever Black Watch country". We hope you feel welcome with us, as, since today, this is not only our country, but also yours.

I thank you.

Brigadier ML Jameson, the Association President replied on behalf of The Association and presented a 23 inch tall, bronze maquette of the statue to the people of Zonnebeke. In his speech he said;

“Minister Borgeois, First Alderman, Ladies and Gentlemen – on behalf of The Black Watch Association may I thank you and the people of Zonnebeke most sincerely for your warm welcome and kind words.

The unveiling ceremony we have all just witnessed, in memory of Black Watch men who gave their lives in the Great War, has been an enormous undertaking which we are all proud to have been part of, but it could not have been achieved without the whole-hearted and enthusiastic commitment to see it through to a successful conclusion by the Zonnebeke Council and the Passchendaele Memorial Museum.

Planning to place this magnificent monument at Black Watch Corner during the centenary year of the start of the Great War has been on-going for about three years and has entailed much extra work; but the care you have taken to ensure that it has been placed in a most prominent and desirable place at Polygon Wood and the quality of the work carried out by your engineers has been exceptional. This has indeed been an international joint venture which now links us together. In future years, not only members of The Black Watch and their families and friends will want to visit Zonnebeke and their memorial to those who gave their lives in WW1 but also others who visit the Flanders battlefields, in particular students of the first Battle of Ypres, will wish to visit Black Watch Corner.

We are about to sign a Memorandum of Understanding transferring the ownership of the Black Watch Corner memorial into the care of the people of Zonnebeke and as a measure of our appreciation we hope you will accept this limited edition, bronze maquette of the monument, also sculpted by Alan Herriot, to place in your Museum.”

Sabine Vanderhaeghan, accepted the maquette which was to be placed in the Passchendaele Museum. Both parties then signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the ownership and future care of the statue at Black Watch Corner.



The Tattoo was held at Gheluvelt and featured many Belgian bands.

As the sun dropped below the horizon, the air temperature dipped and we were enjoying the hospitality of the village of Gheluvelt and an excellent Tattoo organised by Erwin Ureel. Bands, Pipes and Drums and singers entertained us and The Black Watch very much entered the spirit of the occasion.

On Sunday, after a leisurely start, most of the groups made a final visit to the memorial before heading home. I sense that most of those who attended the Service of Dedication realised that they had just taken part in a very special Regimental occasion. In a similar way to the Laying up of Colours Parade, the feeling of pride mingled with a sense of sadness that The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) was no more but we were all clear that we had left behind a fitting tribute to our forebears who suffered so much in the Great War.

Photographs. The images used with this article have come from various sources and are used by the kind permission of their owners. In particular I would like to thank Graeme Hart of the Perthshire Picture Agency.



Pipe Major Grisdale and three members of The Black Watch Pipes and Drums.



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)
BETWEEN THE BLACK WATCH ASSOCIATION AND ZONNEBEKE COUNCIL
MEMORIAL TO THE BLACK WATCH AT BLACK WATCH CORNER**

1. Introduction

At a meeting held in Zonnebeke on 3 December 2012 and in letters exchanged between Mr Francis Claeys (Chief Executive Officer) and Brigadier Edward de Broë-Ferguson the Chairman of The Black Watch, ratified in a letter from the Council dated 7 May 2013, it was agreed that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Zonnebeke Council and The Black Watch Association, duly signed by both parties, was the appropriate way of recording the understanding given by both parties in good faith.

2. Monument

It is the wish of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) to gift to the People of Zonnebeke a cast bronze monument of a Black Watch soldier in the uniform of the period 1914-1918, mounted on a plinth of granite, to stand on the traditional site known as *Black Watch Corner* (South West corner of Polygon Wood).

The monument, by the celebrated Scottish sculptor Alan Herriot, is life size plus one quarter (approx. 2 metres), cast in bronze and standing on an approx. 2 metre high block of granite. An image of the proposed statue is attached to this MOU.

The Monument plinth will display three memorial facings:

- Under a Black Watch badge the words *Black Watch Corner*;
- *A commemoration to those of the Regiment who fell in the Great War 1914-1918;*
- *A commemoration of those of the 1st Battalion The Black Watch who fell in the action at Black Watch Corner during the First Battle of Ypres November 1914.*

That The Black Watch Association will provide 4 benches to be placed on the perimeter of the monument apron so that visitors can better enjoy the site and statue.

That an information panel, including a panorama and explanatory notes of the Battle of Nonne Bosschen of 11 November 1914, in English and Flemish, would be integral to the overall site plan.

3. Preparation of Site

It was agreed that to give the monument greater stature, it should be elevated on a rectangular, stepped (two steps) structure and that it should be positioned in the centre of an outer apron, using bunker blocks; that the information panel would be constructed to conform in material, form and size to other panels in the region; and that the perimeter of the site should be delineated by a beech hedge in accordance with the architect's drawings submitted by the Zonnebeke Council.

4. Ownership and Maintenance

The Black Watch Association undertakes to deliver, supervise the construction of the monument and gift the memorial to the Zonnebeke Council, representing the people of Zonnebeke; and the Zonnebeke Council agree to undertake the following:

- The care and maintenance of the site to ensure that visitors can enjoy this unique memorial in a manner befitting the sacrifice made by the officers and men of The Black Watch who fell during the Great War.

- The care and maintenance of the statue in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the sculptor Mr Alan Herriot through the good offices of The Black Watch Association (attached to this MOU). This will include an annual inspection by a qualified member of the Zonnebeke Council staff, as part of the routine inspection programme of all public and privately owned monuments in the region.
- The Black Watch Association will be informed by the Zonnebeke Council in writing of any significant damage caused to the monument and the planning of any repair or refurbishment necessary to maintain the statue, the plinth and/or memorial tablets (including the Battlefield Panorama).

5. Relocation

The Zonnebeke Council undertakes to consult with The Black Watch Association in the unlikely event of wishing to relocate the monument; whilst acknowledging that such a move would be at its own expense. Furthermore, if, at any stage in the future, the Zonnebeke Council no longer wishes the monument to remain in Belgium it undertakes to transfer ownership back to The Black Watch Association or its successor.

Enclosures:

- Map of Black Watch Corner
- Image of the Monument
- Sketch of proposed site/landscaping
- Architect's Ground plan for preparation of the site
- Sculptor's instructions on care of the statue

The Chief Executive Officer
Zonnebeke Council

Date: 3 May 2014
(Francis Claeys)

The Interim Mayor
Zonnebeke Council

Date: 3 May 2014
(Dirk Sioen)

The Alderman of Tourism
Zonnebeke Council

Date: 3 May 2014
(Sabine Vanderhaeghen)

The Chairman
The Black Watch Association

Date: 3 May 2014
(Colonel A. Murdoch)

Trustee
The Black Watch Association

Date: 3 May 2014
(Brig. EN de Broë-Ferguson)

PENINSULAR WAR 200 COMMEMORATIONS

BAYONNE 11-14 APRIL 2014

By Col (Retd) D C Thornycroft

2014 is the hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War, as will be immediately apparent from the most cursory glance at this edition of *The Red Hackle*. It is also the two hundredth anniversary of the end of the Peninsular War. An organisation called Peninsular War 200, led by Colonel Nick Lipscombe (late RA) and historian Professor Charles Esdaile of Liverpool University (whose forthcoming book on the disastrous Siege of Burgos 1812 will be required reading for all historians of *The Black Watch* and *Cameron Highlanders*, who almost alone succeeded in reaching their objectives) has celebrated each of the major battles of the War on its 200th anniversary over the last six years. 1814 was the year Wellington crossed from Spain into France, causing the Emperor Napoleon to abdicate and ending the War (temporarily, at least. He was, of course, back in time to fight Waterloo the following year). So 2014 was the year to commemorate the invasion of France.

The major battle was at Toulouse on 10 April 1814, in which the Highland Brigade under Sir Denis Pack played a prominent, and bloody, role. The 42nd Highlanders' Colours were carried into the redoubt by a Sergeant after three officers had fallen whilst carrying them. Only 90 out of the 500 men who followed them across the start line were still with them. The 42nd and the 79th Highlanders were consequently two out of the four Regiments singled out for "highly distinguished service" in Wellington's despatch after the battle. But, when asked, Toulouse, unlike the Spanish towns that had been delighted to celebrate their liberation, saw no reason to commemorate a humiliating defeat. Fortunately, the Mayor and Corporation of Bayonne, which saw a smaller engagement on 14 April 1814, consider themselves Basque, not French. The region had not been sorry to see the end of Napoleon and was delighted to host us and to cock a snook thereby at their French neighbours. Not that that made them infallibly attuned to the national sensitivities of others. The ridgeway on which the 92nd Highlanders stood and died is still known as the "Chemin des Anglais"!

The British delegation consisted of General Sir Nick Parker (late RIFLES), the Defence Attaché from Paris and about forty representatives from the Regiments that took part. The Highland Regiments were represented by myself for the 42nd, Major (Retd) Ian Cameron (late Cameron Hldrs and coincidentally my father-in-law) for the 79th and Captain (Retd) Giles Nevill (late QOHldrs). The remainder of the party was rather Guards heavy, for reasons which gradually became apparent.

The first day featured a battlefield tour of the complicated operation to force the River Nive by Wellington. We saw where the right wing under General "Daddy" Hill crossed the river; the church at Arcangues in which the Light Division was, rather uncharacteristically, caught napping but held for two days against counter-attack, until the 3rd and 6th Divisions (including Pack's Highland Brigade), came to its relief; and the manor house, still lived in by the same family, from which General Hope escaped by jumping out of a window during another counter-attack. We were read extracts during the day from the memoirs of Captain John Malcolm 42nd Highlanders to give an eyewitness flavour. Finally, we returned to Bayonne



Colonel Nick Lipscombe describes the crossing of the River Nive at Cambo-les-Bains, watched by General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter (GREN GDS) and Major Ian Cameron (Cameron Hldrs).

to admire the technically brilliant feat of bridging the mighty Adour River to get the Guards Brigade across to complete the encirclement of the town.

The following day we completed the battlefield exploration by learning about the sortie across the river from the besieged town of Bayonne on 14 April which was, eventually, repulsed by the Guards. Like the assault on Toulouse earlier that week, in which the Highlanders suffered so greatly, the bloodshed was quite unnecessary. Napoleon had already gone. Unlike Marshal Soult at Toulouse, who did not know, General Thouvenot at Bayonne did and whether he was a hero or a cynic who sacrificed men's lives to retrieve a battered military reputation was the only cause of tension between us and our hosts.



Highland bonnet badge picked up on the battlefield, now in the Musée des Basques, Bayonne.

The second day also saw a parade of re-enactors march through the town. The "British" were led by a party of Highlanders, mostly 42nd but with a few 92nd, who hailed from Germany and the Netherlands. The French were naturally more numerous and the glamour and colour of their splendid uniforms was only spoilt by their universally sporting sunglasses – and by the unfortunate straggler who came doubling across the bridge at the end, having presumably overslept in the tented encampment. The last of that day's events was a guided tour of the remarkable exhibition put on for the occasion by the Musée des Basques. They had one of Napoleon's hats and one of Wellington's and an extensive collection of pictures and battlefield artefacts, including a bonnet badge and a belt plate that, I presume, belonged to a 42nd Highlander since both bore our motto, although the centre, where St Andrew later came to stand, is occupied by a thistle. We were the guests that night of the French Special Forces in what they claim to be the oldest Officers' Mess in the world, built in the year 1160.

The final day was at the heart of the commemorative events. We laid a wreath at the Coldstream Guards cemetery, a delightful little privately purchased plot surrounded by farmland, which was attended by the Mayor of Bayonne, flag bearers from the French equivalent of the British Legion and the town band. Intriguingly, one of the flags was a Union Flag which turned out to belong to a branch formed from the World War II Resistance group, known as the Comet Line, which helped British and Commonwealth POWs to escape over the Pyrenees to neutral Spain, as Captain (later Brigadier) Bill Bradford of 1 BW did after St Valery. Another wreath-laying followed at the French memorial, which touchingly portrays an Imperial eagle trailing a broken wing. Then General Parker unveiled a plaque on the wall of the church of St Etienne, which lost



Re-enactors parade through Bayonne, led by 42nd and 92nd Highlanders.

its bell tower during the fighting, before we attended a commemorative Mass inside. After that we all repaired to the Hotel de Ville for a Mayoral reception and speeches, which seemed a lot longer than they actually were because of the Continental insistence on not giving anyone a drink until they were over!

This was a worthwhile event which paid well-deserved tribute to those who died, whatever the colour of their uniforms, in some pretty challenging fighting in some pretty challenging weather that,

during the pursuit of Soult's army, forced soldiers of the Highland Regiments to make shoes out of the hides of their beef ration, just as their ancestors had from deer skin. It was clear throughout that, to the French, "Highlanders" is synonymous with "Black Watch", to the immense irritation of my father-in-law. To be fair, it is not easy to say "Cameron Highlanders" with a French accent, although both Regiments equally won Battle Honours for the Pyrenees, Nive, Nive, Orthes and Toulouse.

HIGHLAND BRIGADE GOLFING SOCIETY – VETERANS' TROPHY

By Alex Murdoch

The Association Chairman, Colonel Alex Murdoch, was surprised and delighted to win the Veterans' Cup at the Society's Spring Meeting held at Panmure Golf Club on 4th and 5th June. The event was well attended with a good Black Watch representation.

The Veterans' Cup is a very special Trophy. It was presented to The Black Watch by Royal St George's Golf Club to commemorate Freddy Tait's winning of the Champion Challenge Cup at St George's in 1896, 1898 and in 1899. The inscription reads:

St George's Golf Club
Memento of the
Champion Challenge Cup
won by F G Tait
1899
Score 76-79.165

Frederick Guthrie Tait (11 January 1870-7 February 1900) was a Black Watch Officer and famous amateur golfer.

Born in Edinburgh, the third son of an eminent physicist and fanatical amateur golfer Peter Guthrie Tait, the young Tait was educated at the Edinburgh Academy and Sedburgh School. He was admitted to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, at his second attempt, and is credited with introducing golf there. Tait was commissioned into the 2nd Battalion The Leinster Regiment (109th Foot) and then transferred to the 2nd Battalion The Black Watch.



The Highland Brigade Veteran's Trophy which was originally presented to The Black Watch by Royal St George's Golf Club.



Captain Freddie Tait in uniform.



Captain Freddie Tait on the Links.

Tait was an extremely powerful and long hitter of the ball. At The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews on 11 January 1893, he hit the ball 250 yards, the ball then rolling on frozen ground and coming to rest 341 yards from the tee, thereby refuting his father's calculation that 190 yards was the maximum possible flight.

Tait won The Amateur Championship twice in 1896 and 1898 and finished third in The Open Championship twice in 1896 and 1897 and was leading amateur in the same competition on six occasions. Tait was playing against two of the greatest amateurs of all time, Harold Hilton and John Ball. In Open Competitions he faced the great triumvirate of Braid, Taylor and Vardon. A very modest man without any self consciousness, there was a light-hearted confidence about his game. The gallery loved it and he delighted in the gallery.

Tait was killed in action aged 30, serving with the 2nd Battalion, whilst leading a charge to secure a hill at Koodoesberg Drift during the Second Boer War. He had previously been wounded in the thigh at the Battle of Magersfontein but made a speedy recovery. When wounded, he went to Cape Town for a couple of months. One of his great friends and a fellow golfer in The Gordon Highlanders, who were part of The Highland Brigade out in South Africa, learning that he had been hit in the thigh, sent him a letter saying that it was good thing the bullet had a slice on it, or he would have been killed.

Freddie Tait was in the same Wynberg Field Hospital in Cape Town as Colin Innes's grandfather Lieutenant Sydney Innes who was also in the 2nd Battalion and was also wounded at Magersfontein. Another subaltern in the Battalion at that time was Lieutenant A P Wavell, later Field Marshal The Earl Wavell. All three were great friends and played golf together before the Boer War.

Tait is buried in Kimberley in Northern Cape Province of South Africa. The base of the Trophy reads:

The Veterans' Cup
Presented to The Highland Brigade Club Golfing Society
by
The Black Watch
In Memory of
Field Marshal The Earl Wavell, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,
C.M.G., M.C.

The first winner recorded on the Trophy in 1976 is Lt Col MVA Wolfe Murray. It has been competed for every year since with many notable winners from The Black Watch.

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

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel A P Reilly
Second-in-Command:	Major A P Richards/ Major N G Jordan-Barber
Adjutant:	Captain R J Colquhoun/ Captain M P Stanning
Operations Officer:	Captain A J Phillips MC/ Captain R J Stewart
Intelligence Officer:	Captain M A Dobson
Regimental Signals Officer:	Captain N J Drapper
Training Officer:	Captain M James/ Captain T J H Towler
Regimental Sergeant Major:	WO1 (RSM) Shaw/ WO1 (RSM) Marshall

COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

The Battalion has had many new and exciting challenges. This year we have trained and operated in Africa, all over Europe and in Canada. At home, we have been busy too, training the Libyan Army in Cambridgeshire; supporting the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow; and preparing for our future roles both at home and overseas.

The Battalion's main focus this year is the delivery of training to the Libyan Army. To deliver this training we have moved south to Bassingbourn Barracks just outside Royston – believed to be where the Red Hackle was presented to the Regiment by His Majesty King George III. Our first Libyan Trainees arrived in June after considerable delays. Chants of 'Libya, Libya, Libya' are now a daily occurrence and although each day brings new challenges, the training is progressing well. Routinely, the Training Companies deploy on exercise on a Sunday and return to camp on a Thursday for a well earned rest prior to redeploying. On exercise, the Libyans work well during the day, but activities at night are foreign to them, with singing and dancing the preferred option over sentry duties and some of our Senior Non Commissioned Officers are the dance partners of choice. Due to the attention surrounding our task we have hosted a number of high profile visits including the Head of the Army and his Italian counterpart, Commander Land Forces, the Chief of Joint

Operations, and the General Officer Commanding 3rd (UK) Division, Major General James Cowan, to name but a few.

The rest of the Battalion has been just as busy, supporting exercises in Italy, Spain, Morocco, Tanzania, Kenya and Canada. Charlie (Fire Support) Company has also just returned from the Commonwealth Games where they played an important role in venue security. The Pipes and Drums have had success on the competition circuit on top of their duties at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and have also played a prominent role in the Highland Military Tattoo at Fort George this September. Of note, they have recently competed in their first World Pipe Band Championships and were placed fifth in their class among some of the world's most talented bands.

This year, we mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War, and the sacrifices and achievements of our forbearers. I am pleased that we were able to join the Association to commemorate the unveiling of the monument at Black Watch Corner. We also marked 4th August with vigils in both Inverness and Cambridgeshire. Members of the Battalion were also present at the re-opening of the museum at Balhousie and we have also been delighted to host members of the London Branch who visited us and witnessed firsthand our efforts with the Libyans.

There have been a number of personality changes across the Battalion. In the Headquarters we have a new Battalion Second-in-Command, Adjutant, Operations Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major. I wish Major Andy Richards, Captain Rob Colquhoun and Captain Scott Shaw all the best for their future roles, and I welcome back Major Nigel Jordan-Barber and Captain Robert Stewart. We have also said farewell to Major Jim Reid, and Major Christie Broadbent as we are joined by two new Company Commanders, Major Andy Bayne and Major Al Phillips (who somehow convinced me that he should take the reins of Charlie (Fire Support) Company after finishing as Operations Officer). Captain Jamie James moves on too after his sterling efforts as the Battalion's Training Officer. I will also move on shortly and I would like to say thank you to you, the Black Watch family, for your support over my tenure of command.

Lieutenant Colonel Al Steele returns to the Battalion and rejoins his former Company Sergeant Major Paddy Marshall who has taken over as the Regimental Sergeant Major. I wish him every fortune and I hope that he enjoys his time as much as I did. I know he will.



The Commanding Officer shows his culturally sensitive side in the Mhuktar Mosque, Bassingbourn Camp.

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS: OPERATION VOCATE

Having spent much of this year preparing to deliver training to the Libyan Army General Purpose Force (Op VOCATE), it was with some relief that we received the news that they were actually coming. The first to arrive in May were the National Support Element; a group of eight Libyan Staff Colonels assigned to provide a similar role to the administrative element within a British Headquarters. The relationship we have developed with them, although frustrating at times, has been essential to providing potential solutions to some of the more bizarre frictions that have arisen from training a foreign force within the United Kingdom. The main conduit for these has been the Adjutant who having only just come to terms with the fact that a supposed one month tour at the end of Op VOCATE has extended to six, now has to deal with a number of increasingly testing G1 issues – a perfect rehearsal for the two years to come!

Away from the minor discipline issues faced by all military forces the GPF have, in the main, proved keen to train, providing an excellent opportunity for the Training Officers, both Captains James and Towler to flex their imaginations. It would be entirely correct to assess the training being delivered on VOCATE as truly class leading and this is in no small part down to the efforts of the Training Wing staff. They have consistently pushed the boundaries and challenged conceptions of what can be achieved and on the whole this approach is bringing considerable reward. The imparting of military knowledge to a civilian is hard enough in 24 weeks but to do it through an interpreter to a group of individuals whose main life experience is of revolution is testing.

It has been a challenging time for the Headquarters trying to manage the considerable frictions of Op VOCATE alongside a major change in personnel. A new team is now in place and focused on the challenges remaining to deliver a fully trained Katiba by December 2014, whilst looking forward to the opportunities 2015 will bring. A United Nations peace-keeping tour to Cyprus (Op TOSCA) and conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry all await.



Your wish is my command effendi! The Adjutant takes down his orders.



The Adjutant taking his disciplinary powers a little bit too seriously.

THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee: Major C M B Broadbent/
Major A J Phillips MC
Mess Secretary: Captain N J Drapper
Mess Treasurer: Captain S W Lewis

2014 has continued to be another jam packed year for The Officers' Mess and despite the Army's best efforts to prevent us having fun, we have continued to do so, even if there is a 600 mile gap between the Mess members.

As ever, we are in the sad position of having to say goodbye to various Mess members as they depart Fort George. Since the last edition we have said our farewells to Major Andy Richards who has gone to the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow, Major Andrew Dunford who has moved on to 39 Engineer Regiment, Major Christie Broadbent who has been posted to 38 (Irish) Brigade, Major Jim Reid who has left for 1st (United Kingdom) Division, Captain Richard Martin who is trying his hand with the Army Air Corps and Lieutenant Zach Smyth who is on a Long Language Course at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham. We wish them well in their new positions and hope that it will not be long before our paths cross again. However, as the old depart the new arrive and we are lucky to be able to welcome Major Nigel Jordan-Barber as the new Battalion Second-in-Command, arriving fresh from instructing at Shrivenham, Major Andy Bayne who takes over Command of Bravo Company, Captain Bobby Stewart who returns as Operations Officer and Captain Allan Cunningham who takes over as the Unit Welfare Officer.

From reading the other articles in this edition it will be no surprise that as the Battalion is split, so is the Mess. For those left up North the social side of the Mess has slowed slightly but they have managed to fit in a few events between elongated coffee mornings that run into lunch. A Ladies' Lunch held in the Fort provided an excellent opportunity for the wives to spend their husband's hard earned wages, whilst enjoying good weather, good food and good company. This was followed by an excellent Blues Dinner night where people had the opportunity to formally say goodbye to the leavers. This merry event was attended by a small but determined band of Southerners, including the Commanding Officer, who were able to make the long trip north to ensure that they did in fact leave! There are also plans afoot to host a Ladies' Dinner night later this month, giving the wives another opportunity to pine for their loved ones in style!

South of the border efforts were initially put into making the moth-balled Bassingbourn Mess habitable. This was aided in no small part by hanging a healthy number of Black Watch paintings on the walls to make it feel like home. To further ensure no one was feeling homesick the Senior Subaltern took advantage of his captive audience and put in place a ruthless Scottish country dancing regime. Unfortunately for our attached Arms and Danish linguists there was no escape and we have impressed our culture upon them in fine style. The first few months of the deployment were quiet as people found their feet in their new surroundings but it did not take long for the more adventurous to get restless. The sights and sounds of both Cambridge and London have been fully explored by day and night. By some miracle an amateurish punting trip down the River Cam did not end in disaster, although it



Captain Phillips adjusting his diet and belt loop in anticipation of taking command of The Savages.

is difficult to capsize a punt if you can only make it go in circles. Both halves of the Mess, senior and junior, are on first name turns with the local publicans. Unfortunately, delightful as the Cambridgeshire countryside is, it is too small for those in search of adventure. Spurred on by the insatiable Captain McRobbie, who subsequently did not make the trip, a small group of travellers boarded the Eurostar and headed for the Continent. The fewer questions asked about 'One Night in Paris' the better but it is safe to say that 'where is the library?' is not the best chat up line!

Whatever they are putting in the water up in the Fort is potent and catching. So far this year there have been three proposals and a wedding. Congratulations go to Bobby Stewart and Camilla Jenkins, Craig Treasure and Holly Robinson and Nigel Drapper and Tessa Cleghorn for successfully popping and also accepting "the question" and congratulations and best wishes go to Christopher McRobbie and Gina for tying the knot in the Battalion Kirk in June. The wedding was an excellent event with Mess members putting in a strong appearance despite the distance to travel. The weather was outstanding and will have made for some excellent photos and the band, Bahookie, brought the house down at the party afterwards.

Despite the distractions, six months away, no matter where, is hard work and all members of the Mess are longing for home. With 13 weeks left to push, the Ball planning committee is already hard at work organising our Christmas Ball. On our return we have a list of events to look forward to and it is going to be difficult to fit them all in but I am sure we will find a way. As a starter for ten we have the Christmas Ball, The Black Watch Ball, Christmas Week, The Jocks' Christmas Lunch and Officers' Mess Carols.

The final thoughts from the Officers' Mess for this edition of the Red Hackle must go to the Commanding Officer. After two years of action packed command, he is moving onwards and upwards to take up the position of Military Assistant to Commander Land Forces. To send him off in style, the Mess organised a covert dining out in the Priory, Chicksands. The night included a four course dinner, two poems, numerous songs by Captain Billy Garrick, backed in the chorus less tunefully by the rest of us, presentations, a performance by the Pipe Band, a smattering of reeling and some splitting headaches the next day. We wish him and Anna-Lee all the best for the future and hope to see them again soon. At the same time, we welcome his successor, Lieutenant Colonel Steele, and his family back to the Mess.

WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Mess Committee

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

Mess social life has been greatly reduced since the last update due to operational commitments, not least the deployment of many members to Bassingbourn. Working with the Libyans has proved to be an unusual leadership challenge with even the most seasoned veterans incapable of dreaming up the scenarios that have transpired. To remain grounded, members have established a suitable Mess Annex in the form of The Hoops, an accommodating pub in Bassingbourn. There have been many other tasks involving members too, from attachments to Canada, Kenya and support to the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow all of which have provided challenging and entertaining moments.

Promotions and Postings

There have been plenty of changes since the last update. First, WO1 (RSM) Shaw has departed, on commissioning, to become the Unit Welfare Officer for the Royal Highland Fusiliers at Penicuik. The Mess would like to wish Scott, Lindsay and Lewis all the best for the future. Thankfully, we did not have to look too far for his replacement. WO2 Paddy Marshall, Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant was promoted to WO1 and assumed the position of the RSM on the 10th June 2014. He in turn passed the reins of RQMS (Technical) to WO2 Mikey Fairweather. This was instigated when Mikey eventually returned from his wee holiday in Libya as part of Op VOCATE. We say farewell to WO2 Allan Cunningham, RQMS (Main). He has assumed the position of our Unit Welfare Officer. Replacing him in the Quartermaster's Department is our very own 'Competitive Dad' WO2 Kev Stacey. Kev returns from the Infantry Battle School at Brecon. Congratulations on promotion also go to WO2 Graham Hannah, CSM of the Grenadiers, WO2 Ian Carlisle as Mortar Second-in-Command and Davy Taylor, newly appointed as CSM HQ Company. WO2 Kev Blackley has returned from the wilderness after serving with The Royal Scots Borderers and has assumed the position of CSM C (FSp) Company. Congratulations also go to the Master Stitch Scotty Currie on promotion to Colour Sergeant. The period has seen many other arrivals;



The Dining Out of Lieutenant Colonel A P Reilly, The Priory, Chicksands, 16th September 2014.



WO1 Shaw hands over to WO1 Marshall as RSM at the Fort.



Time check! Op VOCATE Platoon Sergeants' Training Conference is delayed by Sergeant McLaughlin

Colour Sergeants Bowe, Buist, Carnegie, McCready and Sharp MC and Sergeants Blake, Harkness, Leye, and McMaster.

With the inflow of all the new faces, either reporting for the first time or indeed returning from various postings, space must be created. To that end, we say farewell to our departing comrades, safe in the knowledge that there will always be a dram waiting their return. Farewells go to; Sergeants Bavadra and Welshman who are both off to ITC Catterick, WO2 Ross Beaton (RQMS) and Colour Sergeant Johnny Barrie who are both now roaming the Kenyan Plains with BATUK, Colour Sergeant Craig Weir who is posted to the Operational Training and Advisory Group, Colour Sergeant Ross McBride who becomes a CQMS with the Royal Scots Borderers and Colour Sergeant Scott Mitchell who takes up a post with the UOTC.

We look forward to serving under Lieutenant Colonel A F L Steele and we welcome him and his family back to the Battalion. We also look forward to returning to the Fort and plans are already underway to have a Burns Supper in 2015. The Mess will also try to fit in as many functions as humanly possible before the next deployment to Cyprus in April 2015.

CORPORALS' MESS

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

The Corporals' Mess members have, as usual, been working tirelessly since our last update. They have been involved in a plethora of activities including Operations VOCATE and COMET and exercises in Kenya and Canada amongst other commitments. Unfortunately this has affected the social aspect of Mess life, which we aim to remedy on the run up to Christmas, with Red Hackle Day and the Burns Supper.

Operation VOCATE

Op VOCATE has been the greatest draw on Mess manpower as training corporals are at the very centre of efforts to build the capacity of



Lance Corporal Cruickshanks assesses Libyan casualty drills.



Lance Corporal Jones and Corporal McMillan making new friends.

the Libyan General Purpose Force. The task has proven to be amongst the most challenging that many Mess members have faced in their careers to date. We have been subjected to all manner of incidents and situations, that not even the most creative Hollywood director could imagine. We live and work with the Libyan soldiers six days a week. This includes escorting them on day trips to Cambridge, London and to the local shops. They are not the best at adhering to timings as some of us have found out. This was evident when we had to be put up in London hotels overnight at the expense of the Duty Officer to wait for them when they were 6 hours late. They have made decent progress through training and are now beginning to look like a formed body of men, capable of returning home and having an effect on the security situation in Libya. When the VOCATE dust settles and all of us are back in the Fort, there will no doubt be a few anecdotes and stories shared over a beer in the Mess.

Farewells

The Mess would like to wish Lieutenant Colonel Reilly a fond farewell as he relinquishes command of the Battalion and we also say goodbye to WO1 (RSM) Shaw. The following members have also departed; Corporals Graham and McFadden to the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) as instructors and Corporal Forbes as a Company Storeman. Corporal Todd moves to the ITC Support Battalion, Corporal Rae

to the Infantry Battle School at Brecon as a signaller and Corporal Errington (RLC) on promotion and posting as a Sergeant. A special farewell goes to the following members as they depart the Mess and the Army as volunteers for redundancy; Corporals Sloan, Showell and Armstrong and Lance Corporals Soqeta, Tawayaga and Vunibobo. The Mess would like to wish all that are departing good health, wealth and happiness for the future.

Welcome

There is a new Tara in town and the Mess welcomes and indeed looks forward to working with WO1 (RSM) Marshall. We also welcome Lieutenant Colonel Steele. We also extend the hand of friendship to Corporals Turner, Robb and Beattie on posting in from other units. There have been a few Private to Lance Corporal promotions also, they are; Campbell, Jones, Rice, Morton, McKenzie, Currie, Shields, Gurung, Broatch, Chamberlain and Hague.

Births

We would like to congratulate the following Mess members on the births of their children; Corporal Rana and son Ishan, Corporal Qulubulawasakabara and daughter Leilani, Corporal Wilson and son Sian, Lance Corporal Churcher and daughter Lilli and Corporal Murphy and son Lewis.

Promotions

Congratulations to Corporals Blake, Sim and Whyte on their promotions to Sergeant and to Lance Corporals Cain, McMillan, Murphy and Stewart on their promotions to Corporal.

Awards

The Long Service and Good Conduct Medal (LSGC) has been awarded to Corporals Steel, Errington, Blair and Rana. Well done to you all.

A (GRENADE) COMPANY

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Officer Commanding: | Major G K Adamson |
| Second-in-Command: | Captain C G McRobbie |
| Company Sergeant Major: | WO2 (CSM) Hannah |
| Company Quarter Master Sergeant: | Colour Sergeant Copeland |
| OC 1 (Senior Highland) Platoon: | Lieutenant J E Fish |
| Platoon Sergeant: | Sergeant Everett/
Sergeant McMaster |
| OC 2 Platoon: | Lieutenant E P French, Int Corps |
| Platoon Sergeant: | Sergeant Pasifull/
Sergeant Blake |
| OC Machine Gun Platoon: | Lieutenant J A Young |
| Platoon Sergeant: | Sergeant Pratt 59 |
| OC Training Support Platoon: | Sergeant Dunn |

Fans of the Grenadier pages of the Red Hackle will recall from the last issue that we were poised and waiting for the arrival of the Libyan General Purpose Force at Bassingbourn; now they are here and what an experience it has been so far. The training teams and the JNCOs in particular have been tested in ways that many never thought possible. The task has required a blend of intelligence, determination, cultural awareness and industrial quantities of patience. It will come as no surprise that the Company has risen to meet the challenge in every respect.



Lieutenant James Fish delivers an ambush lesson



Lance Corporal Jones surrounded by Libyan friends.



Sergeant Pratt takes a moment in Thetford.



Jundi and Red Hackles getting briefed.



Corporals King (second from right) and McMillan (right) take time out to chat with the signaller and Danish interpreter (left).

I have every confidence that in spite of some of the darker days that we have experienced during the last six months, people will look back on Op VOCATE and smile.

In the first term of the course we have trained the Libyans in marksmanship, drill, first aid, urban operations, the English language and much more besides. It would be fair to say that everybody who has been directly involved in the training has had to amend his approach to teaching or leadership style in some way. Although we know that our method of teaching British soldiers works it does not naturally follow that it will work with those from an entirely different culture. I have rarely seen mission command applied at the most junior level, so often and so well.

While much of the focus has been placed on the Training Teams, the Training Support Platoon under the management of Sergeant Garry Dunn has done an incredible job in the background making this whole venture work. They have provided guard, enemy, ammo NCOs, stand-in instructors, demonstration troops, work parties and much more beside. In addition to the pure, undiluted graft that they have put in, they have also formed relationships with the Jundi, and while there was inevitable friction between the two groups of soldiers to begin with, the Libyans have developed a degree of respect for their Scottish counterparts and have begun asking for help and advice from them too.

Introducing the Libyan General Purpose Force to British Culture

One of the training objectives of the course was to give the Libyans an insight into British culture and life in the United Kingdom. Unsurprisingly, when asked, the number one destination on everybody's list was London. Rather than simply taking the Jundi sightseeing and shopping, the plan was to explain the relationship between the Monarchy, the Government and the Military through a trip to the City of Westminster. Military connections were exploited in order to make the trip as memorable as possible and support was enlisted from the Black Watch network in the form of Rory Stewart MP whose office secured us entry to the Houses of Parliament whilst HQ London Central Garrison allowed us access to Wellington Barracks to watch the Changing of the Guard Ceremony. Between Wellington Barracks and



Libyans experiencing total cultural immersion



The next coalition government?

the Palace of Westminster we walked passed Buckingham Palace down The Mall, through Trafalgar Square and down Whitehall.

On arrival at Downing Street it was clear that the Libyans would be unable to see No.10 due to the crowds and the security barriers. Nae cheek, nae chance – the Police at the gate could not have been friendlier or more helpful, and in spite of their initial reservations they completed the necessary paperwork and allowed thirty Jundi access, in order to stand on the steps of the Prime Minister's house.

In the Houses of Parliament they were treated to a professional tour of the building and although fatigue, induced by the privations of Ramadan and the sweltering heat, was setting in they were in awe of the access that they had been granted. As we arrived at the central lobby between the two chambers the guide explained the difference between the lower house and the upper house one Jundi was heard to utter “and where is the interim chamber?”

For obvious reasons the trip was a great success. More surprising have been the other trips into British society; the Royston branch of Tesco has been held in the same regard that a four year old regards Disneyland. Soldiers are soldiers the world over and the Libyans are no exception, when they have gone out in Cambridge they have been bowled over by the pretty, young ladies of the town. I'm not sure how successful their *I like you, do you like me?* style “patter” has been, but they have definitely enjoyed the experience.

BRAVO COMPANY

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

The past 6 months have seen Bravo Company at the very forefront of the Battalion's training of the Libyan General Purpose Force. To achieve this, the Company has re-orbated to form a Headquarters, three training teams, each made up of three to four JNCOs, a platoon sergeant and a platoon commander and a training support platoon made up of thirty Jocks.

The Company deployed three weeks before the Libyans' arrival at Bassingbourn Barracks and training teams were kept busy decorating accommodation, preparing lessons and sorting out kit. Whilst it was a busy time there were opportunities to relax. Lieutenant Pearson took 32 members of the Company away to Thorpe Park for the day. It was a brilliant day away from the confines of the camp with the South of England's weather taking many by surprise, leading to a few sun-burned faces.

Operation VOCATE: Instructional Challenges

Op VOCATE has been full of instructional challenges. First, the JNCOs have been asked to instruct a force of varying levels of experience from those who fought hard to topple Gadhafi, some ‘wannabes’ and those who have had no military experience at all. Second, all the instruction has had to be painstakingly translated. Thankfully, contractors provided by the MOD have been a great help in this area although Arabic is increasingly spoken within training teams.

Originally Bravo Company was instructing as though our recruits were that of the familiar quality and eagerness as can be found at Infantry Training Centre, Catterick. It did not take long for the instructors to realise that their trainees needed to be handled quite differently. There have been struggles with timings, attitudes and, of course, behaviour. Regardless, the British Officers, SNCOs and JNCOs have remained professional throughout and the quality of instruction has been of the highest standard, although the expectations may have had to be somewhat relaxed.

Putting the Libyans through lectures or classroom based activities is relatively pointless. Conceptual study is not for them. They do, however, react very well to practical tuition and we adjusted our training to accommodate this. Practical tuition has been our main focus for August and early September. The training conducted has included urban warfare training in Copehill Down, public order training at Thetford, and a company attack. It would be fair to say that they have improved drastically from their start point.



Lance Corporal Stott practices his ballet.



Lance Corporal Cruickshanks enjoys taking his flaming dog for a walk.



New additions to Bravo Company.

To aid with the evident challenges encountered with command and control, the Libyan Officers have been given full control of their platoons but 'mentored' by their British counterparts. This has brought with it its own unique challenges. The Libyans respond very well to being controlled by their commanders and often orders are relayed through them to achieve the result intended. A careful relationship has to be developed between the Libyan and British chain of command. If trust or faith is lost by the Libyan commander it will be near impossible to achieve anything with his platoon.

Although it has been a testing few months, the Company has had many achievements. We have developed a group of men into workable platoons and formed a basic Company structure operating in the urban and rural environment. We have had many visits from the wider Army community including the Chief of General Staff and an

American 3* General all who have been particularly impressed by the training provided by Bravo Company. Additionally, our JNCOs have had an invaluable experience which will greatly enhance their careers. Many will go on to Catterick and will shine alongside their peers as the experience they have gained here will make the training of British recruits a breeze.

Routine activity

Bravo Company has been very busy training the Libyans but outside of this we have still found time to flourish on the sports field and within the local community. Lieutenant Hawke has taken members of the Company to compete in a number of local running events including the Bassingbourn Half Marathon and Baldock 10km race. Captain Weir signed himself up for 'The Wall' Ultra Marathon covering 69 miles in two days across Hadrian's Wall. His training was somewhat erratic and resulted in him being unable to walk for days afterwards. Sergeant Hendry ran a military stand on behalf of the Battalion at the local public house: The Hoops. This was a community engagement activity which witnessed members of the Company very engaged with the free bar that was offered.

We would like to express our farewells to Major Jim Reid who is now living and working in Germany as SO2 G1 for 1st (United Kingdom) Division. With his departure we would like to introduce and welcome the new OC, Major Andrew Bayne. Since arriving at Bassingbourn he has experienced the full cacophony of Libyan complaints including gripes about utilities, living conditions, food and medical services. Having said farewell and good luck to Captain Rich Martin for his pilot training (God help us) and waved a fond farewell to Lieutenant Axie Deck, who has joined Balaclava Company before being posted to ITC, we had the joy of welcoming two new platoon commanders. Lieutenant Hawke, recently transferred from the ETS of all places, a Canadian academic – who ever heard of such a thing, and Second Lieutenant Christie who has recently returned from supporting the Scots Guards in BATUS. We also bid farewell to Corporal Nigel Nicholson who has left the Company to return to Fort George before leaving the British Army in early 2015. We wish him the best of luck.

As always the Company's extended family continues to grow and congratulations are in order to Sergeant McLaughlin and his partner Sarah on the birth of their baby boy, Michael, on the 16th July 2014.



Captain Weir at Mile 30 of his ultra-marathon.

CHARLIE (FIRE SUPPORT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major A J Phillips MC
Second-in-Command:	WO2 Parker
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 (CSM) Blackley
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Bright
Anti Tank Platoon Commander:	Captain I K Walker
Anti Tank Platoon Second-in-Command:	Colour Sergeant Buist
Anti Tank Platoon Sergeant:	Corporal Wilson
Mortar Platoon Commander:	Captain C M Treasure
Mortar Platoon Second-in-Command:	Sergeant Grant
Mortar Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Mortley
Pipes and Drums Platoon Pipe Major:	Colour Sergeant Grisdale
Drum Major:	Sergeant Campbell
12 Platoon Commander:	Sergeant Bruce
12 Platoon Sergeant:	Corporal Smith

The winds of change have brought in a new command team since Charlie Company's last entry in this magazine. Major Broadbent moves on to Northern Ireland and WO2 Beaton to Kenya. There has also been a temporary change to the order of battle with the Recce and Sniper Platoons being committed to training the Libyan General Purpose Force in Bassingbourn. 12 Platoon has been formed from Rifle Company Jocks not required for that NCO heavy training task.

The Company's role in meeting the array of tasks allocated to the Battalion has been truly impressive and the opportunities afforded to its soldiers exceptional. From ceremonial duties to field soldiering, the Company should be proud of its achievements. Most members of the Company will have, at the time of going to press, completed at least one overseas training exercise, in either Kenya, Canada or Spain. These training exercises, combined with the activities discussed below, have added a huge amount to the Jocks' personal development.

Operation COMET, the military support to the Commonwealth Games, saw 82 officers and men, from the Company, provide search teams at the Scottish Exhibition Conference Centre. The men were accommodated in Tulliallan, the Scottish Police College. It was rather unfamiliar territory for the Jocks who found themselves guests of the Police in altogether more friendly conditions than they may have been accustomed to previously. The Glasgow Games were a break from the norm, exposing the versatility of the troops who enjoyed working and socialising in a Tri-Service environment.

When the opportunity to go to Spain for 2 weeks was floated to the Company there was no shortage of volunteers. This was not, however, to be the usual holiday to the Costas. Exercise IBERIAN STAR saw a platoon deploy to Fort Fuerteventura on the Canary Islands. Paired with a Company from 7 SCOTS, the Platoon conducted a week of low level skills and drills to integrate with the Reserves before exercising with the Spanish Army. The focus was on rural operations in a testing environment made up of volcanic hills. As Privates Livingstone, Copland and Reid attest, 'It was hillier then Cape Wrath...and hot!'. The exercise culminated in an integrated Company attack with the Jocks working with their Spanish counterparts. For many, though, the highlight was an R&R trip to Corralejo where the troops got to sample



Members of 'The Savages' on exercise in Canada with the Scots Guards, June 2014.

some Spanish culture and enjoyed a well earned session of water based adventure training.

The focus for routine training has been the 4 Mechanised Brigade patrol competition held in September, involving patrolling over the rugged terrain of Warcop and the testing of basic military skills. The competition allowed basics to be honed and offered the opportunity for newly promoted JNCOs to command in the field. It has also been an opportunity for the Cambrian Patrol team to rehearse and prepare to a much higher standard than was previously possible.

On ceremonial matters, the Company has had an excellent year. The Pipes and Drums Platoon, under Pipe Major Grisdale, have dedicated a huge amount of personal time to competing in civilian competitions and were ranked fifth in the World Piping Championships held at Glasgow Green. This was achieved on top of the huge number of commitments the band have had over the last few months, including the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, piping for Her Majesty The Queen at Balmoral and countless other tasks.

September also brought the Highland Military Tattoo to Fort George. The Company provided the bulk of the manpower ensuring the behind the scenes work was completed. Captain Walker commanded the Honour Guard and the Jocks put on a fine show to the assembled masses.

Beyond the overseas training exercises the Company has been involved in all aspects of battalion training. The Company Second-in-Command, WO2 Parker, has continued to provide training courses for potential JNCOs and has prepared candidates for Section Commanders' and Platoon Sergeants' Battle Courses to a very high standard. The next few months will see a focus on re-establishing the basic support weapon skills in Anti-Tanks and Mortars.

As WO2 (CSM) Blackley has often said to the Company 'You can rest when you're dead' – Forward the 'Savages'.

PIPES AND DRUMS

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

We start this edition with a report from Royal Week. Her Majesty was in residence at The Palace of Holyroodhouse in June. Drum Major Campbell was, though, a wee bit disheartened when Her Majesty did not come over to chat during the arrival parade. It was left to Private Archibald (wee Archie) to inform the Drum Major that if he had trimmed his beard with a hedge trimmer the Queen would not have been so scared of chatting to us.



A good day out!



Awaiting the arrival of Her Majesty The Queen.



Pipe Major Grisdale keeping an eye on 'top hand Toni'.



The naming of HMS Queen Elizabeth.



The Pipe Band at the World Pipe Band Championships

For the newcomer to the Platoon, Private Adamson, it was an eye opener as to just how much the Pipes and Drums do work when they are away. "It's just not drinking all the time", he was informed by the Pipe Major.

The conclusion of Royal Week came when on the Thursday night the Queen's Piper invited the Pipe Major, Corporal Muir and Private McDonald into the Palace to play around the table for the Royal Family and the guests. Alas, an early night was to be had as the Platoon was to be up early the next morning and on the bus to Rosyth. The Pipes and Drums were once again in demand playing at the naming ceremony of the new aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth. It was a surprise to some of the lads to see themselves on live TV as the parade was happening. Clearly they were not looking at the big TV screen as their heads and eyes were forward!

On 19th July 2014, the Platoon competed at the Paisley Pipe Band Competition. The Pipe Major's diplomatic skills were put to the test

when no parking could be found for the bus. The Scouse Pipe Major phoned up the organiser to ask about the parking only to be informed that there was no parking for busses and to just park anywhere. When he asked about a parking ticket the reply came back "its OK my friend is the traffic warden here". But after blood and a lot of tears and under the rainstorm from hell the Platoon came first in the street march, second in Grade 4, second in Grade 3 and were the best Drum Corps. The drummers have not let us forget the fact that they were very successful this session. After this fantastic achievement the Pipe Major's wife Kelly invited the Platoon around to the house on the Sunday for lunch.



The calm before the storm.

This resulted in her having to take the next day off work and three lads sleeping in the guest room. As we lived to tell the story, our focus turned back to State Ceremonial with the arrival of Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Rothesay at The Palace of Holyroodhouse. This time the Drum Major was a very happy man as he got to chat with our Royal Colonel.

Running alongside this array of music and State Ceremonial parades Op VOCATE has been supported by a duty piper and drummer. For the entirety, the duty drummer has been the ever so graceful Private Craig with a mix of pipers coming and going. Private Craig has been the backbone to Op VOCATE.

Rehearsals for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo began on Monday 28th July. As always, the first few days were non-stop and trying to concentrate whilst playing next to civilian bands is really tough. The young members of the Platoon found this hard going as during any small break that we had the band was going through our own competing sets.

Once the dress rehearsal was done and dusted, we were up early on the Friday morning to travel to Glasgow to take part in the Commonwealth Games Closing Ceremony rehearsals. Friday was the first of many long days as the band returned to Edinburgh just in time to don No 1 Dress and head to the Castle for the first official performance.

Saturday was another early start as we headed to the Inverkeithing Highland Games. The thought of our first performance at the Castle was overcome by winning Grade 4 and gaining second place in Grade 3. Then Sunday arrived and the pace remained frenetic as we found ourselves on an early bus journey back to Glasgow to participate in the Closing Ceremony of the Commonwealth Games.

As the month ticked on, the performances at the Castle were becoming second nature. Private Archibald thought it was like Groundhog Day and was heard saying, "I could do this with my eyes shut".

The second weekend in August saw the band once again don their hacking kits and travelling to more Pipe Band Championships. This time the driver (ex RLC) was commanded to North Berwick (Saturday) and Perth (Sunday) with the help from the Drum Major's satnav. Anyway, another two competitions and another two trophies to be engraved. The Drum Corps started complaining of sore backs as they were carrying the Pipe Corps. Claiming three Best Drum Corps prizes we do not think the pipers will be getting new reeds for a while.

Saturday 16th August saw the band competing in the highly prestigious World Pipe Band Championships. The band played really well and managed to qualify in the top 12 of 46 bands (the first time an Army band has qualified for 20 years in any grade). Time was ticking as we had to return to Edinburgh for our third double show, as we marched on to play in the final and we stepped up another notch and claimed a fifth place. Fifth out of 46 bands was a great achievement for the band considering the commitments we had in the few months prior to the competition.

The Tattoo was one of the busiest we have had in years with only one day off. The troops made best use of this day off, by dressing up in charity clothing and hitting the town for Lance Corporal Muir's unofficial stag do.

A week's leave was very welcome as the Tattoo came to a close. On returning to Inverness we hit the ground running, straight into rehearsals for the Inverness Military Tattoo. Only lasting four days, it was very relaxed considering the few months we have had on the road. The Highland Military Tattoo was a great success and the Drum Major got his beard on the front of a whiskey bottle!!

MORTAR PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Captain C M Treasure
 Second-in-Command: Sergeant Grant
 Platoon Sergeant: Sergeant Mortley

Within the last six months, the Mortar Platoon has been deployed on a number of exercises and RAAT tasks. The pick of these was Exercise PRAIRIE STORM 1 in Canada where we were required to support The Scots Guards with MFCs and a number of dismounted Jocks. The opportunity to support a Heavy Mechanised Battle Group proved an excellent challenge for the MFCs who, having been in the light role for some years, were unaccustomed to operating in CVRT (SPARTAN), a fact highlighted by Corporal Steele who forgot to secure his hatch whilst on a cross country move; we hope his hand is better! That said, the performance of the Jocks was exceptional and having adjusted to high intensity mechanised operations, they provided first class support to the developing Scots Guards Mortar Platoon.

In July, the Platoon deployed on Op COMET as part of the MOD's support to the Commonwealth Games security plan. The majority of the troops deployed to Tulliallan Police College where, after a period of pre-training, they were tasked to support the provision of security at the SECC Hydro in Glasgow. Although a change from our recent operational taskings, the Jocks took to their new role with gusto, happily engaging in banter with the spectators as they awaited screening. It was pleasing to hear many positive comments from the spectators regarding the professionalism of our soldiers ensuring they stood out amongst a tri-service organisation. That said, the Jocks were always ready to aid the other services as required and Private Sweetin should be commended for his efforts to develop the relationship between the Army and the RAF.

As ever, we have continued to provide a steady flow of soldiers to the Support Weapons School for career courses. We congratulate both Sergeant Mortley and Lance Corporal Smith on passing their respective mortar courses. No doubt they are looking forward to the inevitable trawls they now qualify for with their new found competencies. We also have a new Platoon Commander, Captain Treasure with Captain



Sergeant Mortley just beaten to the finish line by Dame Kelly Holmes.



At last! A sensible head for the Mortar Platoon.

Dobson having moved on to become the Intelligence Officer. Captain Treasure will complete his Platoon Commander's Course this autumn alongside Lance Corporal McKenzie who is on his Mortar Standards Course.

The Platoon would like to say farewell to Privates Roberts, Gourlay and Brown who are going to further their life experience with a move to civilian street. We would also like to congratulate Private Alexandre on his marriage to Krystal.

The next six months is set to be just as busy with the upcoming Company Military skills competition with Corporal Watson leading the Mortars team. This will be followed by the Battalion Mortar Cadre and a period of live firing on Salisbury Plain, as well as support to Ex BORDER STORM and Ex STEEL DRAGON over the same period.

ANTI-TANK PLATOON

Platoon Commander:	Captain I K Walker
Second-in-Command:	Colour Sergeant Mitchell
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Brady
1 Detachment Commander:	Corporal Carpenter
2 Detachment Commander:	Corporal Creighton
3 Detachment Commander:	Corporal Carmichael
4 Detachment Commander:	Corporal Wilson

The Platoon has been spread across the world over the last six months; Ex PRAIRIE STORM 1 and 2 in Canada have been supported successfully, as has the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. We have sent men to Brecon and Warminster to qualify them in the wide range of skills they need to operate in the Anti-Tank Platoon, with Lance Corporal Withington passing the Detachment Commanders' Course and Corporal Wilson passing the Section Commanders' Course. Corporal Creighton was also successful in the Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course in Brecon.

During Ex PRAIRIE STORM members of the Platoon acted as dismounts for the Right Flank Company, 1st Battalion The Scots Guards and were tested thoroughly in all their infantry skills. The Platoon battled through cramped conditions combined with high temperatures to successfully rid the vast expanse of BATUS of the enemy.

Looking to the next six months the Platoon will complete another qualification cadre in October and hope for further successes at the Support Weapons School in Warminster.

DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY

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

2014 been a period dominated by change and realignment for Delta (Light) Company. Fresh from the challenges of 2013 (and not so fresh for some following their return from a 6 week exercise in Kenya at the start of the year!) the Company quickly found itself tasked to transform into Training Company 3 on Operation VOCATE. A frantic period of retraining followed with programmes becoming dominated by Arabic lessons and periods of preparation and rehearsal.

Operation VOCATE has been a fascinating task from the off and has demanded the men adjust expectations and instructional techniques to fit the Libyan approach to life. Owing to the teaching requirements of VOCATE, our order of battle has transformed to reflect that of a Training Company at Catterick. However, rather than run a mini ITC Catterick we have striven to find a middle way between British and Libyan expectations; a relationship that has proven to be rather more fluid than expected. It has forced us to adapt and has put a far greater pressure on our people than we perhaps expected. We had not fully understood, for instance, the full implications of Ramadan and what it would mean to us (chefs serving food at 0200hrs as it turned out!). We had not envisaged encountering an individual unable to open a UK bank account owing



Lieutenant Crook looking for the 'Rats of Tobruk'.



Corporal Miller teaches his interpreter the 'Brecon Point'.



Lieutenant Coles celebrates his promotion in style thanks to the talents of Mrs McCarthy

WHAT MAKES A GOOD OP VOCATE INSTRUCTOR?

By Second Lieutenant Andrew Atterbury

Operation VOCATE has presented challenges to the training teams that would have been difficult to fully anticipate at the start. This has forced the instructors to adapt from the 'Catterick Model,' to something capable of dealing with the problems posed by training a Libyan General Purpose Force.

From the beginning it has been essential for instructors to be adaptable and flexible. The unpredictability of the Libyan soldiers has meant that lessons and events have to be put together at short notice. At times this has put pressure on the training teams to deliver with little warning and has highlighted the importance of flexibility amongst the NCOs and officers. Whilst the initial construct of VOCATE was to operate a training establishment similar to Catterick this was quickly adapted to cope with the reality on the ground. It has taken time, however, for instructors (particularly those with a background in training centres) to bring their expectations into line with this reality. Good instructors have



Don't tell the MTO!



Major John 'Haraka Baraka' Bailey with honorary Golden Dons.



A Libyan soldier gets back to basics.



I'm pretty sure this isn't Benghazi!



The Libyans feel the heat during public order training.

to his birthday falling on the 30th of February on the Islamic calendar. On the whole though we have made a successful time of it and our instructors have taken to the task with aplomb (and not a small helping of humour). Who can forget the long running war between Sergeants Young and McCarthy, daily tampering with each others' rooms, bikes, kit, possessions, headdresses and so on? Who could fail to laugh when a Libyan told us his brother had been injured fighting back home but it was alright as he had only been "shot a little bit"?! We have found our stride with the Libyans and have learnt many lessons while down in Bassingbourn. There can be little doubt we are a better organisation for our experiences.

Congratulations are in order for Corporal Miller and Lance Corporal Cameron and their partners who have recently celebrated the birth of their first children. We say hello and farewell to OC Recce, Captain Hamilton, who spent three months with us in Bassingbourn. He hands over to Second Lieutenant Atterbury who arrives very fresh faced from Brecon. We also bid farewell to our long-standing CQMS, Colour Sergeant Barrie and we welcome Colour Sergeant Carnegie into the Golden Don's fold. Colour Sergeant Barrie heads off to pastures new in the form of the Laikipian plains of central Kenya where his love of soldiering and his gift for sharp turns of phrase will no doubt serve him well in his new post on the BATUK training staff. We thank him for his time with the Company and we wish him the very best for the future. Sergeant 'Bob' Bavadra and Corporal Ritchie have recently left to take up positions at ITC Catterick, an environment in which they will surely excel; there can be no better preparation for training recruits than a deployment on Operation VOCATE! Finally, we are all thoroughly jealous of Corporal Vaniqi's posting to Gibraltar and we thank her for the postcard.

adapted to the fact that we cannot deliver the same package that would be delivered to a Phase 1 recruit. Instead they have managed the expectations of their teams and have looked for the successes of VOCATE; a growing grasp of section and platoon tactics and an improving attitude to the course as a whole.

Patience has been key. The Libyan soldiers operate at a very different pace from a British NCO and this disparity has caused numerous problems. The good instructors are those who have accepted this rather than fight it and have developed the patience to deal with Libyans who may take an hour to do what a Jock would do in five minutes. Patience has also been required due to language. Working through an interpreter inevitably causes delays and at times confusion. This can be compounded by dealing with soldiers who often have a very different understanding of how they should fight. Good instructors have adapted to working through an interpreter and have learned to accept that the lesson may not be learned immediately.

One of the toughest issues for instructors to surmount has been the cultural difference between the Libyans and the Jocks. While the language barrier can be partially overcome through the use of interpreters this cannot bridge the cultural divide. Instead it has taken time and effort to understand the very different approach the Libyans have. In particular the Libyan approach to honour and shaming has taken some getting used to. Whereas most NCOs would think nothing of publicly berating a British soldier, doing the same with a Libyan recruit would bring a very volatile response and almost certainly a negative outcome. Good instructors have learned to compromise their approach to get the best result out of the Libyan recruits.

Overall, training Libyans has presented our NCOs and Officers with challenges that have forced them to change, and in some cases completely overhaul, their approach to training. Despite this it has been hugely encouraging to see the strength of our instructors and the manner in which they have adapted to deliver an excellent level of instruction.

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

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

Company Headquarters has found itself as busy as ever both in Fort George and with support to almost every other major event across the Highlands. This includes Armed Forces Day, the Northern Meeting and the very successful Highland Military Tattoo. Major McInroy has found himself to be chief 'go to' guy of all of these things as well as recruiting! At one stage he was receiving at least 20 visitors daily; Lance Corporal Mudunavosa can confirm this as his brew making skills have improved tenfold.

CSM Allan Dunn would have gone grey if it were possible however due to lack of hair that has not quite happened yet. The constant change over of troops from Op VOCATE to the Fort brings the daily struggle to find bodies to cover the guard and all the additional tasks that have to be supported. However, he has taken to this task like a duck to water without a swear word to be heard!

The store has had an extremely busy period, firstly seeing the handover of CQMS's at the start of June. We say farewell to Colour Sergeant Ross McBride as he takes on the challenge of a battalion move as his first task as a CQMS with 1 SCOTS and welcome Colour Sergeant Rab McCready who returns from the Infantry Battle School to take post as CQMS. During this action packed period we have seen the stores supporting two Pre Brecon Cadres and a PJNCO cadre, a good experience for Corporal 'H' Harris, Lance Corporal 'Mud' Mudunavosa and Private McPhate to test their long range transporting skills, or as McPhate put it "...a pure deliberate attempt to ruin my weekend!". The support to the Northern Meeting, The Highland Tattoo, 4 SCOTS BRT and preparation for the Commanding Officer's Assurance Audit has kept us with enough work to keep the storemen busy.

We congratulate Corporal Rana and his wife on the birth of their new baby boy and his promotion to Sergeant but also say farewell as he leaves for his new job (jolly?) in Cyprus. The remainder of the Company HR department have been on a merry go round seeing Corporals Rana, Whalley and Buchan and Private Tilley and anyone else who can switch on a computer or thinks they can work JPA passing through the office. However, Corporal Whalley and Private Tilley are now building a firm base to work from and trying to keep track of an ever changing Company.



Lance Corporal Mudunovosa deals with getting a bigger gun for his Armskote.



Sergeant Major Allan Dunn completes his handover programme

QUARTERMASTERS' DEPARTMENT

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

There have been many changes in the QM's Department recently with the introduction of two new RQMS' and a new QM(T) all in the space of a couple of weeks. We have managed to come through the turmoil that these changes bring and we continue to support and sustain the Battalion on a range of taskings. We are now into our ninth month of supporting Op VOCATE in Bassingbourn and the reactivation of the site which had been closed for nearly 2 years was a real challenge. The receipt of kit and equipment, accommodation and infrastructure were the main priorities during the activation phase. Many obstacles were overcome; not least the building of 900 beds over a two day period during which Corporal "Slugmeister" Sloan was heard to remark "I never thought I'd see the day when I was sick of the sight of a bed". The focus has now switched from site activation to that of support to training which is certainly a much easier task.

Once the Libyan Forces arrived in Bassingbourn in June, the main effort for the Department was the issue of their clothing and equipment. Rehearsals were conducted of the issue process until the RQMS (M) was satisfied and under the watchful eye of Staff Sergeant 'Smudger' Smith, plus the cheerful help of a work party of Jocks, this task went extremely well. It was not without incident though and Private 'Aaron' Cameron was left a perplexed figure as the Libyan Officer he was escorting through the kit issue suddenly left the issue tables remarking "cigarette" and went outside for a smoke! With this key task complete, the QM was a happy man and this was reflected in his improving golf scores!

With the bulk of G4 activation work complete and all kit issued, training started and this allowed the Department to filter back to Fort George to provide support to the 350 or so soldiers not involved in Op VOCATE. That is with the exception of the RQMS (M) and Corporal O'Gorman who continue to provide excellent G4 support to this high profile operation. Meanwhile in the Fort, the other members of the Department continue to graft away looking busy in the eyes of the QM but there are some who need to practice their 'bluffing and looking busy' skills, namely Colour Sergeant Hastings and Lance Corporal Porter! The Master Tailor, Colour Sergeant Currie has been joined by his new apprentice, Lance Corporal Couper both of whom continue to work hard on a myriad of tailoring tasks to the sound of dubious dance music CDs whilst the Clothing JNCO, Corporal Errington, continues to monitor how many pairs of brown boots are issued to the QM!

Captain Scott MacKenzie who was previously MTO has taken up his appointment as QM(T); the Department welcomes this move



Outgoing QM(T) Captain Glenn Hogg says farewell to the Battalion and hands over to his successor Captain Scott MacKenzie.

and it is hoped that he can provide the legislation that will keep Corporal Catto out of the QM's Department van which he seems to think is his own personal vehicle! Our two new RQMS' are now in place; WO2 (RQMS (M)) Stacey and WO2 (RQMS(T)) Fairweather both of whom are experiencing the joys that being an RQMS brings and are tearing their hair out in frustration on a daily basis, as they try and work out who owns what kit across the Battalion!

We look forward to completing our Op VOCATE task at the end of November 2014 and are already into the planning stages of our forthcoming deployment to Cyprus on the UN Op TOSCA deployment in 2015.



Staff Sergeant 'Smudger' Smith thinks his Op VOCATE is over... well it is now!



Corporal 'Simmy' Simpson receives his farewell gift from the QM on his departure for the Welfare Office

CIS PLATOON

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

2014 continues to be a jam packed year with the CIS Platoon working feverishly on all manner of tasks. Since the back end of last year we have been heavily involved in Op VOCATE. This has seen us deploy early to the site in order to establish communications infrastructure prior to the arrival of the Battalion, moving on to provide tactical communications advice and assistance to the exercises running throughout the course.

The VOCATE commitment has split the Platoon between Fort George in the North and Bassingbourn in the South. This split has left the task of getting to grips with the G6 implications of converting the Battalion to Light Mechanised Infantry to the RSWO. The enormity of this is finally getting to him, turning him older and balder by the minute.

Following the pain of redundancies last year, the Platoon has concentrated on rebuilding its integral capability. Throughout the year there has been a surge in training activity with all the newcomers to the Platoon being put through their paces, converting them from rifle-men to signallers. Congratulations go to Corporal Munjoma, Lance Corporals Ahmed, Odame and Gurung and Privates Beats, Greaves, Olaleye and Scott for passing their Regimental Signallers (RS) course, conducted in Warminster. Special recognition should be paid to Lance Corporal Ahmed for passing this course with a distinction and to Lance Corporal Gurung for his promotion.

Colour Sergeant Dowdles is now firmly embedded in the role of CIS CQMS and is already making his presence felt. He has also deployed south of the border to control the vast array of BOWMAN equipment associated with the Battalion's deployment. The Platoon has also welcomed back Sergeant Bonnar from ITC and he has settled into the dual role of BOWMAN System Manager and iHub Manager.

Away from the main Battalion activity the Platoon has been actively involved in supporting the Commonwealth Games with Corporal Cochrane and Private Tudor heading up the G6 commitment. There have also been two deployments in support of the Scottish Regimental Training Team (SRTT) through the summer, ensuring that the future commanders of the Regiment are able to operate the communications equipment at their disposal. These were ably supported by Corporal Patterson along with various other members of the Platoon. We are also looking to the future; Op TOSCA is on our immediate horizon, as is the conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry, both of these will throw up different G6 challenges for us to solve.

Finally, on a personal note, congratulations must go to Corporal Murphy and his fiancée Ruth on the birth of their son Lewis.



CIS Platoon Initialisation Training.

TRAINING WING

Training Officer: Captain M James/ Captain T J H Towler
Training WO: WO2 Parker
Training Sergeant: Colour Sergeant Sharp MC

With the Battalion deployed on Op VOCATE the Training Wing team remains split between Fort George and Bassingbourn. In Inverness, WO2 Parker and his small band of men continue to do sterling work preparing candidates to a very high standard for external courses. Despite operational pressures, they have maintained the flow of primed and motivated students travelling to Brecon. Equally, the pre-course run at the Fort for potential JNCOs has continued to



Colour Sergeant Sharp ending his exercise debrief to Sergeant Pratt on an encouraging note.



Captain Towler spots an unfastened webbing pouch at a range of 600m.

prove its worth, with a number of the Battalion's soldiers finishing strongly on recent SCOTS Regimental Training Team Section 2iC courses. All of this bodes well for the Battalion's deployment to Cyprus next year.

In Bassingbourn, Training Wing personnel have been at the centre of efforts to enhance the capacity of the Libyan General Purpose Force. Whilst the Catterick model has been a useful handrail, the programme has evolved throughout the course with Companies gaining an increasing awareness of how to get the best out of their students. Typically, this has involved time spent in the field with as much excitement thrown in as possible. Encouragingly, the Libyans' performance has improved much as the course has progressed, with respectable Company Attacks being completed by all Companies at the 11 week point. Sergeant Smith RDG, attached to the Wing for VOCATE, has also had great success in public order exercises, turning reckless mobs into well ordered and disciplined bodies of men. Whilst many of our standard training techniques have been cast aside, the Battalion has benefitted much from the VOCATE experience with the daily requirement to inspire challenging students and to remain ready for the unexpected to happen at any time. The benefits of this will no doubt be seen as our Lance Corporals head to the Section Commanders' Battle Course and our Corporals take up post at Phase 1 Training establishments.

Finally, we wish Captain James and Colour Sergeant Copeland farewell and good luck in their new roles whilst welcoming Captain Towler and Colour Sergeant Sharp to the Wing.

CATERING PLATOON

Regimental Catering Warrant Officer (SQMS): WO2 Philip
Platoon Sergeant Fort George: Sergeant Leye
Platoon Sergeant Op VOCATE: Sergeant Ross-Matthew

The Catering Department continues to provide an impeccable service to both the VOCATE Land Training Site and Fort George.

With the arrival of the Libyan General Purpose Force (GPF) mid June and the commencement of training at Bassingbourn Barracks the delivery of food services increased dramatically. It was always going to be a 'suck it and see' approach as not many of the Platoon had met a Libyan, never mind fed one. No amount of research could have prepared the Platoon for the demands of these soldiers but after 2 months we finally cracked it. Having the word "chicken, chicken, chicken" shouted repeatedly at the chefs during meals gave me the inclination they preferred this protein. Subsequently all they eat now is chicken and they have stopped shouting, a simple fix.

Bearing in mind Bassingbourn Barracks had not been occupied for some time, there were quite a few barriers to break before the delivery of food service could commence. By far the most difficult of these was the periodic gas flow stoppages to the central feeding facility, the Roysia Restaurant. I have lost count of the amount of times the gas has gone off at short notice but thanks to the Sergeant Ross-Matthew (AKA DIY Mattie and his techno coloured tool kit), more often than not these situations were rapidly rectified. However in the background the Platoon was busy deploying Operational Field Catering Systems (OFCS) to ensure hot meals were provided if Sergeant R-M's magic wrench failed the task. In all cases the Platoon overcame the shortfall and delivered without fail.

The month of July brought more change and disruption including Ramadan, a word that still sends shivers through the Catering Platoon. Without doubt this was the most testing period given the requirement for a 24 hour catering facility. Tasked to provide three meals during daylight hours for UK troops and a further two meals though the night for the Libyans to ensure all parties were fed to enable the sufficient continuation of training. During daylight hours the GPF would conduct a fast which could only be broken at dusk by the consumption of dates and 200 millilitres of milk. Throughout the month long period of Ramadan they consumed 58,000 dates, the equivalent weight of a Land Rover Wolf, and drank 2160 litres of milk which equates to 3801 pints of lager.

The end of Ramadan was celebrated with Eid. Yet again the Platoon was called upon to provide a huge feast which would be served in the mosque. With the assistance of several parties including the Cultural Advisor, Libyan soldiers and an interpreter, the chefs surpassed expectations and provided a feast indeed fit for the occasion.

It has been a tumultuous few months but the Catering Platoon is looking forward to the challenges ahead. Although we have all enjoyed and learnt from our experiences we very much look forward to some well deserved respite and Christmas leave on our return to Fort George.

KIRK OF THE BLACK WATCH

By Padre J C Duncan CF Chaplain

Padre's Patter!

Hello there!

We have moved! The Battalion Kirk is now in two locations! Of course we have the splendid and historic Kirk at Fort George but the Battalion is also now on Operation VOCATE at Bassingbourn Barracks. I re-opened the Station Church as an operational church where we have regular Sunday worship and I am using The Black Watch Communion set. What a privilege to use the communion cups and plates while the Battalion is deployed. This is the best communion set I have ever used in the Army. My iPod is the organ and I and the RMO have christened my iPod with the name, Gladys Bell! It sounds better than iPod! Bassingbourn Kirk is a modest building compared to Fort George Kirk but not without its own history. Bassingbourn Barracks was an RAF camp during the Second World War and was used by the US Air Force. The church building was originally the briefing room for the air crews for their missions over Germany.

There is a small hall attached to Bassingbourn Kirk and this is called "The Refuge". The Refuge is open to all ranks and it is a place to simply relax and have a brew! We get the daily newspapers and I even managed to get some Scottish ones to keep up with the "fitba" scores! There is also everything from chess to snakes and ladders!

As we are training Libyan soldiers at Bassingbourn, a Mosque has been opened for the Muslim soldiers. I was invited to the opening of the Mosque by Colonel Elfetori Abdewi, Imam, from the Libyan Army. This is the first time a Mosque has been opened at a British Army barracks. The Mosque is situated in a hangar which at one time was the band block. The Imam also invited me to the Mosque for the festival of Eid which ends the period of fasting after Ramadan. We had an excellent meal together which was prepared by the Battalion catering staff.

We commemorated the centenary of the British Empire's entry into the First World War with a Kirk Muster on the parade square. Thanks must go to the RSM and the RP staff for preparing the square, the lighting and PA system for this significant service when we remembered the contribution made by The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) during the war. At 2300hrs the parade lights were dimmed to recall the famous words of Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1914, when he said, "The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our lifetime." The Commanding Officer laid a wreath on behalf of the Battalion.

While members of the Battalion commemorated the First World War at Bassingbourn Barracks, those at Fort George held a similar service at the same time and this was led by the Very Rev'd Canon Alison J Simpson, Officiating Chaplain to the Military, and the Rector of St Columba's Episcopal Church, Nairn, and Dean of the Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness. The Battalion Second-in-Command, Major Nigel Jordan-Barber, members of the Battalion at Fort George and families attended this service.



Eid feast: The Commanding Officer and other happy customers.

Congratulations!

Marriages

Captain Christopher McRobbie to Doctor Georgina McLellan at Fort George Kirk.

Sergeant Darren Pasifull to Miss Jacqueline Higgins at Saint Margaret's Chapel, Edinburgh Castle.

With every blessing,



The Padre's sense of humour is too much for Corporal Hart (back to camera).



The Padre's Libyan opposite number with a 'parishioner'.



The First World War commemoration service.

MT PLATOON

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

Since May 2014 the Platoon has been split into two smaller platoons. The MTO and 12 others have been permanently deployed on Op VOCATE and the MT Sergeant and the remainder of the Platoon left in Fort George. The Platoon is currently managing two fleets with 28 white fleet vehicles and 37 green fleet vehicles in Bassingbourn. In the Fort there are 53 vehicles, bringing a total of 118 vehicles.

In Bassingbourn Privates Wood, Batao, Tullis and Mike-Philip have become almost full time coach drivers, taking the Libyans to and from training. Corporal Blair has become an almost permanent fixture in



A rather serious looking MTO.



Private Tullis: Go Karting Champ 2014.

Bassingbourn Camp, having deployed in December 2013 and is still going strong. All the extra money he has been earning has put him in the good books with his wife so he has splashed out and bought himself an XBOX One. This, it seems, has been the highlight of his tour. It has not been all work and no play with the Platoon managing to get a way for the day to do some Go Karting. After a hard fought Grand Prix, Private Tullis emerged champion much to the annoyance of Corporal Cruickshanks who really fancied his chances.

Back in the Fort the small team remaining behind have done a great job supporting the remainder of the Battalion. Not only have the troops kept the MT running at full tilt with reduced numbers, they have also had time to help out with Guards and Duties. Members of the Fort George element have also had time to support Public Duties and the Commonwealth Games.

As the Battalion moves towards conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry we have seen the first members of the Platoon become Driver Maintenance Instructors (DMI) on the Foxhound AFV. Corporal Wishart along with Sergeant Whyte (B Company) attended the DMI course at the Armoured Training Centre. This is an intensive 8 week course where all aspects of maintenance and driving are covered. This allows the DMIs to teach the vehicle platform to soldiers back at the unit.

Looking to the future, 2015 is going to be another busy but exciting year. The Battalion awaits the arrival of the Light Mechanised Basic Unit Fleet which will see us start the conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry. Some members of the Platoon will also deploy on OP TOSCA to Cyprus. There is a lot to look forward to in the coming year.

LIGHT AID DETACHMENT

Officer Commanding LAD: Captain A W A Manning REME
AQMS: WO2 MacMillan

The Light Aid Detachment of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers is always integral to ensuring the smooth running of its parent unit and its contribution to The Black Watch Battalion is no exception. Over the past year the LAD has supported the Battalion on operations and exercises, ensuring that its equipment is ready and up to the task. While the Battalion has been deployed on Op VOCATE, the LAD has had a small team detached to support the effort. However, over the course of the deployment most of the LAD has deployed either on the initial setup (including the 500 mile 2 day road move) or rotating through.

The experience has proved both interesting and useful, particularly for the more junior tradesmen who have had a chance to get hands on with a wide variety of both vehicle and weapon system issues that they would not normally see day to day at Fort George. Normal wear and tear on a well used fleet has kept the LAD busy but with the help of several external agencies, including Defence Support Group Colchester and 29 EOD Regiment, equipment availability has remained high, allowing the Battalion to achieve its mission.

For those members of the LAD who have remained at the Fort the pace of work has not slackened off. In addition to normal maintenance the LAD has also been preparing for the changes required by the Army 2020 plan. The Light Mechanised Infantry structure sees the LAD making the largest changes of any department within the Battalion. More than doubling in size from 14 to 29 it is gaining a number of specialists including Electronics Technicians, a Metal-smith, a Recovery Mechanic

and an Engineering Officer. These changes will allow the LAD to more ably support the new armoured vehicles that will be arriving including Foxhound, Ridgeback and Husky. With this new equipment to be brought in and the old equipment to be disposed of, all whilst maintaining what we have, there is no doubt that the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers of the Black Watch will continue to have a busy year in 2015.



Craftsman Cameron tinkering.



Craftsman Webster cradling his baby.

RAO'S DEPARTMENT

RAO:	Major A A Dunford MBE AGC(SPS)
Detachment Commander:	Captain S W Lewis AGC(SPS)
RAWO:	WO2 (SQMS) Young AGC(SPS)
FSA:	Staff Sergeant Downie AGC(SPS)
Regimental Accountant:	Sergeant Penman AGC(SPS)

The Adjutant General's Corps Staff and Personnel Support (AGC(SPS)) detachment has continued to support the Battalion in all its endeavours throughout the spring and summer. Six months ago I wrote of the backdrop of uncertainty facing the Detachment due to operational commitments; thankfully, the start of Op VOCATE simplified the immediate requirement for Staff and Personnel Support and the Detachment has been able to focus on both Fort George and Basingbourn. In addition to the support provided to training in the South, Corporal Whalley deployed as a female searcher supporting the delivery of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, giving her a chance to experience another side of military service.

Op VOCATE has followed the old military maxim of "plan early, plan twice" and the detachment has had ample opportunity to practice its flexibility. Operational duties have included many aspects of tradi-



Sergeant McAloon and WO2 Young conduct a pay parade.



Private Whittall starts work with Delta Company on leaving his post in BHQ.

tional SPS work but with additional complexity due to Arab culture and language. The detachment has been highly involved in aspects of the Libyan trainees' pay and movements control, doing much of the legwork for the Libyan National Support Element. In conjunction with Lloyds Bank we opened a bank account for each Libyan trainee, facilitating their government in paying a living allowance to their trainees. Friction has been caused by external agencies and a missed delivery by G4S resulted in WO2 Young making a Friday evening trip to the Permanent Joint Headquarters in London to pick up £25,000 in cash! We have also been busy providing advice to Libyan trainees about how to use their debit cards, and administering the inevitable forgotten PINs and lost bank cards. Augmenting the detachment in Basingbourn have been two members of the AGC(ETS) who have been managing and conducting quality assurance on the 70 interpreters that are enabling the delivery of training in Arabic.

I end with the happy news that Corporal Rana's wife gave birth on the 20th June, and Corporal Tamang's wife gave birth on 2nd August, both to healthy and happy boys.

UNIT WELFARE OFFICE

UWO:	Captain A H Cunningham
AUWO & WIS Manager:	Sergeant Trickovic
Welfare JNCO:	Corporal Simpson

Over the past few months the Unit Welfare Office, along with the Community Development Workers, have been busy laying on various events to keep the children and families entertained during the summer holidays. These events have been well received by the community, despite the Scottish summer weather not always being on side.

There were six day trips run on Wednesdays for the children and families, ranging from Corona's Theme Park in Aberdeen, a day out to Edinburgh Castle and Blair Drummond Safari Park.

Two barbecues were also organised, the 33 foot high slide and the bungee run being firm favourites with both the kids and the not so young! The Community Development Workers have run a number of

activities all throughout the summer including a five day residential course for 23 lucky kids at Ardour.

The Welfare Office also said its goodbyes to Captain Pete Marshall who has moved on to be MTO and Corporal Dougie Ferguson who has completed 22 years service. We wish both of them good luck for the future.

With their departure brings a new Welfare Officer, Captain Allan Cunningham and Corporal Robert Simpson, both joining the team from the Quartermaster's Department.



A fun time had by all!

EXERCISE POLYGON HACKLE

By Captain Iain Walker

Exercise POLYGON HACKLE was a rank ranged battlefield study in Belgium and France examining five actions of the First World War, culminating in the unveiling of a statue at Black Watch Corner, commemorating Black Watch soldiers who fell during the First World War. The study included visits to battlefields and memorials across the two countries allowing participants to apply modern day doctrine and tactics to the problems faced by our forebears. The areas visited were Mons, where we looked at the defence and retreat, the First and Second Battles of Ypres, the Somme and finally the Third Battle of Ypres.

Participants were allocated to syndicates and given subjects to research relating to the stands prior to briefing the group as a whole. At the end of the day there was the opportunity back in the hotel for the syndicates to present on the 'Golden Thread' linking today's soldiers to the past actions.

Highlights of the study were parading at the Menin Gate for the daily remembrance service and being present at the unveiling of a statue at Black Watch Corner in Polygon Wood. This brought together both young and old from the Black Watch in commemoration of fallen members of the Regiment and it was also a perfect opportunity for a catch up with old friends and comrades.



A visit to St Symphorien Cemetery near Mons.

ATTACHMENT TO THE NEPALESE ARMY

By Captain Bobby Stewart

Tales of my attachments to foreign armies are almost becoming a regular feature in the Red Hackle. In 2012 I spent a month on attachment to the Brazilian Army. From the middle of August I was fortunate enough to spend three weeks attached to the Nepalese Army. The Battalion's officers are convinced that I am making up for not having a gap year and that I spent my time travelling round Nepal. I was in fact there to attend their United Nations Staff Officer Course (UNSOC).

Nepal joined the United Nations in 1955, and since 1958 has gained a huge amount of experience in peacekeeping operations. They are currently the fifth largest troop contributing country to the UN. They have soldiers and officers deployed in 12 separate missions including Iraq, Israel, Syria and Sudan.

This staff course was delivered at the Birenda Peace Operations Training Centre (BPOTC) in Kavre Panchkhal. This is 950m above sea level and approximately 45 km to the east of Kathmandu. It does not sound far however this journey takes almost two hours with the road conditions. BPOTC is responsible for delivering pre-deployment training to Nepalese military contingents, military observers and staff officers to various UN peace support operations. During my time in Nepal there were over 2,500 soldiers conducting pre-deployment training, with two battalions preparing to deploy to Sudan and one preparing to deploy to Lebanon. The easiest organisation to compare this to in the British Army is OPTAG.

The UNSOC is distributed training from the UN Peacekeeping Operations HQ in New York. It was broken down into three different phases; firstly, learning about UN structures and how it operated, secondly mission analysis and finally working as staff officers in a UN Force HQ. I was one of two foreign students (another from Sri Lanka) and the only Captain on the course of 27. The Nepalese officers were predominantly Majors with five Lieutenant Colonels. They all hosted me exceptionally well and made me feel very welcome. The officers were keen that I explored and learnt about Nepal. With thanks to my Nepalese colleagues



Sunrise over the Kathmandu Valley.



Captain Stewart and Major De Silva, Sri Lankan Army.



UNSOC Course photograph.

I managed to tick off five of the top 15 things to do in Nepal according to Lonely Planet; including a trip to Bhaktapur an ancient city from the 8th Century, an opportunity to see the Himalayas from a hill station, as well as exploring Kathmandu.

The course was great, having the opportunity to learn about the UN and work with a foreign army. There were of course moments of frustration working in a multi-national headquarters but I think it will be great preparation for deploying to Cyprus next year.

CRICKET CLUB

OC Cricket: Lieutenant N J T Coles

The season opened up with Corporal Clement offering some ferocious chin music immediately putting the opposition on the back foot. He flew down from Fort George and fortunately the setting at The Honourable Artillery ground did not disappoint him or the rest of the team that had been kindly invited to support The Highland and Lowland Brigade Cricket Club (HLBCC). For many, just being part of the setting was an experience, however, the players stepped up to the mark and they made the most of the golden opportunity of playing on one of the most expensive grounds in the country. Lance Corporal Hunte ensured that the run rate was kept to a minimum from the opposite end before Lieutenant Pearson and Captain Lewis challenged the middle order with their deadly swing. As the bowlers sent the batsman back to the pavilion one by one the light closed

in and the opposition were bowled out for 94! Unfortunately, the arrival of the rain meant we could not chase the target but it was considered as a winning draw and in return we were offered a tour of Armoury House.

After the success against the HAC, the Battalion played Bassingbourn Cricket Club. In true infantry style we continued playing in the pouring rain for twenty overs to illustrate that we were determined to make a game of the situation. Once again, our aggressive bowling attack, although lacking Lance Corporals Clement and Hunte, kept not only the batsman guessing but also Captain Hamilton who donned the keeping gloves. Much to his own amazement he snapped up anything on offer and enjoyed discussing tactics with Captain Martin. With a feasible target, Captain Martin kept his head down and remained focused building the foundations of a strong innings. Lance Corporal Chadburn modelled the pads at one end while Corporal Purce became frustrated he could not strike the pig skin as smoothly as a golf ball. As guests we were unable to clinch victory from our hosts but a rematch is on the cards.

A further invitation from the HLBCC meant that some players were able to play on another highly sought after wicket at Chelsea Hospital against the Guards. Our hosts were put into bat and crawled their way to a respectable total before the final partnership added a further sixty in a flash. Unfortunately, our batting did not give a fair reflection of the game; however, it did mean that the summer evening was pleasantly enjoyed in Chelsea.



The Black Watch Battalion Cricket Club at the HAC ground.



Cricketers happy to be on day release from Bassingbourn.

SHINTY CLUB

OC Shinty: Captain P Marshall
Coach: Flight Sergeant Cooper, RAF

With the deployment of a number of players on Operation VOCATE, Shinty development has been put on temporary hold at Fort George. There have, however, been members of the Battalion featuring with the SCOTS Camanachd, the Armed Forces Shinty Team. Captain Marshall has played on a number of occasions this season having been dragged out of retirement from his coaching role due to players being deployed. This season also saw the first cap for Lance Corporal Grant Jamieson, Sniper Platoon, who took a break from rugby to turn out for the Armed Forces team in the Bullough Cup semi-final.

This was the first time in many years that Lance Corporal Jamieson has picked up a caman and played a competitive match. After a few minutes of getting used to the pace of the game, he was right back into the fold. He put in a really good performance and narrowly missed out being man of the match. It was a slightly disappointing finish to the season for the SCOTS who made it to one semi-final and one quarter-final. However, this can still be looked upon as a positive achievement considering all their opponents play Shinty regularly.

Looking forward to the start of 2015 the Battalion has plans to host a Shinty training camp in Fort George where players from all three Services will be invited to attend. Looking further into the year the Battalion also plans to host the first ever Inter-Services six-a-side competition. So while the development of the game has slowed down slightly, 2015 looks like it is going to be a busy and successful year for the team.



Lance Corporal Jamieson in action against Inverary.

GOLF SOCIETY

Golf Officer: Major J Howe
Match Secretary: WO2 Tollan
Handicap Captain: Staff Sergeant Smith

Despite the pace of life in the Battalion it has been another successful period for the golfers with the Society still retaining a high level of members of upwards of over 30 personnel across the Battalion of varying ranks and age. Due to work commitments it has been a difficult year to organise too many large events but we have continued to play matches whenever the opportunities arise.

Staff Sergeants Smith (QM's Dept) and Murray (Army Physical Training Corps Instructor) have led the charge this year flying the flag for their own corps and the Battalion. They have participated in high profile events such as the Army Open, Army Match Play and the Inter Corps Championships.

A team was again fielded to the MSIS Charity Quaich event this year. A number of members of the Society including Major Jamie Howe, WO2 Robbie Tollan, WO2 Allan Dunn, CSgt Mark Shearer attended the annual Black Watch Association event at Muckhart GC in June. The banter between the 'old and bold' and current serving members in the Battalion was second to none and huge congratulations must be given to Major Alex Stewart.

A friendly match was also held at Nairn Dunbar GC between members of the Society led by Major Jamie Howe against the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Club led by former Black Watch officer, Bruce Osborne. After a tough match the prizes were shared equally at the end of a great day and we look forward to the return match in the future.

The annual Ahluwalia Cup, our 'marquee' event of the year is scheduled to take place at the Cambridge Meridian GC in Cambridge on 26 September and there are approx 20 members scheduled to play. This promises to be a great day out and details of this event will be published in the next Red Hackle notes.



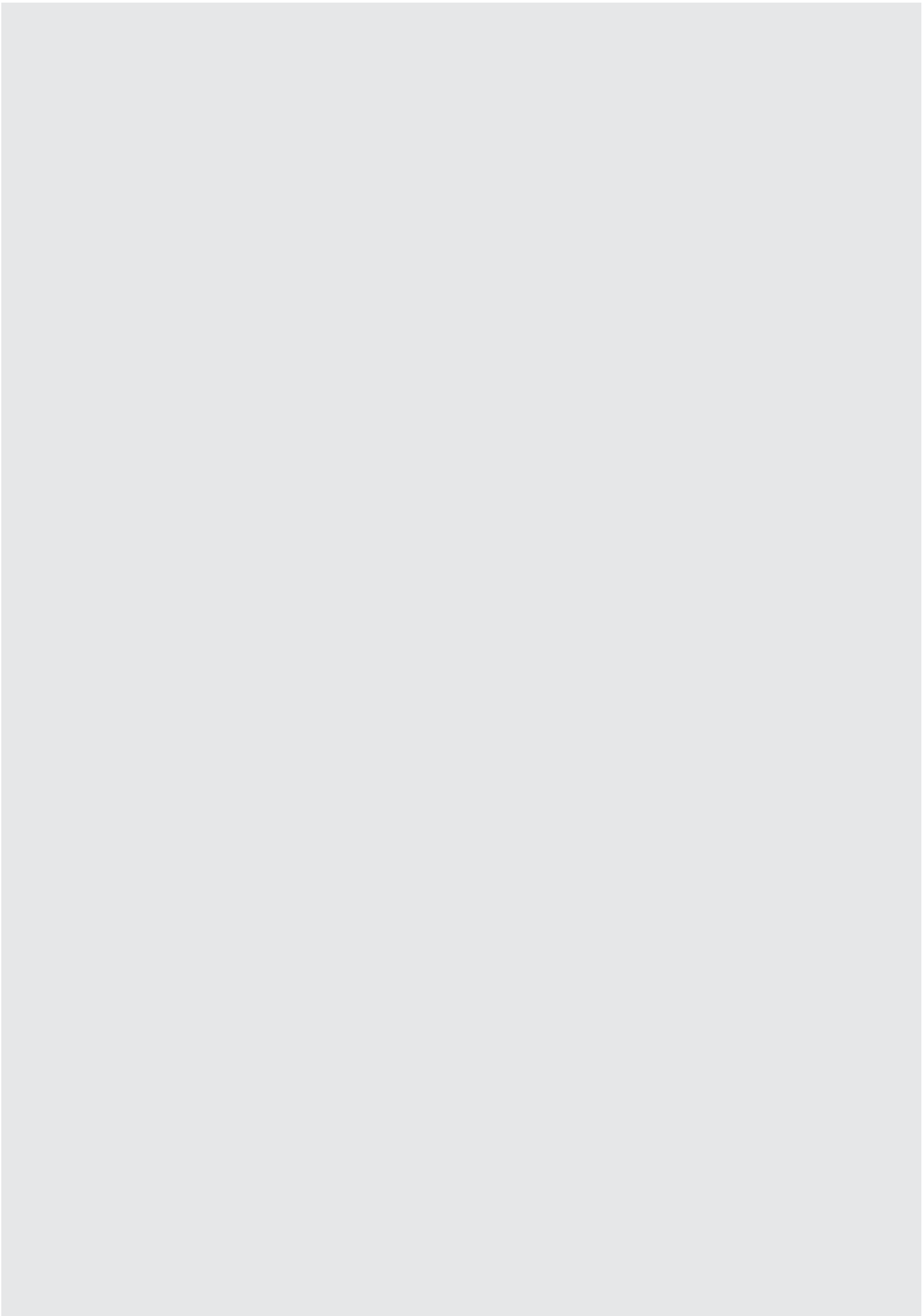
Bruce Osborne receives his prize from Major Jamie Howe for coming second in the match vs the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Club.



CSM Allan Dunn, Major Jamie Howe and Colour Sergeant Mark Shearer prepare to battle the 'old and bold'.



The teams line up for the match between the Battalion and the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Club.



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

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

BATTALION OVERVIEW

Since last updating you in the spring, the time has flown by for 51st Highland. We have packed a lot in and our Headquarter and Alpha Companies, based in the Black Watch heartlands, have been at the forefront of it all. Our commitment to operations has been relatively light during this period with only a single individual in Afghanistan and a handful supporting The Black Watch Battalion, our paired Regular Unit, in the training of Libyan soldiers in southern England. We are now gearing up to support the 3rd Battalion on Operation TOSCA on the UN line in Cyprus in 2015; it will give approximately 30 members of the Battalion a very different flavour of operations after so many years of kinetic tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Op FORTIFY (Recruiting and Retention) is currently our Main Effort where we continue to seek to man the Battalion to full strength by April 2019. That may seem like a long way off but we will need to have a net increase in our Infantry Trained Strength of about 170 during the next 4 years to achieve that; given the high turnover of personnel such as transfer to the Regular Army, age, retirement and life changes, this effectively means we are seeking to recruit and train almost 400 soldiers! But we can do it and we have certainly seen an upturn in interest and numbers flowing in over the last 6 months. I am pleased to report that the most effective area in that time, across the whole of the Highlands, has been the area around Dundee and we are seeking to expand that success to Perth and lower Fife. The future of Kirkcaldy is still uncertain and we are seeking to justify its retention but in order to make a reasonable pitch we must see some significant upturn in interest across the Kirkcaldy, Glenrothes and Dunfermline areas; again I am pleased to report that we have 2 new recruits currently going through the system and we are about to take on two ex-Regular Black Watch soldiers in the coming months, all to join Kirkcaldy. But we must keep the pressure on in terms of numbers and capability; it is clear that the recruiting teams in Angus, Fife and Perth & Kinross have the bit between their teeth and I hope you will all engage with them when you see the Red and Purple hackles on the streets.

Our Battalion training exercise in Fuerteventura, Canary Islands in June might have sounded more like a package holiday when we were waiting to board Easy Jet, Monarch and Ryan Air flights from Manchester and Liverpool, destined for the sunny islands off the Atlantic and closer to Africa than Spain. We enjoyed some tough and outstanding light infantry training. You can read about the exercise in more detail in the A Company report. You will also see below an account from Captain Mike Dunnigan on a smaller but highly effective deployment of 8 Officers, WOs and SNCOs to Canada to take part in a major Brigade level exercise with the 48th Highlanders of Canada in August; it really did open our eyes to how other nations engage with the community through the implementation of good local training. At

home, in addition to the regular training conducted at Barry Buddon, we also held our annual Section Patrols Competition on the Atholl Estates in late August, this year won by the team from C Company centred on Inverness.

There has been plenty more to speak of including some support to the Commonwealth Games, Flag Raising at the Ryder Cup and a revisit of the Pipes & Drums to take part in the Basel Tattoo. Most recently in September, the Adjutant, Captain Charles Grant, led a small team out to Veules les Roses to commemorate the liberation of the village by the 51st Highland Division in 1944 (70th Anniversary); it was great that Dr Tom Renouf was also able to be there and the Mayor and townsfolk were thrilled to see an old soldier alongside the new soldiers! It is our firm intention to return next year to take part in 75th Anniversary commemorations of the battles around St Valery.

We will begin to close some of our smaller bases in the coming months (Wick, Keith and Dunoon). Peterhead will follow in the next 6 months, which will then signal a major change in A Company; Aberdeen will join the Company while Stirling will rejoin D Company in the southwest. We will continue to integrate more with our paired Black Watch brethren, focused not only on the Cyprus tour but also on training events back in Scotland.

As this 6 months draws to a close we say farewell to a great Highland soldier; he was initially RSM of 3 BW before commissioning and finishing as our Battalion 2IC. Major Richard Barker has served us well in almost every other post available for a 7 SCOTS officer. He leaves us for what should be his last post in the Army as the Officer Commanding Soldier Training Wing at the Army Training Unit in Edinburgh. He moves on with our great thanks and best wishes.

We also say a heartfelt farewell to our Honorary Colonel Brigadier (Retd) CS Grant OBE. He has been an outstanding advisor to me, previous COs and the Battalion Staff. He has always maintained the perfect balance of being a dignified Colonel but also being able to converse and associate with every rank down to the Private Soldier. In his place we welcome Brigadier (Retd) The Honourable HBHE Monro CBE. We look forward to welcoming him into the battalion. His advice will be invaluable at a time when we are undergoing so much change and the tempo of life is as quick paced as ever.

A COMPANY – DUNDEE, KIRKCALDY AND STIRLING

Officer Commanding:	Maj R Davies
Second-in-Command:	Capt M Dunnigan
CSM:	WO2 Parker
PSAO:	Capt R Reid MBE
Mortar Pl Commander:	Capt J Valentine
Platoon Commander (Stirling):	Capt H Cannon
Platoon Commander (Dundee):	2nd Lieutenant R Walker
Platoon Commander:	2nd Lieutenant C Duncan
Platoon Commander:	2nd Lieutenant M Orr
SPSI:	CSgt S Rennie
PSI:	CSgt I Robertson
PSI:	Sgt W Rankin

Overview

As always there never seems to be enough time in the year and the fact that the deadline for delivery of the latest set of journal notes is rapidly approaching only seems to add to the feeling!

With the Battalion Main Effort very much focused on Recruiting, A Company has been “all hands on deck”, to support this. It is no small task and the Recruiting team under Sergeant Wade, supported by the small recruiting support team of regular soldiers (attached from 3 SCOTS), have been extremely busy over the last 6 months. It is still an uphill struggle but there are definite green shoots of progress.

It is all very well bringing in new blood but if you cannot retain the old blood then our recruiting efforts will have been in vain. To that end there has been a lot of effort put in to making sure the training on offer is challenging, fun and engaging. In the last six months for example there have been three overseas trips; Ex IBERIAN STAR (in Fuerteventura with the Spanish Army), Ex STALWART GUARDIAN



A Company Recruiting team busy at Armed Forces Day 2014 in Stirling.

(in Canada with the 48th Highlanders of Canada) and a number of exchange trips to the United States to work with the National Guard. These exercises and exchange trips all involved members of A Company, some of whom have been kind enough to include accounts of the training for this edition of the Red Hackle. The only exception is Colour Sergeant Woods who at the time of this submission is still enjoying the National Guard's hospitality near Las Vegas.

The training has not all been on foreign shores because as part of the Army 2020 structures the Reserves have been receiving a large amount of new kit and equipment including new sight systems, night vision equipment and weapons. The Company has been out on the ranges making good use of this equipment and there is more of this training planned in the coming months.

Careers are also being closely managed and the results of attending career courses are now being seen; the long overdue promotion of Sergeant Ian McNiven is testament to this. There have been other

changes in the Company and we have said farewell to Warrant Officer Class Two Graham Woolley. The gap that he left has been ably filled by Colour Sergeant Steven Rennie who joins us from The Operational Training and Advisory Group. The Stirling detachment will be re-rolled to D Company as the Assault Pioneer Platoon who are based in Aberdeen.

EXERCISE IBERIAN STAR 1 (31 May 14-15 June 14)

By Captain J Valentine

The 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment Of Scotland (7 SCOTS) recently deployed to the Spanish Canary Island of Fuerteventura to participate in a combined training exercise with the Spanish Army. 7 SCOTS was accompanied by a platoon from The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment Of Scotland (3 SCOTS) which is the regular 'partner' battalion for 7 SCOTS. For us the deployment to Fuerteventura represented an opportunity to strengthen this relationship but also to test our own combat skills in what the Commanding Officer later summarised as being "...punishing terrain, but awesome light infantry training". The Spanish Army hosts for EXERCISE IBERIAN STAR 1 were the 16th Light Infantry Brigade "Canarias". The 16th Light Infantry Brigade is a permanent Army formation and is based on the Canary Islands where it forms part of the Spanish Army Canary Island Command. It comprises three separate regiments which are located on the main Canary Islands. Two of these units took part in the exercise; the 9th Light Infantry Regiment (9 RIL) – which happens to be the oldest existing military unit in Europe and the 49th Light Infantry Regiment (49 RIL).

In the first week all the soldiers were able to prepare themselves and their weapons prior to participating in a live firing package. The Company completed a series of tactical training exercises starting with low level tactics and section attacks. This provided a good start point for the platoons, comprised of both regulars and reserves, to then merge into effective fighting units. The unforgiving volcanic terrain provided an extra dimension to the training as it tested our physical robustness as well as the suitability of the new issued equipment. The new issue of desert boots proved to be most beneficial and the hot weather clothing and hydration systems helped to reduce heat injuries. After the section training we progressed onto platoon and Company level training culminating with a scenario based operation with an enemy in a nearby defended village. The Company Commander issued orders for reconnaissance patrols and with the information they gathered a Company strength deliberate attack was launched. The enemy, played by Spanish soldiers from 49 RIL, completed their role with enthusiasm and provided a realistic opposition that made the assault a challenging scenario. By the end of the first week the Company had achieved its first aim of merging Regular and Reserve soldiers into an effective fighting unit and had set the conditions for the composite 7 SCOTS Company to integrate into a Spanish Army Battalion in the second week.

The completion of the first week was marked by some well deserved rest and recuperation in Puerto Del Rosario Barracks. There was a friendly football match where after some initial apprehension, 7 SCOTS took on the Spanish Brigade champions 9 RIL. An early Spanish goal put them ahead but 7 SCOTS equalized before



Pte Taylor getting used to the new sight.



LCpl McNicol reloading the LMG.



The composite 1st Coy 7 SCOTS on exercise IBERIAN STAR 1 in Fuerteventura.



2nd Lieutenant Calum Duncan showing a Spanish soldier how to clear the SA80 on Ex IBERIAN STAR.

half time. After a further 75 minutes of determined play the 9 RIL team scored the winning goal and our Spanish hosts carried the day 2-1. In a cunning change of tactics, it was decided to challenge the hosts to a tug of war competition, the winner being decided by a best of three pulls. 7 SCOTS, with a fair amount of experience in this pursuit, took the first round and with the Spanish on the back foot we managed to follow this with a decisive second round victory to win the match. We then hosted 9 RIL in appreciation of the assistance that the Spaniards had provided during the first week. To cap off the rest and recuperation, the soldiers had the hard choice between deep-sea fishing, sailing on catamarans or a submarine excursion to the island of Lanzarote. Needless to say there was something to suit everybody but then it was back to work and onto the main phase of the exercise.

The second week kicked off with us again deploying to the Pajara training area, this time as part of 49 RIL. We started by conducting static firing ranges to allow each other to swap weapon systems and compare characteristics. Our soldiers liked the lighter weight of the Spanish rifles and the Spanish soldiers praised the optical sights that had been recently fitted to our SA80 rifles. It was then on to the scenario phase of the exercise and



LCpl Brian McGarrity conducting ammo resupply on Ex IBERIAN STAR.



LCpl Ptes Keith Christie and Michael Burnage moving between positions on Ex IBERIAN STAR

once established we conducted a Battlegroup advance to contact with the 7 SCOTS Company seizing the high ground as the Spanish Companies cleared the low ground. The Battlegroup then assumed defensive positions and we were ordered to site observation posts and conduct ambush patrols in support of the Spanish. After the successful clearance of all enemy forces we finished by conducting a planned withdrawal to the extraction point and took transport back to Puerto Del Rosario.

In short, by rounding off the exercise on a high, we successfully completed the objectives of EXERCISE IBERIAN STAR 1 by deploying a composite Regular/Reserve Company into a Regular Spanish Battalion. In doing so 7 SCOTS has demonstrated its ability to deploy on multinational operations overseas within a short time frame and successfully operate in hot climatic conditions over challenging terrain. It enabled our soldiers to visit another part of the world and work alongside some of our NATO allies. It also demonstrated the effectiveness of the partnering plan between the Regular and Reserve battalions.

US EXCHANGE VISIT

By Lieutenant R Walker

For two weeks in July, I was on exercise in Florida attached to the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment (2-124th) of the Florida National Guard. The two week exercise was quite a change from my usual civilian duties as a final year medical student in Dundee. The exercise was part of an ongoing annual US and UK Army Reserve Exchange Programme. Earlier in the year 7 SCOTS had been joined by three US Army National Guardsmen for our own annual training exercise (Ex IBERIAN STAR). One of the three was my exchange partner; First Sergeant Dan Slingerland of the 2-124th who met me when I arrived in Florida.

As I stepped off the plane, into what I was later told was a “cool Floridian evening”, I was quickly drenched in sweat. This was mostly due to the heat but also due to the rather ominous absence of my luggage, which was later discovered in London Heathrow. This did lead to some hilarity and incredulity as I was delivered to the Florida National Guard in possession of just one set of uniform, and a large bottle of whisky (a gift!). Not quite the first impression I was aiming for. I was assigned to D Company, the battalion’s Humvee mounted heavy weapons company under the command of newly promoted Captain Ryan Starkey, whom I was to shadow for the next two weeks.

As the sun rose on my first morning ‘in country’, I was quickly impressed by the sheer scale of the exercise. 4500 Florida National Guardsmen from all arms and trades had descended on Camp Blanding in North Eastern Florida, bringing with them all their considerable resources for their specially extended annual training exercise. Their resources stretched from TOW mounted Humvees to a multitude of fixed and rotary wing aircraft, as well as artillery, engineers and an impressively comprehensive medical set up.

The exercise flowed through three main phases as the troops progressed from Squad and Platoon level missions onto Company level tasks and eventually a Battlegroup mission culminating in a massive air assault operation. It was certainly impressive to see waves of Chinooks (all flown and crewed by reservists) fly overhead as the fifty vehicle long ground convoy rolled through the training area.

The two weeks were a fantastic opportunity to work with our cousins across the pond and learn how their Army works. It was fascinating to be involved in such a large exercise and to see just how similar our two services are.



Lieutenant Walker enjoying the sweltering Florida heat in the back of a Humvee.

STALWART GUARDIAN – CANADA

By Captain M Dunnigan

In August this year an opportunity arose for some of 7 SCOTS to cross the Atlantic to join the 48th Highlanders of Canada on exercise. The exercise took place near the city of Welland (about 40 minutes drive from Niagara Falls) on the Niagara Peninsula between Lakes Ontario and Eirrie. Our two units are connected through the oldest officially sanctioned affiliation in the Commonwealth, the link going back to 1904 when the Canadian Militia, the 48th Highlanders became allied with the Gordon Highlanders. Thanks to this connection that has been rekindled over the last few years the 7 SCOTS troops were invited to become part of the 48th Highlanders Battlegroup. We were also joined by a platoon from 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (US Army National Guard) from Georgia, making this a truly multinational exercise.

The trip began on 15 August with a 0430 rendezvous at Queens Barracks in Perth to make the early flight from Edinburgh Airport to Toronto. After a minor hiccup sorting out the excess baggage charges we were checked in and on our way. We arrived in Toronto and were collected by the 48th Highlanders before being taken to their Armoury in Moss Park where we were given the opportunity to freshen up and head into town to find a well needed meal.

Suitably refreshed it was back to the Armoury to start the Battle Procedure. We were issued our equipment and given a hasty introduction to the Canadian C7 rifles. Ex STALWART GUARDIAN involved deploying a Reserve Brigade in a counter intervention role. The premise being that a foreign power had invaded Canada looking for mineral resources and that the Reserve was deployed to secure the Niagara Peninsula. Surprisingly for us this exercise did not take place on a training area in the middle of nowhere; instead it took place on private land in and around the towns and villages of Welland. The troops found themselves patrolling and conducting operations through city streets and even on an active airport!

Getting over 2000 Reserve soldiers into the field is a huge task no matter where it is conducted. In the case of this exercise when the troops in question are travelling from all over Ontario, the second largest Canadian Province and approximately four times the size of Great Britain, it is not surprising that there was a great deal of administration to be considered before we got started. A few lessons could be learnt from this operation and with only a few minor hiccups the difficult task was completed with



Major Robin Davies busy in the BG Planning cell on Ex STALWART GUARDIAN.



Captain Mike Dunnigan in the Ops Room on Ex STALWART GUARDIAN.

minimal fuss. The initial tasks were pitched at a level to allow everyone to find their feet and a rapid planning session led to a number of platoon level missions so that everyone could get to know the personalities that they would be working with for the remainder of the exercise. These early missions also allowed the headquarters time to get used to the various language and cultural differences that are bound to occur when you take soldiers from three different nations and put them into the same organisation. It is amazing how "NATO standard" is not really standard! The differences however were relatively minor and once we became familiar with each others' methods the initial problems were soon overcome. Indeed, it proved to be a useful experience, making some of us examine the way we have done things to see if there is a different way to achieve the same effect. After these baby steps the exercise increased in complexity and tempo, culminating in a final Battlegroup attack with accompanying naval support and the landing of one Company in an Amphibious Assault to clear the final position.

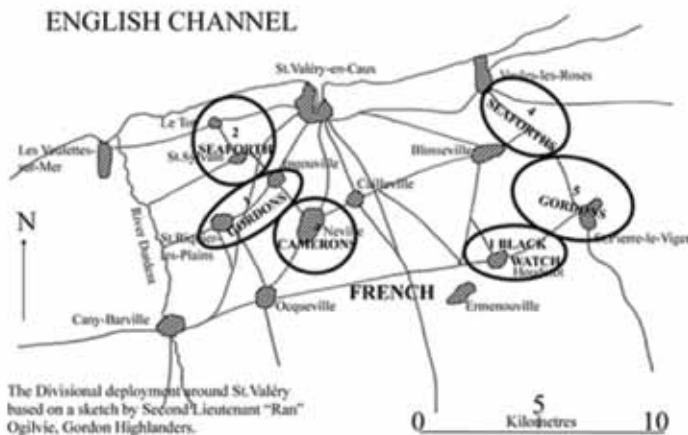
With the war won the inevitable clean up began; it takes an amazing amount of kit just to accommodate a Battlegroup, never mind all the communications and IT equipment required to allow it to function in the field. This all had to be stripped down and packed away before we could recover to Toronto. Thankfully our hosts took care of this and we were put on some transport and taken to a local swimming pool where we got a very welcome shower and got changed into a (reasonably) fresh uniform before being driven the 40 minutes or so to Niagara Falls. The Falls truly are an amazing sight and after a number of jokes through the week about exercising near the Falls and not getting to see them we were all glad to have the opportunity.

Before the Battlegroup finally dispersed the Commanding Officer of the 48th Highlanders took the opportunity to address everyone and presented some awards and commendations. We eventually arrived back in Toronto and the stores and weapons were accounted for leaving us with an evening to spend in Toronto before making our way back to the airport for the journey home. Before that, our hosts invited us out to sample the delights of downtown Toronto and various groups headed off to restaurants and bars for a chance to socialise and reminisce and talk about future plans for collaboration between our units. A hard week's work with like minded people who share a similar ethos of voluntary service has created some firm friendships. The link between 7 SCOTS and 48th Highlanders has been strengthened and we are looking forward to returning the hospitality shown to us the next time the 48th Highlanders visit Scotland.

Ex HIGHLAND ROSES

By Captain C Grant

At the start of September it was a great privilege for the Royal Regiment of Scotland to be invited to the village of Vuesles-les-Roses in northern France. Eight members of 51 Highland, 7th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS) and eight members of The Highlanders, 4th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland (4 SCOTS) travelled to the village to join the community in commemorating the 70th anniversary of the liberation by the 51st Highland Division in WW2. Many people reading this will know the story of the 51st Highland Division's withdrawal and ultimate surrender at St Valéry but I suspect that fewer people will know of the significant part that the village of Vuesles-les-Roses played in this battle. 7Km further along the coast from St Valéry it formed the critical eastern edge of the perimeter that was to protect St Valéry as the troops evacuated.



Map of divisional deployment around St. Valéry.



Royal Regiment of Scotland soldiers laid roses at the graves of those who died in Vuesles-les-Roses during the defence in WW2.



51st Highland Division veteran Dr Tom Renouf discusses the finer points of the parade before the march through the village.

In June 1940 other sectors of the defence were crumbling; the French surrendered to the south and Rommel's Panzer Divisions broke through in the west where they had no anti tank platoon but the east side of the perimeter held out. They could not hold out indefinitely as the rest of the perimeter disintegrated but as it transpired it held out long enough. Almost no troops made an escape from St Valéry itself with the German tanks penetrating in from the west but at Vuesles-les-Roses some 1300 troops were evacuated. Four years later many of these same soldiers who escaped, returned to liberate the village in September 1944 as the reconstituted 51st Highland Division reoccupied the area. It was this liberation that we went to commemorate.

Even after the long journeys from Perth and Fallingbommel the team wasted no time in getting stuck into the visit. Arriving at lunchtime on the Friday we were fed and watered (a cold beer is always a good way to start an educational trip) before learning more about the significance of the area from the respected historian Paul Le Trevier. After a short lecture we walked the village learning about the battle and seeing where the fighting took place. We were well hosted with further food and refreshments at the village hall that evening but our main focus was on the commemorations taking place on the next day. On the Saturday morning we formed up for the parade by the beach where the troops had escaped and marched through the village. Piper Robertson and Musician Currie were instant celebrities as the villagers came out in force to welcome us. A service was held in the church before we had the great honour of unveiling the new plaque to the 51st Highland Division. After another march through the village and up a deceptively steep hill, we all played a part in a moving ceremony at the cemetery where a rose was laid at the grave of every soldier buried there. WO2 Swash handed out the roses before the ceremony and it is fair to say that not one of the Jocks or I had expected to be given a flower by our trusty MTWO.

The service at the cemetery was followed by further acts of remembrance and we were privileged throughout the visit to be joined by Dr Tom Renouf, a Black Watch veteran of the 51st Highland Division. We were hugely grateful for everyone's more than generous hospitality and the people of Vuesles-le-Roses looked after us superbly. The whole trip was a success and everyone involved is eagerly anticipating an Ex HIGHLAND ROSES 2 next year when they will be marking the 75th anniversary of the battle that took place in 1940.



The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada

The summer period in Canada is normally a time for people to relax, enjoy some time at the cottage, go camping and generally enjoy some nice weather after a long cold winter. This does not represent the reality for our Reserve soldiers who spend much of the summer training on career courses, instructing, planning for the “Fall” training period or participating in various community, and recruiting activities. As has become tradition in Montreal, the summer period kicked off with the annual Regimental Church Parade on the first Sunday in May. This year the conditions were less than ideal but this did not stifle the enthusiasm of the participants or the spectators on the parade route that takes us through the streets of downtown Montreal to the Regimental Church. This is always a wonderful regimental event, as it includes members of the Associations as well as cadets from our affiliated cadet corps. Following the church service the Regiment returned to the Armoury for promotions, awards, and some good cheer. The week after our church parade was the National Day of Honour for Afghanistan. This was a day designated by the Government of Canada for local communities across the country to commemorate the end of Canada’s participation in Afghanistan. As part of this national event in Ottawa, the Government of Canada specifically recognized many of Canada’s military units with the awarding of new Battle Honours for the Afghanistan campaign. The Black Watch (RHR) of Canada was one of the Army regiments specifically recognized with our first Battle Honour since World War 2 for our contributions to the mission in Afghanistan. Following our involvement in the National Day of Honour, members of the regiment also participated in several parades and community activities during the remainder of the summer, including the Montreal Highland Games. The Highland Games returned to the city of Montreal this year with a large presence from all parts of the regimental family, including the Association and the cadets. This also included the formation of a Black Watch tug of war team that competed in a series of pulls against a variety of other amateur teams. This was actually a fundraiser for a local charity and succeeded in raising over \$6500. The highlight was when we challenged the local spectators to conduct an impromptu tug of war against our soldiers, which was accepted by more than 40 people who wanted to compete against our team of 10 kilted soldiers. It was a fun event that helped us to connect with the local community and raise funds for a worthy cause. The Regiment is now back to a new training year with many new challenges and activities that will continue to raise the individual and collective training standards of all serving members. The soldiers are also looking forward to competing for the Black Bear Trophy for the best section in the battalion. This will include training events to test their operational readiness, build their physical fitness, compete in various military and sporting competitions, and evaluate their knowledge on regimental history.



Annual Regimental Church Parade 2014.



Montreal Highland Games 2014.

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There are many new challenges coming up for this training year and the soldiers and leaders of the Regiment stand ready to face them all, now and in the future. We continue to conduct training for operations as our primary activity. However, we are also continuing to conduct a great deal of work to connect with our local community. This part of our mission will continue to grow over the next year as we continue to connect with Canadians through community activities, parades, and support to specific charities. This is promising to be a great training year.

ARTEFACTS FROM THE BLACK WATCH OF CANADA COLLECTION – WATERLOO BAGPIPES, 1815

While there have been many forms of bagpipes in existence since antiquity, the Highland pipe has been adopted as the primary martial instrument of the Scots and Irish. With the exception of the third drone added during the 18th century, the instrument has not changed basically since the early 15th century. The lovely old set shown here, possibly dating back to 1800, were reportedly played by a piper of the 42nd (Royal Highland) Regiment of Foot (Black Watch) at the Battle of Waterloo (18 June 1815) They are believed to be one of three remaining sets from that famous battle.



The Waterloo bagpipes are on display in the Officers’ Mess in Montreal.

It is an interesting early set, a mixture of various parts – possibly a two-tenor set fitted with a separate bass. It has been crudely repaired, perhaps hinting at the difficulty of obtaining professionally-made replacement parts, the lack of funds to pay for professional repairs, or both. The set was originally acquired by George Brown Fraser (1854-1933), a prosperous Montreal dry goods wholesaler, likely during one of his frequent business trips to the United Kingdom. The date of the acquisition is not known but the old set became a treasured possession which graced his home for many years. On his death, the set passed to his son, James Morrison Fraser (1884-1966). Sometime over the period 1950-1966, James Morrison presented the set to Canada’s Black Watch in memory of his son, Major George Climie Fraser, killed in action in Normandy on 21 July 1944, while serving with Canada’s Black Watch. Major Fraser, then commanding “D” Company, was wounded by a shell fragment during the consolidation phase of the battle for Hill 67 near Ifs, and died a few hours later. The taking of the Hill by the Black Watch of Canada was later described as a classic textbook attack. The swagger stick, shown at the bottom of the display board, was used by Major Fraser. It was presented to the Regiment in January 2004 by his son, James Frederick Tooke Fraser and was subsequently incorporated into the display. The “Waterloo Bagpipes” are currently on display in the Officers’ Mess in Montreal.

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HMS MONTROSE

Following the return of HMS MONTROSE from her six month deployment East of Suez the ship entered a brief maintenance period before being deployed at short notice to participate in BALTOPS 14. En-route she made her first visit to London which coincided with the ship's 20th Anniversary. During the visit, where the ship was berthed alongside in West India Dock, the Ship's Company were involved in numerous engagements and capability demonstrations, which included a visit by the Princess Royal to launch a charity auction for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity, of which she is Patron; this was hosted by the Worshipful Company of Distillers. The ship then left a hugely successful visit bound for Sweden.

Fourteen countries, 30 ships, 52 aircraft and a massive expanse of water for one of the largest naval exercises of the year – BALTOPS 2014 took place in June kicking off in Karlskrona, Sweden, and concluding alongside Kiel for the legendary Kiele Woche festival. Hosted by the Commander, United States Naval Forces Europe the exercise aims to improve maritime security in the Baltic Sea through partnership working and the sharing of resources. As a regular player in this annual exercise, the Royal Navy was this year represented by HMS MONTROSE. Put through her paces with a non-stop programme devised by the BALTOPS planning team, the ship gained a huge amount from the multi-national exercise which was co-ordinated by the USS Mt Whitney, a command ship, and the flagship of the US Sixth Fleet. The exercise included vessels from Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom and the US.

On return from BALTOPS, HMS MONTROSE paid a visit to her home town of Montrose. On the east coast of Scotland the town has only around 11,000 residents but HMS MONTROSE was made to feel very welcome during her week alongside as she visited her namesake port again after an absence of six years. Arriving alongside at 4 o'clock in the morning to glorious weather, the self proclaimed "most Scottish ship in the Fleet" held a Reception and Capability Demonstration for around 150 guests who were shown the capabilities of a modern frigate and met a number of the crew demonstrating their professionalism and versatility in navigation, weaponry, fire-fighting and boarding operations. Guests included Major Howe, who made the journey from Fort George for the occasion. Having already introduced themselves to the local dignitaries, the following evening the Ship's Company of HMS MONTROSE showed themselves off to a wider audience when they exercised their Freedom of Angus by parading in Montrose town centre in the time honoured style, bayonets fixed, drums beating and Colours flying. Crowds of many hundreds of residents packed the streets to see the Provost of Angus, Helen Oswald, take the



Princess Anne on board HMS MONTROSE for the Royal Navy Royal Marines charity auction.

salute from the platoons of passing sailors. After a formal inspection by the civic and naval VIPs, the crew marched through town, led by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland, to their own civic reception where Angus Council formally welcomed the sailors to the town for only the fourth time in over 20 years of the ship being part of the Fleet.

For the next twelve months, HMS MONTROSE will draw a brief pause in her adventures. Following a stint as Fleet Ready Escort over the summer the ship entered its next chapter when her fourteenth Commanding Officer, Commander James Parkin, handed over to the ship's new Senior Naval Officer and current Marine Engineering Officer, Lieutenant Commander Fergus Ochtman-Corfe as the ship started her second refit period. In this multimillion pound maintenance period, she will be dry-docking in Devonport, Plymouth for a series of machinery and sensor upgrades, structural repairs and extensive maintenance not possible while the ship is in the water.

Commander Parkin has been in Command since July 2012 and during his time on board, a total of 24 foreign ports have been visited in 13 different countries over 64,484 miles of travel – almost three times the circumference of the Earth. During this time the ship deployed on both COUGAR 12 and COUGAR 13, conducted a six month Op KIPION deployment to the Persian Gulf, and escorted Syrian chemical weapons in Op RECSYR.



HMS MONTROSE Ship's Company exercising the Freedom of Angus in Montrose.

Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force

The three aims for this year were firstly to maximise the opportunities available to the cadets secondly, to make maximum use of the time and thirdly to ensure everyone had the maximum fun possible. So far in 2014 the first two of these aims have certainly been achieved and it is hoped the third one has as well but that is a matter of personal opinion.

Playing rugby for the National Team, taking part in Tug of War and 5-a-side Hockey tournaments, entering a team for the Welbeck Cadet Leadership Competitions and piping at senior officers dining out nights were just some of the highlights of the early part of the year which gave a flavour of what was to come. The notes which follow are of necessity long in order to cover everything that has happened.

SPRING CAMP

Spring Camp began on a rather overcast day but with much to anticipate and do. It did not take long for everyone to find their feet and the first cadre was soon out in the field for the night. That set the tone for the rest of the week which was nonstop. Everyone, be it the cadets, the adult instructors or the permanent staff played their part in what was a very successful week. It may be invidious to pick out one group who really earned the thanks of everyone but Captain Mary Little and Mrs Karen Simpson did outstanding work in the Medical Centre. In addition to the Star Boards, a Familiarisation and Assessment Board was run for eleven potential Adult Instructors and the Regimental Sergeant Major ran an Adult Instructors Course. Lieutenant Charlie Tough also took a weapons coaching course and four adults were qualified to use the Climbing Tower thanks to the Air Training Corps and Angus and Dundee Battalion who provided the necessary instructors.

This year for its Spring Camp the Military Band took part in a Band concentration and was based in the Angus and Dundee Battalion lines in Barry Buddon. Meanwhile a strong contingent from the Pipes and Drums took part in their own concentration in Inverness. While mentioning the Pipes and Drums it is of note that the ACFA Pipe Major is Pipe Major Isla Stout who, in the early part of the year, showed off her piping skills when playing at the dining out of the last Colonel ACF Piping.

IN BETWEEN CAMPS

May was particularly busy. On the first weekend a number of cadets were invited to go to Belgium to witness the unveiling of the memorial that was put up by the Black Watch Association to remember those who died serving in the Regiment during the 1st World War. This was a truly memorable event and the Battalion was greatly honoured to have been there and to have been asked to surround the memorial at the actual unveiling ceremony. This trip would not have been possible without the financial support from The Perth Forces Charitable Trust, the Black Watch Association, the Black Watch Regimental Trust and the HRFCA. To them all the Battalion is indebted.

On 24 May and after a great deal of planning, fifty cadets and seventeen adults took part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award 'Flag A Munro' scheme where the intention was as the name suggested, to climb a Munro. Ben Chonzie, near Comrie, was the chosen hill. On a near perfect day for a walk, everyone set off and, despite the odd moan, reached the top with a great feeling of achievement and in some cases, relief. There was even time for a snow ball fight at the top before head-



HRH The Earl of Strathearn and Colonel Erskine with the Cadets at Crieff Campus.



Cadet Sergeant Major Logan Clark, Countess of Strathearn, Earl of Strathearn, Colonel Erskine at the visit of Their Royal Highnesses to Crieff.

ing downhill again. On the same day the Battalion entered a team into to ACFA Scottish Athletics competition. Subsequently Cadet Corporal Hunter and Cadet Sergeant Ross (Auchterarder) were picked to represent Scotland at the National Championships in the High Jump and 100m respectively but had to pull out due to other commitments.

On 29 May the Earl and Countess of Strathearn visited the area of Perthshire after which they are named and their first stop was to the Strathearn Campus in Crieff where they met a number of youth organizations including the Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force. The Earl of Strathearn shook hands and spoke to all the cadets who were there and showed a real interest in what they did. The Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, Brigadier Mel Jameson, had kindly asked his Lord Lieutenant's cadet from the Battalion, Cadet Sergeant



The Cadets on top of Ben Chonzie on the Munro Challenge.



Colonel Erskine and Cadets at The Black Watch Corner Memorial.

Major Logan Clarke, Crieff detachment, to accompany him throughout the day an experience he is unlikely to forget, not least because of the amount of pictures of him that appeared in the papers the next day.

SUMMER CAMP

Summer Camp was spent at Altcar, a place that has become well known to the Battalion in recent years. The cadets took part in a variety of activities throughout the week which was blessed by some very warm weather. Sadly the ranges were not all open but the Clay Target Range was and proved to be as popular as ever. A day was spent in the Liverpool Docks where a local firm organised some watermanship experience for the cadets. This was much enjoyed, not least because the weather was so good and a soaking in the sea helped cool off the cadets. The Summer Camp was also the culmination of the Champion Company Competition and this year, Korea Company were the winners. A number of other competitions covering sports, shooting and drill and one for the Commandant's Cup were held at camp with the spoils being shared throughout the companies.

POST CAMP

The period after Summer Camp is usually quite quiet with some detachments taking a break. However, this year, the cadets took part in a number of high profile centrally organized events. On 8 July, Cadet

Helen Johnston from Cowdenbeath represented the Battalion at the launch of the Cadet Badge in Edinburgh Castle. On 22 July, His Royal Highness The Duke of Rothesay formally opened the new Museum at Balhousie Castle and the Battalion was invited to send a number of cadets to witness this occasion. On 31 July a number of cadets went to the preview performance of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and on 10 August sixty members of the Battalion, the Military Band and the Pipes and Drums represented the Army Cadet Force at the Drumhead Service on the Edinburgh Castle Esplanade to mark the outbreak of the 1st World War. They then marched down the Royal Mile and helped with the events in Holyrood Park. At this stage the heavens opened and by the end everyone was very wet.

Throughout the summer the cadets also took part in some less well publicized but nonetheless locally important and fundraising events throughout the area including Cardenden, Birnam, Kirkmichael, Auchterarder and Dunfermline.

The last weekend in August was perhaps a good example of what Battalion life is like. Apart from a company training weekend, there was a course run for Potential Instructors, a detachment took part in a local Highland Games, a group raised funds for SSAFA, the Pipes and Drums took part in an engagement in Newcastle, the Military Band put on a concert at a local hospital and a detachment took part in a World War 1 Commemoration Service in Dunfermline Abbey.

MUSIC

Music is becoming an increasingly important part of Battalion life and both the Pipes and Drums and Military Band have flown the flag on numerous occasions. At the Pipes and Drums Concentration in April the pipers and drummers achieved some notable successes. Pipe Major Isla Stout was the Best overall piper, Cadet Sergeant Cunningham was the top advanced piper, Cadet Yilmaz was the top novice piper and Cadet Scrivener-Anderson was the top novice snare drummer. No sooner had that finished than they played in the Army Cadet Force Association Beating Retreat on Edinburgh Castle Esplanade where their appearance, drill and playing was quite outstanding. The Pipes and Drums came to Summer Camp and as well as practicing their musical skill, they also provided a duty piper each day and took part in some of the training being done by the remainder of the Battalion. On 8 August they then had the greatest privilege of all – going to Balmoral to play for Her Majesty The Queen. Unfortunately it was a very wet evening and so the programme had to be changed at the last minute. However Her Majesty met some of the cadets before the rain relented enough for the Pipes and Drums to play for her.

The Military Band has also played its part in promoting the Battalion. In April they played in Dundee following their concentration at Barry Buddon. At the beginning of June they played a concert in St Leonard's Church, Dunfermline and raised over £200.00 for ABF-The Soldiers' Charity. On 20 June the Bandmaster and Cadet Sergeant Major Jordan Grierson went to Edinburgh to present the cheque to Charles Dunphie, the Scottish Coordinator



Cadets at the Battalion Stand before the Earl and Countess of Strathearn arrive.



The Black Watch Cadet Band entertains the residents of the New Town, Edinburgh at the Heriot Row Garden Party.



Bandmaster Robert Cowan and Cadet Sergeant Major Jordan Grierson present a cheque to Major Charles Dunphie (The Soldiers' Charity). The District Gunner, Sergeant David Beveridge was also present.

for the charity. The highlights for the band were in the first week of July. For the first time ever, the Band played at the Palace of Holyroodhouse when His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh presented the Gold Awards for the Duke of Edinburgh's Scheme. At the end of the week the band then took part in the ceremony when Her Majesty The Queen officially named the Royal Navy's new aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth. Then at the end of July they played at a garden party in Edinburgh when money as raised for ABF – The Soldiers' Charity.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Rugby is not a sport the Battalion has participated in over recent years but with the encouragement of Staff Sergeant Taylor it was decided this should change. A number of the Battalion took part in the ACFA training and on 5 April Cadet Lance Corporal Boyle, Blairgowrie and Cadet Lance Corporal Anderson Glenrothes Viewfield were selected to play for the Scottish Intermediate Team at the National Championships in Wales. Cadet Corporals Allan and Ross both from Auchterarder were also selected to represent Scotland in the Senior Rugby Team which came second in its competition.

Shooting is a very popular activity within the Cadet Force and the Battalion has had some notable successes in recent years. This year two relatively young teams took part in the Brigade Cadet Rifle meeting on 17 May. The 'A' team of Cadet Sergeant Mackenzie, Cadet Corporals Rae and Nelson and Cadet Lance Corporal Robertson came second in the Watts Bowl 500m competition. Later in the summer, Cadet Sergeant MacKenzie competed at Bisley. Meanwhile the First Aid Team of Cadet Corporals Adams and McDonald and Cadet Lance Corporals Deuchars and Mackay came second in the ACFA First Aid competition. They were beaten by 3 points and were placed out of 11 teams in the inter-services competition.

For only the second time the Battalion sent a team to Welbeck to take part in the Welbeck Cadet Leadership Challenge at the end of March. Sergeant Major Instructor Cameron was responsible for training the team. She was given much assistance by Captain Mark Scott who had a vested interest in two camps as he was also responsible for training Dollar Academy's two teams. For his support the Battalion is very grateful. Some very strong teams entered this competition from throughout the United Kingdom and, although the Black Watch Battalion team did not win (the Dollar Academy teams came first and second), it did produce some hugely creditable performances in some of the stands and there is a thirst to do better next year.

In April five cadets, Cadet Sergeants Barker, Stark and Kemp (all Kirkcaldy), Cadet Corporal Clark (Glenrothes Woodside), and Cadet Staff Sergeant Sweeney (Glenrothes Viewfield) went to Nesscliff to take part in the Cadet Leadership Course and all came back with good reports.

In June Cadet Sergeant Tannahill and Cadet Lance Corporal Douglas went on the training ship, TS Royalist from Newcastle to Inverness and since then have never bored of regaling stories about this adventure.... and nor should they. Determined to make the most of what the Army Cadet Force can offer, Cadet Sergeant Tannahill also attended the Inland Kayak 2* Foundation Course at the end of July.

HONORARY COLONEL

Sadly the tenure of Lorraine Kelly as the Honorary Colonel came to an end in the Spring. Lorraine was a great supporter of the Battalion and a real champion for the Army Cadet Force. Whenever she visited the Battalion she was interested in what was happening and even when her work commitments prevented her from coming, she continued to show great interest. The Battalion wishes her well and hopes the connection will continue. The Reverend Professor Norman Drummond who is well known within the Black Watch family has kindly agreed to take over and the Battalion is really looking forward to meeting him.



Cadet Sergeant Ross (Auchterarder) with the Gold Medal he won for the 100 metres at the ACFA Scotland Athletics Championships.

Association News

Royal Patron: HRH The Prince Charles Duke of Rothesay
 KG KT GCB OM
 President: Brigadier M S Jameson CBE,
 Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross
 Vice Presidents: Mrs Georgiana Osborne
 (Lord Lieutenant of Angus)
 Mr Bob Duncan
 (Lord Lieutenant of the City of Dundee)
 Mrs Margaret Dean CVO
 (Lord Lieutenant of Fife)
 Colonel A Murdoch, TD
 Chairman: Lieutenant Colonel R M Riddell
 Vice Chairman and Trustee: Major R J W Proctor, MBE
 Secretary and Trustee:
 Trustee: Lieutenant Colonel T A Coles, MBE
 Trustee: Major J M K Erskine, MBE
 Trustee: Major J D Monteith
 Trustee: Captain B M Osborne
 Trustee: Mr G Hay

Executive Committee: Lieutenant Colonel F L Beattie, MBE
 Lieutenant Colonel J Keating, OBE
 Captain A McEwen
 Lieutenant Colonel J A Menzies
 Lieutenant Colonel R I Rose, TD
 Mr R Scott, JP
 Mr G Kennedy

Welfare Committee: Lieutenant Colonel R I Rose,
 TD – Chairman
 Major R J W Proctor, MBE – Secretary
 Mr J Baird
 Mr J Devlin
 Major G Grant, MBE, MM
 Captain T Graham
 Mr R Scott, JP
 Mrs I Shivas
 Mr G Ross
 Captain A McEwen
 Mr W Barr
 Major B Dickson

ANGUS BRANCH

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

Bob Inglis has joined the list of Octogenarians within the Branch and continues to be hale and hearty despite his attempt at break dancing and badly bruising his ribs and other parts of his anatomy as he entered the Legion Clubrooms in Forfar when attending a Branch Meeting; he is now fit and well.

The Branch has been very active over the past few months with attendance at local and national events beginning with the ANZAC Commemoration which took place in Arbroath on the 25th of April with local members including our Branch President and Standard Bearer Jock Torrie in attendance. Arbroath Armed Forces Day followed on the 7th of June and the Branch fielded a strong marching contingent commanded by our Branch President. Our Chairman as Veterans' Champion Angus was part of the saluting dais party along with the Lord Lieutenant of Angus, Mrs Georgiana Osborne and the Provost Mrs Helen Oswald.

The Association Annual General Meeting and Annual Reunion was for the first time held on the same day and although it gave the organisers a heavier work load than in past years both events were well attended by the Angus Branch. Lieutenant Colonel Fred Beattie briefed the Annual General Meeting on the Branch's activities and managed to raise a few chuckles from those attending, with his sharp wit and dry sense of humour.

The Armed Forces Day at Stirling was the next event on the calendar and took place on the last Saturday in June and the day was enjoyed by all who took part.

One week later Blue Bonnets and medals were again looked out for the Armed Forces Day Dundee where a strong solid block of Red Hackles was highly visible and the hospitality of the City of Dundee in the Caird Hall was enjoyed by all participants from across the Association.

The Drumhead Service to commemorate the beginning of the First World War was held on the 10th of August on the Esplanade of Edinburgh Castle followed by a procession down the Royal Mile into Holyrood Park. Although the weather was somewhat inclement, the



The Angus Branch annual Branch Standard Rededication was held at Rescobie (courtesy of Paul Reid/Angus Pictures).



Ruaraidh Proctor and Jim McEwan with the Rescobie Sunday School children.

event was enjoyed by all those who attended. John Glen our Branch Standard bearer on most events should be thanked for organising the transport which conveyed members from across the Branch Area, Dundee, Perth and Fife.

Branch monthly meetings continue to be well attended as do events and the Annual Branch Standard rededication service which was held in the lovely country church of Rescobie some four miles outside Forfar and was attended by fifty members and their ladies. The service was conducted by the Reverend Brian Ramsay who used some information gained from our Branch Secretary as part of his sermon. The service took place on the day of the hundredth anniversary of the Battle of the Aisne where two men whose name appear on the War Memorial lost their lives.

“Lieutenant Reginald G Don aged 20, Killed in Action 14th September 1914. Reginald who was from Ravensby House near Carnoustie was commissioned in May 1914 and was posted to the Second Battalion. However, when war broke out he went with the First Battalion to France. During the Retreat from Mons he kept his men’s spirits up by singing to them with his fine singing voice and was everything one would want in a young officer as he had buckets of enthusiasm as well as endurance. He was a great footballer which endeared him to his men. He was mortally wounded near Vendresse and some of his men wanted to carry him back to safety but he refused to allow them to do so, or to remain with him.

Corporal Robert Bannerman aged 27, Killed in Action 14th September 1914. Robert was originally from Arbroath but was working at Pitscandy near Forfar as a blacksmith when he enlisted in 1905 and served with both the First and Second Battalions before returning home at the end of his seven years’ service in December 1912. As a Reservist he was called up at the outbreak of the war and was probably the first Arbroath born man to fall. His officer wrote; “he was killed while controlling the fire of his men with the greatest coolness and disregard of danger. I had always the greatest admiration for him as a fine leader.”

The Reverend Brian Ramsay also commented that the Black Watch Association was formed out of the desire to help those members of the Regiment and their dependants who had suffered hardship as a result of the Great War and that the same ethos of charity shines through in the Association to the present day.

The preparation for our next event, the El Alamein Dinner is in full swing at the time of writing and details of which will be recorded in the next edition of these notes.

We wish all in the Regimental Family a merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year

R J W Proctor

DUNDEE BRANCH

Branch members enjoyed the visit to Black Watch Corner in May and then we were well represented at the AGM and Reunion, which this year were both held on the same day on 21st June 2014.

This was followed by the Dundee Armed Forces Day Parade on 5th July and the City Council also held a ceremony to mark the start of the First World War. This was held on the 2nd of August and Branch and Association members joined the Dundee Combined Ex Services parade, commanded by Major Dave Ritchie.



Some members of the Association marched to Balhousie Castle on the day of the Reunion.

Our annual Church Service to commemorate the Battle of Loos was held on 21st September. Dundee suffered great losses during the battle which began on 25th September 1915. Sadly, our old friend John McNiven our Branch Treasurer died and many of his Regimental friends gathered at the Congregational Church in Dundee.

Future Events

The Branch continues to hold its monthly meetings in The Black Watch Club in Arthursstone Terrace on the last Sunday of each month at 12.00 pm and our annual Red Hackle Dinner will be held on 30th January 2015.

D M Ritchie

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

As we approach the first anniversary of the formation of the Branch, it is with great pleasure that we can report, steady progress throughout the year. From an initial membership of nine in January 2014, we now have sixty plus fully subscribed members. It is also encouraging to report that there is a healthy balance of age groups, from the present day to individuals who served in the 1950’s. In the spirit of being a family regiment it is also worthy of note that we recently welcomed to the ranks, one of our former Fijian soldiers (Joseph Taroga), who has settled in Edinburgh.

Congratulations are in order to our Branch President, Julian McElhinney has been selected for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel and will take up his first post as an SO1 at Central Volunteer Headquarters in November 2014.

For anyone interested in joining our Branch, we meet regularly at the Scots Guards’ Club, Haymarket. This location is a central point in the city and is on the main route for buses, trains and the tram service. To join, our main points of contact are Major Alex Stewart and Mr Rory McIntyre. Confirmed dates for the 2015 diary are: Wreath Laying at The Mound on Remembrance Sunday, followed by lunch at the former Police Club in York Place. We will be holding our first major function (Ceilidh)



Edinburgh Branch Meeting.

on Saturday 10 January 2015, again this will be at York Place. Planning for our first Members' Dinner is ongoing, however it can be confirmed that the event will take place on the second weekend in May 2015.

For readers who are interested in why we lay a wreath at the Edinburgh landmark known as the Mound, the bronze statue at the corner of Market Street and North Bank Street, is that of a Black Watch soldier in Highland Dress. This Memorial is dedicated, "To The Memory of Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of The Black Watch Who Fell in the South African War 1899-1902".

Finally, a big thank you to everyone who turned out for the World War 1 Commemoration at Edinburgh Castle on Sunday 10 August 2014. Despite very poor travelling conditions as the result of bad weather, there was a tremendous showing of "Red Hackles" and it was with great pride that we followed the Massed Bands and Pipes and Drums down the Royal Mile.

J A Menzies

THE FIFE BRANCH

Our notes start with our trip to Belgium and Black Watch Corner. A bus travelled from Fife on the 1st of May 2014 down to Hull, where we were ferried overnight to Belgium. On arrival in Belgium we made our way to the village of Zonnebeke near Ypres, the area of the battle and where the unveiling of the statue was to take place. We were then taken to a site overlooking the battle area and briefed on the battle near Polygon Wood; after the briefing we then visited the War Cemetery at Tyne Cot. I found this to be a very humbling and moving experience. The day culminated in a march to the Menin Gate in Ypres where I met the Provost of Fife (Jim Leishman), whose brother had also served in the Regiment. The Provost told me that in the morning he was going to lay a wreath at a Lochgelly soldier's grave not far from Black Watch Corner. The next day the Provost's face was a picture to remember as the whole of the Fife bus plus the Padre, Piper and Bugler trooped into the Cemetery to support his cause. In the afternoon, it was on to the main event and the unveiling of the Monument at Black Watch Corner. We formed up and marched the short distance to the area of the unveiling; this was very well organised and the event was supported by a large number of the Belgian people.

In the evening we were invited to attend a Tattoo, laid on by the local people. With fifty four Pipers along with other military type bands and three local Highland Dancers on parade, it was a well organised



A fine body of men from Fife attended The Black Watch Corner weekend in Belgium.

and enjoyable night. On Sunday morning we visited the Passchendaele Museum. This was a very good end to our visit.

As a Branch we attended more home events, the main one being our Annual Reunion; we paraded as usual then marched to Balhousie Castle. The unfurling of Armed Forces Day Flags in Fife and Dundee saw a good number of the members in attendance and again it was good to hear the Provost of Fife praise the Regiment and its support to him in the laying of a wreath for a Lochgelly man. I must thank the Dundee Branch for giving me the honour of commanding the veterans that day. It wasn't long before we were back in Dundee, this time to attend a Drumhead Service to Commemorate the First World War.

Now into August and another Drumhead Service to commemorate the First World War, this time it was in Edinburgh on the Castle Esplanade. After the service the Veterans formed up and marched down the Royal Mile to Holyrood Park where some more wreath laying took place but by this time it was raining hard. It was then back to Fife and another Memorial Service, this time in Dunfermline Abbey. The last event of the period was the Ladies "ALMA" Lunch which was held in the Victoria Hotel Kirkcaldy with nearly sixty sitting down.

We unfortunately had our sad moments as well, with the recent deaths of Jamie Nisbet, Alex Kinnaird and Mrs Margaret Atkinson.

The bi-monthly meetings continue to draw a good attendance with figures of forty plus being the norm. I end by thanking the Branch Members for their continued support.

R M Scott



The Fife Branch Alma Lunch was held in Kirkcaldy.



Fife Branch members pictured after the Service in Dunfermline Abbey – from left to right Jamie Erskine, George Gill, Robert Young, Philip Halford-Macleod, Rob Scott and George Wood.

THE HIGHLAND BRANCH

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

Since our last report a few minor changes have occurred within the Branch; John Stevenson stepped down as Chairman and was voted in as President, being replaced by Joe Barbour and Donald Etherington became Vice Chairman.

The Branch continues to hold regular monthly meetings in the Community Centre (Wimberley Way) and our next major function will be The Aberfeldy Ladies dinner night to be held in May 2015.

Members of The Branch attended a WW1 commemoration event in Inverness and then John Anderson our standard bearer attended

a similar event in Nairn. John continues his sterling work in conjunction with the British Legion and flies the standard at many events and competitions. By the time this goes to print Donald Etherington and Alec Beattie will have been on their travels to the National Memorial Arboretum taking part in Ride to The wall and will lay a wreath on behalf of The Branch. I have asked Donald to compile a small report for inclusion in the next edition.

Finally if any of our readers knows of any ex BW men who live in the area who wish to join the Branch then please ask them to get in touch with me by E Mail or telephone.

Gordon Kennedy

LONDON BRANCH

The usual problems one faces when producing the London Branch's Red Hackle notes are: where should I start and what should be included? On this occasion the start point is clear and the problem for once is what can be left out? I have said more than once – and I apologise for the repetition - that our programme of events is fairly predictable. In the summer season we have Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital, the Not Forgotten Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace and our Branch Summer Lunch. We did, of course, have these events again this year and they were greatly enjoyed by those Branch members attending, but for once, the reporting and photographs of these events will be left out and instead, the notes for this edition will be devoted almost entirely to two events which have been, to say the least, out of the ordinary and deserve pride of place.

The first was the event London Branch members were looking forward to at the conclusion of our spring Red Hackle notes: the visit to Flanders early in May for the unveiling and dedication of the statue at Black Watch Corner, near Ypres. This was a memorable weekend for a number of reasons: the programmed events worked with military precision due to the excellent planning, co-ordination and sheer hard graft of the Association Headquarters staff. So a sincere thanks must go to Roddy Riddell, Ronnie Proctor and their small support team for this. The weather was marvellous throughout, albeit a bit on the cool side at the excellent Tattoo put on by the Belgians on the Saturday night, and the gathering of so many Black Watch men, both serving and retired, together with families and friends



At Tyne Cot towards the end of a long day.

of the Regiment was a great sight. The 'togetherness' and camaraderie made one extremely proud to be part of the extended regimental family. Marching to the Menin Gate with pipes playing on the Friday evening was special and a great lead in to the superb unveiling and dedication ceremony on Saturday 3rd May. All London Branch members who had travelled to Flanders were able to be at Black Watch Corner, despite Norman Topliss not feeling too good at the Menin Gate and Shug Siggers suffering a fall after the Menin Gate which put him in hospital overnight. Luckily one of our Generals was willing to give up his breakfast to chauffeur him back to our hotel from Ypres hospital. You've never had it so good Siggers (and you will never be out of work General Mike)!

On Sunday 4th May we set off by coach on a Battlefield Tour led by a truly excellent local guide, Jacques Ryckebosch, who during the course of the day presented a wealth of knowledge about places, personalities and points of interest along our route, as well as taking us to a good restaurant for lunch. Kevin Jenkinson, our Branch piper, piped at the various Allied and German cemeteries we visited and, at the Tyne Cot Cemetery we gath-



The London Branch at Tyne Cot Cemetery.



The London Branch Chapter of Hells Angels.

ered at some Black Watch War Graves where Kevin played and a poem, 'The Visitors', was beautifully read by Susanna Maitland. Returning to our hotel at the end of the day we decided to go via Black Watch Corner for photos and a final look at the statue of our magnificent Jock. We were pleased to find that, already, two tourist coaches were there, together with a group of Dutch bikers we had met and chatted to at several locations during the course of the day.

Continuing with WW1 centenary events, Jim Keating received an invitation to the First World War Vigil at Westminster Abbey on Monday 4th August, to attend a solemn commemoration on the centenary of the outbreak of that war in the presence of HRH The Duchess of Cornwall. Knowing that Joe Hubble's father had been awarded the MM and bar in WW1, and his father-in-law the MM, he took Joe as his guest to this very special and memorable occasion.

The Branch was pleased to receive an invitation to visit The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland at Bassingbourn Barracks in Cambridgeshire, where they are training personnel of the Libyan General Purpose Force (GPF) on Op VOCATE. So on the 11th September a small party made the journey to Bassingbourn where we were met by Major Nigel Jordan-Barber, the Bn 2IC and the RQMS(M), WO2 Kevin Stacey. After a welcome coffee, a brief introductory talk and a safety briefing we were in the minibus and en route for STANTA, near Thetford in Norfolk, to see the Libyans in the field carrying out training under the watchful eye of A Company DS. We were able to watch them carry out a final attack and subsequently to talk to some of them. It was also good to meet and talk to the officers of A Company: Major Gordon Adamson the OC, Captain Chris McRobbie and the Company Sergeant Major.

After watching the training we returned to Bassingbourn for lunch, followed by a briefing on Op VOCATE under which the UK has undertaken to train up to 2,000 GPF personnel, in tranches of up to 500 at any one time, over the next two years. Similar training of more than 10,000 Libyan troops is taking place in the US, France, Italy and Germany. We learned of the initial challenges faced by the battalion in knitting together this disparate group of people, drawn from all parts of Libya and from hugely varying backgrounds, into the fairly cohesive force they



Brig Donald Wilson with Major Gordon Adamson.



Bill Parr and Joe Hubble with OC A Coy, RQMS (M) & CSM A Coy.



Donald Fraser and Jim Keating watch the assault while Joe, Brig Adam and Mrs Gurdon talk to the CSM.



Donald Wilson, David Wilson and Peter Grant with the Libyan officers.



Brigadier Adam Gurdon, Jim Keating and Joe Hubble share a joke with the Sergeant Major.



Bill Parr and Alf Wade discuss tactics with Major Nigel Jordan-Barber (not like it was in our day!).

now have at Bassingbourn. Well done the Jocks! Finally we received a Regimental update and an outline of the improvements being made at Fort George. All in all we had a most interesting and enjoyable day and, I suspect, gave the serving BW personnel a glimpse of the future – “surely we won’t be like that lot in another 50 years time?”

In May we were sad to bid farewell to Joe Roberts, a staunch supporter of the London Branch, whose obituary appears elsewhere in this edition. Our thoughts are with his wife Margaret and his family.

Jim Keating

NEWCASTLE BRANCH

Regimental Reunion

June saw the Secretary racing towards insanity as he juggled with the arrangements for our trip to the Reunion. Tom Dignam had made arrangements for the accommodation of most of our group and all seemed well until, Tom was forced to withdraw from the event. Theoretically, this should not have posed a problem but life has ways of getting complicated without any interference from the

participants. I did not know where Tom had billeted our people, furthermore, I could not remember where I had booked the bus driver’s accommodation. The transport had been arranged with “The Just Group”, which is an organisation with a wide range of interests. Everyone who has ever dealt with the group gives them very high marks for performance, however, they are hard to contact by ‘phone and once uncertainty on one issue spreads to another, panic is not far away.

Needless to say, the transport provider contacted me, as promised, two or three days prior to the journey; the accommodation problems were all resolved and a most helpful driver conducted us in comfort and safety to our destination. My shattered nerves were repaired by liberal libations from various hip flasks and in a state of serendipitous comfort and self-virtue, I was transported northward.

Stopping in Edinburgh on the return journey, members did their part to assist the Scottish economy by the distribution of funds in the various hostelrys and shopping emporia of that City. All in all, this was voted a decent trip, and the first undertaken without Bob Chantler’s magic touch.

Annual General Meeting

Peter Dodds represented the Branch at the AGM, which was held on the morning of the day of the reunion. This meant that Peter had to travel by train on the Friday, whilst his wife and daughter were left to the tender mercies of the contingent travelling on the bus the following day. Peter gave a full report to the Branch at our July meeting and we are grateful for his efforts on our behalf.

New Arrival

Robin Earle has enrolled with us and we were delighted to see him at the September meeting. Robin served with the Black Watch from 2004 to 2008, having commissioned into the 1st Battalion from the RMA Sandhurst. He spent some time chatting with the lads after the meeting before heading off to drive home. He is keen to get involved in the work of the Branch and that has to be good. No doubt he will find plenty to keep him busy.

Internal Changes

Bill Brown, our Standard Bearer for many years, took the hard decision to step down from the post, which he has held with great distinction for a very long time. It is with considerable regret that we accepted Bill’s resignation and it is hard to do justice to the work he has done on our behalf, with such obvious pride and dignity. His place has been taken by Eric Armstrong who, we are sure, will maintain the high standards of his predecessor. Thanks Bill for all of your service.

Memorial Bench

It has been agreed, with the Tyneside Scottish Association, that we will make a contribution to the cost of a memorial bench in Eldon Square, Newcastle upon Tyne. The bench will carry both a Black Watch and a Tyneside Scottish plaque and it is hoped that the National Lottery Fund will make a contribution towards the cost.

On the subject of memorials, the Branch has, for some years, laid a wreath on a Black Watch War Grave, somewhere in the North East, on the Saturday preceding Remembrance Sunday. Bob Chantler provided transport for a number of members on these occasions and his loss will restrict the area which we are able to cover, however, the ceremony will be continued at those venues reachable by public transport.

I think that just about covers all of our news for the time being so I will close, pleased that I have caught the deadline.

Malcolm Dunn

PERTH BRANCH

President:	Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Roddy Riddell
Chairman:	Captain Alan McEwen
Secretary:	Jim Sandilands
Treasurer:	Fraser Brown
Social Convener:	Ally Alcorn

The Branch has had a busy but enjoyable period and as well as our monthly meetings. Branch members have been involved in many events; the trip to Black Watch Corner was the highlight but Ally Alcorn as our Social Convener has been very active, organising a number of outings. In addition George MacDonald and Weir Rankin were selected to meet HRH The Duke of Rothesay at the

official opening of the new Museum. The Branch hosted a function the night before the Regimental Reunion and it was a night to remember! Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies and the recently retired Lee Fitzpatrick led the entertainment.

Black Watch Museum Tour and Sunday Lunch

Our thanks to Ally Alcorn for organising a conducted tour of the Black Watch Museum followed by Sunday Lunch in the Copper Beech Cafe on Sunday 25 May and again on Sunday 17 August. Those members and partners who attended thoroughly enjoyed their day out. Our thanks also go to the Museum and Restaurant staff for passing on their knowledge and of course for feeding and watering us.

Armed Forces Day – Stirling

A small group of Branch Members attended the National Armed Forces Day Parade in Stirling on 28th of June. Captain Alan McEwan carried our Branch Banner.

WW1 Commemoration – Edinburgh Castle

On Sunday 10th August Jim Sandilands, George and Norma MacDonald, Sandy and Lynn MacDuff and Jock McBride attended the World War 1 Drumhead Commemoration Service along with the Angus and Fife Branches of the Black Watch Association at Edinburgh Castle. Although it was a dreich day our spirits were not dampened mainly due to the wonderful service laid on by the Armed Forces. After the service we marched down the Royal Mile where both sides of the road were lined with thousands of locals and tourists cheering us all the way down to Holyroodhouse. The proceedings at Holyroodhouse were unfortunately cancelled due to the inclement weather but wreaths and poppies were still laid on the 1600 replica headstones; this was a very poignant part of the parade.

A Look Ahead

On the 16th of September, Kevin Murphy, Eddie Kulik, Jack Hershall, Ian Duff, and Jim Sandilands attended a special mass to commemorate the fallen in the Great War who were members of the Parish of St Johns. Of the 66 who fell there were 22 Black Watch men. It was a very moving service and we are grateful to Bishop Robson of Dunkeld for inviting the Branch to the Requiem Mass.



Captain Alan McEwan carried the Perth Branch Banner on the Armed Forces Day Parade in Stirling. John Glen represented the Angus Branch as their Standard Bearer.

Burns Supper 2015

Following the hugely successful 2014 Burns Supper, the 2015 Burns Supper will take place in the Salutation Hotel, Perth on Saturday 7th of February 2015. Tickets can be obtained from Ally Alcorn. In addition the Branch are organising a trip to the Edinburgh Tattoo on either the 8th or 15th August 2015.

Branch Meetings

Branch meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm – in the Perth and District Ex Servicemen's Club. The following are the dates:

- Tuesday 16 December 2014
- Tuesday 20 January 2015
- Tuesday 17 February 2015
- March 2015 – AGM, date to follow
- Tuesday 21 April 2015
- Tuesday 19 May 2015



George MacDonald meets the Association's Royal Patron at Balhousie Castle.