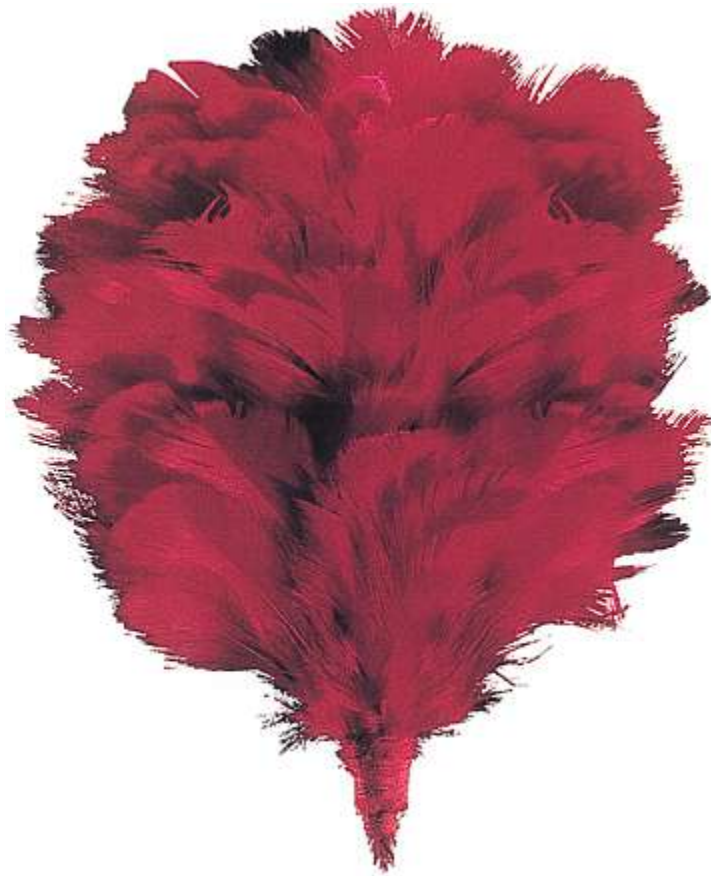


No. 181  
May 2018



# THE RED HACKLE



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42nd



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May 2018

# 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*



*Joe Hubble took part in his final parade at the London Cenotaph in November 2017.  
Joe died on 9 January 2018 after many years of loyal service to The Black Watch and as a Yeoman Warder.*

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# THE RED HACKLE



*The Chronicle of  
The Black Watch  
(Royal Highland Regiment)  
its successor  
The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion  
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**May 2018  
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*Published for The Black Watch*



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## Editorial

An Association project that took a long time to complete was finally sent to the printers in the autumn and the Officers of The Black Watch Addendum 1986-2006 was published in time to be sent out before Christmas. It was an important piece of historical work that recorded amongst other detail the career progression of all officers serving in 1986 and already recorded in the Blue Book (Officers of The Black Watch 1725-1986), those who joined on Short Service Commissions between 1963 and 1986 and those who joined between 1986 and 28 March 2006. It also updates the record of Commanding Officers, Adjutants and Quartermasters as well as "Moves of The Black Watch" from 1986-2006.

The building work to create an extension to the café began before Christmas and will give the commercial arm of the Museum greater flexibility to hold weddings, private parties, lectures and talks without spoiling the normal routine of the running of the café and shop. Hopefully it will also generate more money! The Castle and Museum continue to win awards and it is not always easy to find a seat at lunch; proof of its popularity.

A large proportion of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland have deployed to Iraq to train Iraqi forces and the Battalion notes cover the deployment in detail. I hope that you will be interested to read an article prepared by Captain Tim Towler who talks of his experience of working in the British Embassy in Baghdad.

I would also commend the article written by Lieutenant Colonel WA Colquhoun and the very amusing contribution about Colonel Alec Brodie.

Many of you will know that "The Black Watch Fighting in the Front Line", the second volume of our Regimental history was awarded a Gold Award in the Military History Monthly competition. It is a great accolade to the hard work of Victoria Schofield.

Planning has already begun on a large number of Remembrance events that will mark the end of the Great War. Those living in the South are asked to make a special effort to attend the London Branch Dinner and the Cenotaph Parade. In September the Perth Branch will hold a dinner to mark the 100th Anniversary of the award of the Croix de Guerre to the 6th (Perthshire) Battalion and this will be one of the last events of commemoration for the period from 1914-1918.

Lastly it would be wrong not to mark the death of a great Regimental character, Joe Hubble and Brigadier DR Wilson has written a detailed obituary of his life.

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

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

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

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



*Pipe Major Alistair Duthie represented the Regiment at an award ceremony in Lancaster when Mr David Rodwell was presented with his Legion d'Honneur by Philip Daniel, Honorary French Consul. David who is from Bolton-le-Sands served in The Black Watch and took part in the invasion of Europe in June 1944.*

# Regimental News

## FORECAST OF EVENTS 2018/2019

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
2018		
17 May	Friends Lecture – Allenby's advance in Palestine Campaign 1917-1918	Balhouseie Castle
20 May	Officers' and Ladies' Lunch	Ballathie House Hotel nr Perth
29 May	Scottish American War Memorial Service	Princes St Gardens Edinburgh
7 June	Royal Hospital Chelsea Founders Day	London
7 June	The Not Forgotten Association Garden Party	London
11 June	Officers' and Ladies' Lunch	Caledonian Club London
11 June	Friends Lecture – The Battle of Amiens and the 100 days campaign	Balhouseie Castle
15 June	Perth Branch Pre Reunion Function	Ex Servicemen's Club Perth
15 June	Regimental Golf Meeting	Muckhart Perth
16 June	Regimental Reunion	Perth
27 July	Korean War Memorial Service	Bathgate
30 July	Great War Memorial Service Battle of Tardenois	Balhouseie Castle
9 August	London Branch late summer lunch	London
tbc September	The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland Freedom Parades post Iraq	Regimental Area
16 September	Fife Branch Alma Ladies Lunch	Victoria Hotel Kirkcaldy
22 September	Angus Branch Rededication Service	Brechin
29 September	Perth Branch Croix de Guerre 100th Anniversary Dinner	Perth
20 October	Angus Branch El Alamein Dinner	Forfar
26 October	Association Trustees and Executive Committee Meetings	Perth
26 October	Officers' Gathering Dinner	Perth
8 November	Field of Remembrance, Westminster	London
9 November	Balhouseie Castle Remembrance Service	Balhouseie Castle
10 November	London Branch Dinner	Victory Services Club London
11 November	Cenotaph Remembrance Parade	London
2019		
15 June (am)	100th Anniversary of the formation of The Black Watch Association and the final Service of commemoration to the dead of The Great War	Balhouseie Castle
15 June (pm)	Regimental Reunion	Balhouseie Castle

**CONGRATULATIONS – HONOURS AND AWARDS**  
To Brigadier AJ Aitken on the award of a CBE in the New Year's Honours List 2018.

**CONGRATULATIONS – COMMISSIONING**  
To W01 (RSM) K Stacey on his selection for commissioning in summer 2018.

**CONGRATULATIONS – BOOK AWARD**  
The second volume of our Regimental History "The Black Watch Fighting in the Front Line", was awarded a Gold Award in the Military History Monthly competition. It is a great accolade to the hard work of Victoria Schofield.

**FURTHER CONGRATULATIONS**  
To The Black Watch Castle and Museum which won The Courier Business Award as Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality business of the year.

## OFFICERS COMMISSIONED INTO THE BLACK WATCH (ROYAL HIGHLAND REGIMENT) AND STILL SERVING ON 28 MARCH 2018

It is two years ago that we last published a list of officers commissioned into The Black Watch and since then, four officers have retired. On 27 March 2006 there were seventy five commissioned Black Watch officers. Twelve years later there are twenty still serving.

- Brig JC Roddis – Comd Specialised Infantry Group, York
- Brig BMA Wrench – Army Inspector, Army HQ, Andover
- Col RRE Lindsay – Comd (Designate) 51 Brigade (October 2018)
- Col LR MacDuff – DA Rome
- Col AD MacGillivray – MOD
- Lt Col WA Colquhoun – French Staff College
- Lt Col AV Cooper – MOD
- Lt Col DC Close – CO 2 SCOTS, Glencorse Barracks
- Lt Col R Hedderwick – CO 3 SCOTS, Fort George
- Lt Col AM Philp – Army Personnel Centre, Glasgow
- Lt Col RF Sandford – Army Staff, London
- Lt Col DM Sheldrick – CO 7 SCOTS, Perth
- Lt Col NKG Tomlin – CO 4 SCOTS, Catterick
- Maj JRP Bailey – 2IC 4 SCOTS, Catterick
- Maj CMB Broadbent – HQ 77 Bde, Thatcham



Maj NP Colquhoun – SO2 Org, Combat Units, Army HQ. To 2IC  
 3 SCOTS (May 2018)  
 Maj AL Colville – COS HQ INF, Warminster  
 Maj B Cooper – OC HQ Company 3 SCOTS  
 Maj SP Dallard – PJHQ  
 Maj JE Kelmanson – BATUK

**CHRISTMAS CARD 2018**

The Regimental Christmas card for 2018 is entitled “Departure of the Highland Brigade” and shows a soldier of the 42nd Royal Highland Regiment of Foot bidding farewell to his family as the Brigade depart for the Crimea. It is a print from the Regimental collection. The original was painted by Thomas Duncan R.S.A., A.R.A. and was published by Alex Hill on 18 June 1855.

Each card will cost 72p



*Christmas Card 2018.*

**AMENDMENTS**

Correction to the November 2017 Red Hackle.

The photograph on page 59 of Mr Bob Batchelor and Malcolm Dunn has incorrectly identified Malcolm Dunn as a Korean veteran. It was his brother Harold who served in Korea.



*The 51st Highland Division memorial at Sferro Hill was dedicated on 4 November 1943 and was visited by Major Hugh Rose in 2017. To find out more about this memorial and deeds of the 51st Highland Division visit 51hd.co.uk*

**RON STENBERG**

Ron Stenberg died in New Zealand in October 2017 aged 99. Ron was very proud of his association with the Regiment after he was commissioned to record the dress, weapons and vehicles being used by the 1st Battalion in West Germany in 1967/68 as well as painting Colour Sergeant Nobby Clark of the 4th/5th Battalion.

The full story of his links to the Regiment can be found on Page 31 of the May 2013 Red Hackle Magazine.



*Ron Stenberg, complete with sketch book, working in the field with some of his subjects.*



*George Kroegler presented a cheque for one thousand euros to the Association in memory of Brian “Kiwi” Simpson who died in a motorcycle accident in May 2017. Major Ronnie Proctor accepted the cheque on behalf of the Association.*



*This photograph shows the grave of 2Lt John Tweedy the brother of Brigadier Bob Tweedy. John was killed in action in Crete whilst serving with the 2nd Battalion.*



## GOLF MEETING

The annual all ranks golf meeting will take place on 15th June 2018 at Muckhart Golf Club. This competition is generously subsidised by the Black Watch Association and is open to all members of the Association and members of The Black Watch Battalion. We are extremely grateful to our sponsors, Sidey Ltd and Red Hackle Security.

This is an excellent day's golf and, due to the support of the Association and our sponsors, we can offer excellent value for money as well as some first class prizes. Of course, the best thing about the day is the opportunity to come together to enjoy the company of good friends, old and new. Full details are contained at [www.societygolfing.co.uk](http://www.societygolfing.co.uk) by going to 'Access Your Society Area' and entering the username 'blackwatch' with the password 'fortytwa'. Anyone who is not already listed as a member on the site, but would like to play, or just have their details entered for the future, should contact Maj (Retd) Alex Stewart at [alex8608@btinternet.com](mailto:alex8608@btinternet.com).

## GOLF – ARGYLL AND SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS v THE BLACK WATCH

The Argylls v The Black Watch golf cup (The Depot Cup) has been competed for since the late 19th Century but sadly the Argylls can no longer find players to compete for this historic trophy. The cup is currently held in Balhousie Castle.

## BLACK WATCH CURLING REPORT

*By Major J M K Erskine MBE*

The curling season started as usual with the annual match against the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. This year the Black Watch were the guests and the match was played at The Peak in Stirling on 16 November. The 'A' rink skipped by Jamie Montgomery won 7-2 and the 'B' rink skipped by James Duncan Millar won by 6-3 thanks to a great final stone by the skip to turnover a possible 4 shot loss into a winning end. So, at last the Regiment won back the Macrae Cup, the first time since 2000 by a margin of 13-5. The rinks were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink
Jamie Montgomery	James Duncan Millar
Will Henderson	Roddy Riddell
Jon Twine	David Noble
Malcolm Innes	Peter Burnet

The second match took place on 11 January in Perth against the Highlanders. Each Regiment produced two rinks and the intent was for each rink to play four ends against one of the opposition rinks before playing a further four against the other rink. At the end of the first four ends, the Highlanders were winning by 7 shots to 6. Half way through the second half, it looked very ominous but, while we eventually lost 12-15, it could have been worse. The rinks were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink
Jamie Montgomery	James Duncan Millar
Malcolm Taylor	Will Henderson
Roddy Riddell	Jamie Erskine
Hugh Rose	David Noble

The next match was to have been against the Lowlanders on 1 March at Murrayfield. Unfortunately the "Beast from the East", as the snow

storm was called hit the country the day before the match and it had to be cancelled.

The next big game in which the Black Watch curlers took part was on 15 March when the Highland and Lowland Brigade Curling Club took on The Queen's Body Guard for Scotland (Royal Company of Archers) at Kinross. Jamie Erskine, Peter Burnet and Malcolm Innes curled for the Highland and Lowland Brigade Curling Club while James Duncan Millar, Roddy Riddell, Mike Riddell-Webster and David Noble were in the Royal Company's team which won the match 26-20.

The final event was the Highland and Lowland Brigades' Curling Club Bonspiel on 22 March. This is always a full day of activity with three matches, interspersed with lunch and the Annual General Meeting. The Black Watch was asked to put out three rinks. Sadly one of the curlers pulled out before the day but Greville Ramsay, Paul Middlemiss and Russell Combe all from the Kings Own Scottish Borderers played one match for Rink 'C'. The rinks were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink'	'C' Rink
Jamie Montgomery	James Duncan Millar	Roddy Riddell
Malcolm Taylor	Will Henderson	Jamie Erskine
Hugh Rose	Alan Mcewen	Bruce Osborne
Peter Burnet	Malcolm Innes	KOSB curler

In the first session the 'A' rink lost 5-7 against HIGHLANDERS 'B', the 'B' rink beat SCOTS 'B' and the 'C' rink beat A and SH 'B' 7-4. In the second session the 'A' rink peeled 6-6 with A and SH 'B', the 'B' rink were beaten 1-4 by RHF and the 'C' rink peeled 5-5 with HLDERS 'A'. In the third session the 'A' rink beat KOSB 11-1, the 'B' rink beat HLDERS 'A' 7-2 and the 'C' rink beat SCOTS 'B' 6-2. So, at the end of the day the Regiment won 5, peeled 2, and lost 2 games. Twelve teams took part in the Bonspiel and the overall winners of it were SCOTS 'A' who were unbeaten. Black Watch 'C' came second, Black Watch 'B' came fourth and the 'A' rink was seventh.

Finally, the Black Watch curlers would like to thank the Black Watch Association for its continued and generous support. It really is much appreciated.



*On 16 November 2017 the Black Watch curlers won the Macrae Cup for the first time since 2000. The cup was presented by Colonel Sir Colin Macrae of Feoirinn CVO CBE in 1935. He was a Black Watch officer and since its inception it has been won by the Regiment on 23 occasions but we have been outstripped by the Argylls who have won it 49 times. There have been 2 draws. The cup was not competed for from 1939-46.*



*The Highland and Lowland Brigade Bonspiel was held in Perth on 2nd March 2018 and teams from The Black Watch came 2nd, 4th and 7th. Twelve teams competed in the competition which was won by the SCOTS A Team.*



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

## MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Chairman: Major General M L Riddell-Webster CBE DSO  
Major General J M Cowan CBE DSO  
Captain Angus Ferguson  
Mr Sean O'Reilly  
The Earl of Kinnoull  
Mr Graham Halstead  
Captain Anthony Perriam  
Mr George Hay (from December 2017)

Chief Executive: Mrs Anne Kinnes

The Castle and Museum has had a busy period. The building work for the new extension has progressed well and we have had more visitors than in previous years, as well as a busy calendar of events.

In December we held our second Winter Family Festival and we were delighted that once again it was well received. We had many activities for young and old and it was a chance for them to visit the Museum and immerse themselves in the story of The Black Watch and see our amazing collection.

In November as one of the nine other Regimental Museums in Scotland, working together as part of the Association of Scottish Military Museums, we were as a group, given the status as a recognised collection as Nationally Significant to Scotland.

We have now had external floodlights fitted so that the castle and the memorial to the 51st Highland Division can be lit up at night and we have had a very positive response to this in person and on social media.



*Balhousie Castle illuminated by floodlight.*

We are always looking for ways in which we can have more of the collection on view to the public so when we renamed our Education Room the "Waterloo Room", this allowed us to bring 47 items from storage and placed these in the newly named "Waterloo Room". These items include books, artworks and figures relating to the Battle of Waterloo.

Working with the Association we continue with our memorial services and to date we have 6755 crosses on the wall with another 2206 still to be placed. Our larger services are always well attended both by the Association and visitors. It is quite a regular occurrence that we are often contacted by relatives of the fallen who wish to place their crosses personally.



*The Association Standard Bearers and Pipe Major Peter Snaddon were on parade during the Service to commemorate the lives of Black Watch soldiers killed on 21 March 1918 on the first day of the German Spring Offensive.*

We have instituted a regular pattern of informal learning activities. We are running an average of two workshops per month, though this number will increase during school holidays. Between February and May, the Museum Explorers Club will be looking at flags and standards, the Ludendorff Offensive, the role of Officers and constructing air raid shelters. Given the programme's popularity, we are planning to continue the Museum Explorers Club for the rest of 2018.

Furthermore, we have organised an exciting series of activities for the Easter Holidays, which are intended to run alongside our current temporary exhibition, Art of War. The planned workshops include an illustration and watercolour masterclass, as well as block printing and basket-hilted broadsword making activities.

Finally, between February and May we will be taking part in two national event programmes, British Science Week and The Festival of Museums.

Work is also being carried out on our First World War trench. Firstly, we are running two training sessions in February in order to increase the number of 'Trench Guides'. Secondly, we are looking to purchase a First World War uniform, which will allow these guides to pose as a Highland soldier from the period. Finally, in order to encourage repeat visits to the trench, we are developing five themed object handling tours, focusing on topics such food, past times and weapons, which will enable visitors to explore a different part of life on the front line each time they visit the installation.

On the 19th January we co-operated with Dundee University Archives to deliver a workshop at an Interdisciplinary Learning Study Session for students of the University of Dundee's postgraduate course in Education. Following this, on 2nd February, we were invited to take part in Blairgowrie High School Heritage Marketplace, during which we provided information and assistance for S3 students carrying out local history research projects.

In addition, work has now been completed on our First World War and Second World War teachers' information packs. The results have been very positive: at the time of writing five schools, who between them will bring over 200 pupils, have booked to make a visit between February and March. This is a significant increase in numbers compared to the same period for 2016 and 2017.

In the near future, we are looking to further develop our current provision to schools by marketing our new 'Next of Kin' handling box, updating our pre and post visit activities. Finally, with the end of the First World War Centenary coming this year, we are planning to develop a new session focusing on conflict and remembrance for delivery to local schools in the autumn.

We are fast approaching the opening of the new extension and we are aiming for the 1st May 2018. Our new room is to be called The Queen Mother Room in recognition of her role as Colonel-in-Chief. This room will be a versatile room and allow us to have much larger temporary exhibitions, dinners and weddings. With its glass structure and six roof lanterns it looks very different from the rest of the Castle but I believe it will be very complementary to what we already have on offer.



*The new extension to the Cafe is nearing completion and will be opened on 26 April 2018.*

Finally, we are delighted that as a team we have been recognised as winners at several Award ceremonies this year from Excellence in Business Tourism to Regional Best Heritage Tourism Award.



*Leonor Blackhall, Linda Campbell, Anne Kinnes (CEO) and Debbie Owens attended the Courier Business Awards Ceremony when the Castle and Museum won the Business Award as Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality business of the year (Photograph courtesy of the Courier).*

## MUSEUM NOTES

*By Hope Busak, Curator*

Glasgow is proud to own the painting by Robert Gibb, the famous *Alma: Advance of the 42nd Highlanders*. This beautiful artwork captures the action at the Battle of Alma on 20th September 1854 when The Black Watch as part of the Allied Army, advanced up the slopes of the hills overlooking the River Alma to defeat the Russian defenders.



*A Study of "Advance of the 42nd Highlanders" original by Robert Gibb.*

The Museum is equally proud to have a print of this artwork, previously owned by Sir Peter Halkett, who is depicted in the print holding the Queen's Colour. Halkett has noted the names of other Officers shown, including Colin Campbell uttering the famous order: "Forward 42nd!", and Viscount Forth carrying the Regimental Colour.

Even more exciting for the Museum is a new addition – one of Gibb's studies for the painting. This study will reveal another level to the print on display in Gallery 4, not only looking at Gibb's sketch but also his testing of colours for the final piece.

The painting was bought by the Black Watch Association as well as grant funding from the National Fund for Acquisitions. The acquisition of this study of Gibb's work adds a new and unique dimension to the Museum's coverage of the Regiment's part in the Crimean War – the first time that the Regiment had been engaged since the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.

## THE FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH CASTLE AND MUSEUM

*By Sarah Riddell-Webster*

The principle aim of The Friends is to support the work of the Museum team to sustain the home of The Black Watch and to educate and inform all ages about the Regiment. With that aim in mind I was particularly pleased when we were asked if we would set up a Travel Bursary Fund to assist schools with the travel costs involved in bringing children to the Museum. The fund was set up in the latter half of 2017. Recently I asked Charlie Trzeciak, Learning and Audience Officer at the Museum, what take up there had been by schools. His reply to me was as follows;

*"The cost of hiring transport is a major obstacle to many schools and the support provided by the Travel Bursary has helped teachers to overcome this challenge. We have issued five travel bursaries to the following schools: Blairhall Primary School, Strathmiglo Primary School, Carnegie Primary School, Cleish Primary School and Milesmark Primary School. The financial assistance provided by the Travel Bursary has helped schools from as far away as Dunfermline to visit the Museum, thus enabling a greater number of pupils outside of the immediate Perth area to access, enjoy and learn from The Black Watch's heritage. The introduction of the Travel Bursary has had a positive impact on the number of school pupils we have worked with so far this year. By the end of March we will have worked with 366 primary and secondary school pupils (as opposed to 128 between January and March 2016), with 166 pupils coming from the schools mentioned above."*

We have purchased craft materials to keep both visiting children and the young Black Watch Explorer Club members busy. Charlie is a true master at instructing youngsters in how to build a tank or construct a musket from card, paper and a lot of glue, not to mention plenty of paint. 'Hands on' engagement is a great way for children to learn about history. As the Friends are run by volunteers, giving a not inconsiderable amount of their time, it is particularly rewarding to hear that our funds are having such an impact.

As well as assisting the Museum's education programme we have donated money towards the cost of bringing a Re-enactment Group to the Castle and Museum for the Festival of Museums in March. The First World War Trench at Balhousie Castle has been much in use. To improve visitors understanding of life on the front line we have given a grant to buy equipment and uniforms for the trench. These funds also bought more uniform and kit for people to try on as they go around the different rooms in the Museum. We have also continued our support of the Special Exhibitions and bought more storage materials and equipment for the Archive.

This is, of course, only a small part of the assistance we have given the Museum in the last year. I am not sure if you visited the Museum on any evening after the New Year, but if you did you will have noticed that Balhousie Castle is now illuminated by night. It looks wonderful as you approach from either Hay Street or the North Inch. The lighting was installed following the donation of funds from the Friends and it is nice that those attending our evening lectures in the winter can now see their way into the Castle. We also helped with lighting inside the Castle. For reasons beyond anyone's control the chandeliers that had been installed above both spiral staircases in the Museum became so unreliable that they needed to be replaced. Purchasing two new chandeliers was not a big spend. However, installing them above spiral staircases was very expensive. It was one of those jobs that was not covered by anyone's budget and so it was a perfect example of where the Friends funds could be of very practical use to the Museum. It would be lovely to just





spend our money on things like special exhibitions or travel bursaries but sometimes it is fortunate that we have the flexibility to assist with the mundane as well.

The Friends' lecture programme has continued to attract capacity audiences. We have continued our First World War theme with two visits from Professor Gary Sheffield from The University of Wolverhampton. In October, he told us of the horrors of the Battle of Passchendaele and then returned in March to take us through the Germans advance in the Spring of 1918. We also had a visit from Professor Evan Mawdsley of the University of Glasgow who managed to summarise The Russian Revolution and its impact of WW1 in less than an hour. In December, Dr Mike Taylor brought together all that we had learnt of the First World War during the year by summing up 1917 in a lecture entitled '1917 – Total War'. In January, as we entered the final year of the Centenary of WW1, Professor The Reverend Norman Drummond delivered a very thought provoking lecture entitled "What Will we learn from all this?". It is so important that having got the country thinking and remembering about the enormous sacrifices the war generation made, that we don't let it slip from our memories. As Professor Drummond pointed out, the world is currently a much less peaceful and settled place than it was in 1914. The other subject we covered in a lecture given by Professor Steven Driscoll from the University of Glasgow was the 'Cradle of Scotland'. This lecture centred around the archaeological dig that had gone on around Forteviot and brought in many new lecture attendees who live in the Forteviot area.

Everything that we have done is only possible because of the membership fees we collect and the revenue we raise through our lecture programme. Thank you to all those that continue to support us. To those of you who are still to join, we would welcome you. Please pick

up an application form next time you visit Balhousie or, even easier, join online by going to the website [www.theblackwatch.co.uk](http://www.theblackwatch.co.uk) and click on the Friends section. Full details of our lecture programme can be found in the Events section. With your help we can continue to support the Castle and Museum in many different ways.



*Children from schools in the local area have benefited from the Friends' Travel Bursary Fund. This has led to an increase in the number of schools visiting the Museum.*

## Lectures – Jun to Sep 2018

### **The Battle of Amiens and the 100 days campaign 11th June 2018**

6:30 drinks reception | 7:00 lecture commences  
 Tickets £9 non-members | £7 Friends  
 Prof Sir Hew Strachan will tell us about these momentous months, when militarily, all seemed to come right for the British Army after so many years of effort.

### **Formation of the Royal Air Force and its first century 11th September 2018**

6:30 drinks reception | 7:00 lecture commences  
 Tickets £9 non-members | £7 Friends  
 Air Vice-Marshal Ross Paterson and a member of the Air Historical Branch of the Royal Air Force will talk about the transition from the Royal Flying Corps to the Royal Air force and how air defence has developed over the last 100 years.

### **Bagpipe Music of The Black Watch 10th July 2018**

6:30 drinks reception | 7:00 lecture commences  
 Tickets £9 non-members | £7 Friends  
 Major (Retd) Hugh Rose will discuss the origins, background and history behind some of the well-known, pipe tunes associated with The Black Watch.

### **PLEASE BOOK ALL LECTURES IN ADVANCE BY TELEPHONE OR IN PERSON**

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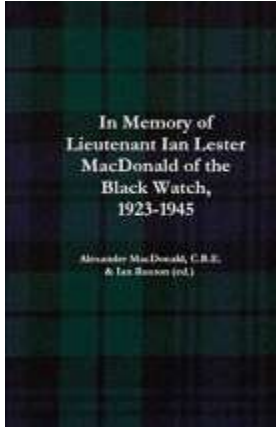
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# Book Reviews



*In Memory of Lieutenant Ian Lester MacDonald, 1923-1945.*

## IN MEMORY OF LIEUTENANT IAN LESTER MACDONALD 1923-1945

*By A MacDonald and I Ruxton*

Ian MacDonald was killed in action on 25 February 1945 during the Reichswald Offensive; he was serving with the 5th Battalion The Black Watch. This book has been privately published by the nephew of Lieutenant MacDonald and is based on the notes and memoirs of Ian MacDonald's father. It is by nature a sad story but it reminds the reader of the tragedy and heartache caused by the death of a cherished only son.

The parents lived in Chile and Ian was educated at Loretto School in Edinburgh. He is buried in the CWGC Cemetery in Rheinberg, Nordrheinwestfalen, Germany and the inscription on the headstone reads "Remembered with Love and Pride".

The book can be purchased from [lulu.com](http://lulu.com) and [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)



*Officers of The Black Watch Addendum 1986-28 March 2006.*

## OFFICERS OF THE BLACK WATCH ADDENDUM 1986-March 2006

This book has been published by The Black Watch Association and brings up to date the historical record of officers who served in the Regiment between 1986 and 28 March 2006.

It was designed to complement and update the Blue Book (Officers of The Black Watch 1725-1986). It records the career progression of Regular Officers serving in 1986, lists all officers who served on Short Service Commissions from 1963-1986 and it then lists all officers who served from 1986-2006.

Lastly it records the names of officers who served on Royal Guards from 1900-2005.

There are a few copies left which can be purchased from the Association at a cost of £5 plus postage. Copies of the "Blue Book" can also be bought for £10 plus postage.

# Correspondence

6 Pembroke Gardens  
London  
W8 6HS

Dear Editor

I much enjoyed reading in the May 2017 issue the Aden 1967 Reminiscence by Major Richard Parata. He might like to have his memory updated on a small detail. The High Commissioner who invited him to a black-tie dinner was not Sir Hugh Trevelyan (now deceased) but Sir Humphrey (later Baron and Knight of the Garter) a close friend of mine. I hope Richard enjoyed the dinner and that his host was persuaded to display his excellent piano playing and singing.

**H B McKenzie Johnston, CB**  
**WW2 Major in 6 BW**

**Editor's note:** This letter was misplaced and only recently came to light.

Godalming  
GU8 5DG

Dear Editor

## SWORD OF HONOUR WINNERS

I was interested to see the article about the Sword of Honour winners and as a cadet on the very last intake to be commissioned from Mons

I thought that the readership of the Red Hackle Magazine would be interested to read about the Mons equivalent of the Sword of Honour.

As the SUO on my course I was awarded a swagger stick (not a Regimental pattern) which had a silver plaque that reads "Arnhem Company, Mons Officer Cadet School, SUO I M Adams-Cairns 4 August 1972".

I also received a charming letter from Martin Gilliat the Private Secretary to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, who wrote to me on behalf of our Colonel-in-Chief and then a further letter of advice from Lord Ballantrae. In it he gave me his congratulations but also some sound advice. He wrote:

"I will confine myself to repeating to you what I repeated to Noble (David Noble, Sword of Honour winner 1969) and Lithgow (Nigel Lithgow, Sword of Honour winner 1970) when they won the Sword. It was said by my old Chief, General Wingate when he gave to one of his officers a bar to his DSO and it remains a salutary phrase": "Let this go to your heart, and not your head".

At the time of the closure of Mons, there was an interesting article written by the late Philip Howard (a Black Watch National Service officer) which is printed below and which marked the closure of Mons Officer Cadet School.

"This morning, at Mons Barracks, Aldershot, 65 officer cadets will march on to the vast, oblong, asphalt square, fenced round by frequent flagpoles, flying the flags of Brunei, Dubai, Great Britain and other military nations, and march off again as commissioned officers.



Gorgetts will gleam white on lapels for the last time, and arms will be pulled so unnaturally far back as to be in danger of dislocation. Drill sergeants will take their last opportunity to scream at their gentlemen with a constipated and animal ferocity seldom heard outside officer cadet schools or jungle films. Under Officers will perform the complicated legerdemain of “Eyes Right” with swords, while marching past in slow time, without amputating their noses.

With luck, the Adjutant’s horse, a large but sensitive animal, will not bolt during the crescendo fortissimos of the band of the Coldstream Guards, General Sir Michael Carver, Chief of the General Staff, will inspect, protected if necessary by the official umbrella. Senior Under Officer I M Adams-Cairns, by tonight of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) will march up as fiercely erect as a red hackle to receive the stick for the best cadet.

And the old khaki flood will course through the veins of all susceptible military men as the final commissioning parade at Mons marches off in fours in slow time to “Auld Lang Syne”.

After today’s parade, Mons Officer Cadet School is closing. In future, for the first time in the history of the Army, all officers will be trained as a united body in the same place, Sandhurst.

All candidates for commissions, whether permanent or short-service, will undergo a 25 week standard military course at Sandhurst, based on the Mons course that ends today. After successfully passing out from this and receiving their commissions, short service officers will join their regiments and corps directly. Regular officers will stay at Sandhurst for a regular career course lasting 24 weeks and dealing mainly with academic subjects relevant to their careers.

The new system will mitigate the old, conventional distinction between first and second class officers: Sandhurst trained and the others. It will also end the anomaly by which a short-service cadet could become an officer after only 20 weeks, and was thereafter occasionally able to convert to a permanent commission, while his Sandhurst contemporary was still doing his two years’ training.

Consequently today sees the end of Mons, the ugly red-brick barracks that have been the nursery where many thousands of cadets have learnt the various arts that make a British officer and gentleman; map-reading, obstacle courses, route marches, leadership, company in attack, naming of parts and exploratory flirtation with the Aldershot talent.

Mons (brick barracks built circa 1925, “spiders” woven for Hore Belisha’s Territorials in 1938) became an Officer Cadet Training Unit shortly after the beginning of the last war, during which Sandhurst was closed. It was used to train officer cadets, at first for the Royal Signals (who had been evacuated from the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich), then later in the war for the infantry.

In 1948 it was renamed Mons Officer Cadet School, and for the next 10 years trained National Service officer cadets for commissions in all arms other than the infantry and Intelligence Corps. In 1958, when National Service began to run down, the infantry cadets were moved down from Eaton Hall and amalgamated into Mons. Since National Service ended in 1961 Mons has trained officer cadets for Short-Service Commissions in all arms.

Since then 2,859 British officer cadets have marched into the regular Army through Mons, and 1,151 overseas cadets from most of the round Earth’s imagined corners, particularly the Middle East and Africa. One of the advantages that Mons has always had over Sandhurst has been that its cadets have come from wider cross section of background, age, school, outlook and experience. For example, over the past 20 intakes only 45 per cent of the officer cadets have been to public schools. These advantages will now be transferred to Sandhurst.

The largest and certainly the loudest in the parade of famous soldiers who have worked at Mons was Regimental Sergeant Major Ronald Brittain; when he invited a cadet on the other side of the square to put his hat on straight the guard at Windsor used to turn out in panic.

The last Commandant of Mons, Brigadier Sir Jeffrey Darell, says “Mons has always provided a hard, practical, concentrated course, especially designed to develop leadership qualities in the non-career officer. The fact that from September the training of all officers in the British Army will be on the lines of the Mons course is recognition that it has been successful. It is sad that Mons is closing but the removal to Sandhurst is a very progressive step for the Army”.

Today, as the last company of cadets, looking lonely without any juniors to support them, present arms to the sound of “Toll for the Brave”, the parade ground and the barracks are full of echoes and shades of the generations who have marched through them to become officers and adults.”

Iain Adams-Cairns

Perthshire

Dear Editor

### DR TOM RENOUF SQUARE – VEULES-LES-ROSES

I am sure that many readers know the history concerning General Sir Derek Lang and my father but needless to say, following General Lang’s death, my father continued to visit and support the efforts of the people of St Valery and Veules-Les-Roses; the aim was to keep alive and well the deep relationship that had been built up since 1940 between the 51st Highland Division and the village.

My father stayed many times celebrating both the events of 1940 and 1944 with equal enthusiasm. He was not there for either as he was somewhat occupied a little to the East in 1944 and still at school in 1940!

The result of this association has been one that has prospered many friendships and following my father’s death in June 2016, the Mayor of Veules-Les-Roses decided that he should honour my father by naming a small square in the town after him. This was in recognition of the work he did on behalf of those less fortunate than himself.

So on Saturday 23rd September the entire Renouf clan returned to St Valery to be present at the annual ceremony to commemorate 1940 and 1944. Present were a small group from the Highland Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland. They travelled overnight on a minibus from Perth and played throughout the day. The first performance was at a commemoration service at the war graves in Veules then we marched to the square where my mother unveiled the plaque, naming the square Dr Thomas “Tom” J Renouf.

The day was very moving and it is special that the people of France still remember those who died for their freedom.

George Renouf



Local dignitaries and the Renouf family pictured on 23 September 2017 at Veules-Les-Roses.



The plaque dedicated to the memory of Dr Tom Renouf in Veules-Les-Roses.

Dear Editor

I was lucky to have a seat at Murrayfield on Sunday 11th February this year to watch the Auld Alliance Trophy International Rugby Match, Scotland versus France.

Scotland had just lost their first Six Nations match against Wales in Cardiff the week before by 34 points to 7 and had returned home wounded after a match in which the team made too many errors. How would they be able to pick themselves up in time for the Auld Alliance match against France? Well, the Scotland team won by 32 points to France's 26.

Reading the Match Programme, my eye was caught by an article about the newly created Auld Alliance Trophy which has recently been made to honour Scottish and French internationals who gave their lives in the First World War. It will be awarded in future to the winning Scottish or French team when they play each other every year. So Scotland were the first Auld Alliance Trophy Winners.

Reading on, I found that of the thirty players who took to the pitch in Scotland's final pre-war match in 1914, eleven gave their lives. In all twenty two French and thirty one Scottish internationalists were killed during the Great War, along with countless other club players from both nations.

The Captain of the Scottish XV was Eric Milroy who joined the 8th Battalion, The Black Watch and was declared missing, presumed killed, during the Battle of the Somme at Delville Wood on 18th July 1916, aged 28. The Captain of the French team, Marcel Burgun, became a pilot and was shot down in the same year and died aged only 26. Family members from both the Milroy family and the Burgun family were at Murrayfield for the match this year – never having met before. Eric Milroy is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing dead of the Somme Battle.

The Watsonians scrum-half, Eric "Puss" Macleod Milroy, was born in Edinburgh in 1887 and attended George Watson's College where he was a Scholar and he then went on to Edinburgh University to study mathematics and later became a Chartered Accountant. He played

for the Watsonian's Old Boys XV, who between 1908 and 1914, when Watsonians won the Scottish Club Championship five times – this achievement was attributed in part to Milroy's "wonderful success at the base of the scrum".

Eric Milroy was capped twelve times for Scotland playing against England, Ireland, Wales and France between 1910 and 1914. He toured South Africa with the British Isles team in 1910 and captained Scotland in the final International in 1914 before he was called up to serve with the Regiment for the Great War.

Initially commissioned into the 11th Battalion on 19th December 1914, he was sent to the Western Front in October 1915 and then drafted to the 8th Battalion and promoted Lieutenant in June 1916. The 8th Battalion was one of five Black Watch Battalions who were involved in the Battle of the Somme and together with the 10th Argyll and Sutherland Highlander's part of the 26th Brigade of the 9th Scottish Division, led the assault on Longueval. By that time that position was finally secured the 8th Battalion was reduced to only 171 Officers and men.

Colin Innes



*The Scotland team with Eric Milroy, back row, second from the right.*

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# Obituaries

## CAPTAIN ROWLAND BRUCE RANALD CRITCHLEY

Bruce Critchley followed his father, Colonel Ian Critchley, his uncle, Brigadier Bruce Hamilton and grandfather, Honorary Colonel Adrian Hamilton into the Regiment. He was commissioned in June 1973 from Standard Military Course 2 and completed his Regular Commissioning Course at RMA Sandhurst before joining the battalion in Hong Kong, just before it returned to Colchester in March 1974.

He was educated at Eagle House near Sandhurst and then Wellington College. On commissioning he took command of 5 Platoon in B Company. On returning from Hong Kong the Battalion started a period of intensive training in preparation for an emergency tour in West Belfast (June-October 1974). B Company's Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR) was West Andersonstown and Lenadoon and like many young officers Bruce had a steep learning curve. The pattern of long hours on patrol, watch-keeping and commanding the Glenveagh OP were interspersed by early morning house searches, riots, shootings and surges in VCP activity to stop bombs being driven into Belfast. It was a busy and in many ways a fulfilling time and, although only for four days, R&R was a welcome break.

On our return from Northern Ireland we were warned off to return to West Belfast between June and October 1975. In the few months after leave, Bruce attended his Platoon Commanders' Course, represented the Battalion at Cross Country and was selected to carry the Regimental Colour during the New Colours Parade on 3 May 1975.

Another period of training kicked off and culminated in an exhausting training package at Lydd and Hythe. Still in B Company, Bruce was now the most experienced Platoon Commander in the Company and respected as a steady pair of hands. The Company returned to Glassmullin Camp and the officers to the same beds as they had used the previous year, a moment of reflection that little had changed or probably improved over the previous eight months. The Battalion were involved in 23 shooting incidents, a number of riots, over 165 house searches and 37,000 vehicle searches were carried out. In October 1975 we left West Belfast with a social flourish, after a final meeting of the Turf Lodge Luncheon Club in the Europa Hotel, attended by all officers, less the Junior Subaltern.

In 1976, the Battalion returned to Northern Ireland for a residential eighteen month tour based at Abercorn Barracks, Ballykinler and Bruce was still commanding 5 Platoon in B Company. The summer of 1976 had a long heatwave and our two mile long beach was a focus for parties. For our first six months there were few deployments and Charlie Maxwell, who commanded 7 Platoon in B Company and lived at Killyleagh, ensured we were fully integrated into the social scene in Northern Ireland. Bruce had great charm and was soon the guest at many family gatherings. He had by now commanded a platoon for four years and his experience was needed elsewhere; he moved to the Depot at Glencorse in 1977 where he trained recruits and ran the Scottish Division Potential Officers' Squad. He shot as an individual at Bisley in 1978, coming 81st in the prestigious Army 100. He competed in long distance running events and at the Depot he was reputed to have a singularly athletic party trick: after a Mess Dinner and presumably a glass of wine or two, Bruce dressed in Mess Dress would run across the room and turn a summersault in the air and land, looking perfectly composed. Luckily the speed of the manoeuvre did not let the onlookers see whether he was a true Highland gentleman.

Capable officers, at ease socially, make good ADCs and Bruce had these qualities and more. For his final posting he was sent to take over from Willie Henderson as ADC to Major General Andy Watson, who was GOC Eastern District. General Watson reported that Bruce "carried



out his duties with calm efficiency, combining a practical common sense approach with an easy manner, quickly gaining the respect of all those at the Headquarters. He had a quiet charm and he was a great support to me. He was also a great credit to, and a fine representative of the Regiment."

During his seven years' service Bruce was well liked and respected by his soldiers and NCOs and was a good friend to many brother officers. He was described by Jimmy Williamson, who had been his Platoon Sergeant, as a real gentlemen, who was smart, conscientious and professional and as a man who always had the interests of his soldiers at heart. Bruce retired as a Captain on 21 March 1980.

After leaving the Army he worked in the timber trade in London and then became a director of Echo Communications Ltd, in the fast developing world of mobile phones. On moving to Scotland in 1993, he worked for a short time with a different communications company and then for Scottish Power. Latterly he was working for a renewable energy company.

Bruce married Lizzie Storey in 1988 and they have three children; twins Fergus and Lucilla and Dougie.

In 1994 he became a member of The Queen's Body Guard for Scotland, The Royal Company of Archers but due to ill health was transferred to the Non Active List in 2016.

He loved being outdoors and took great pleasure in nature. He was a good shot and generous host, taking days of shooting to entertain his friends. He could cast a fine line when fishing for salmon and despite being in a lot of pain he caught his last fish in August 2017 on the River Shee. He was a stylish skier both on snow and on the water.

He was awarded the General Service Medal 1962, with Clasp Northern Ireland, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Bruce died on 9 December 2017 aged 64. He was a man of great courtesy, he sought excellence and could be quite determined but he had a wry sense of humour and during his illness he showed a hugely positive attitude and great courage. He was stoic and never complained about his lot. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word.

**R M Riddell and J D Monteith**

## BRIGADIER OLIVER ROBERT TWEEDY

Brigadier Bob Tweedy died on 20 September 2017 aged 87. He was always known as Bob and disliked his given name Oliver.

He was born on 4 February 1930 in Newbury, Berkshire, the son of Commander GJD Tweedy OBE, RN. He also had an uncle, Robert, who joined the Black Watch in 1906 and who died in India in 1911, presumably while serving with the 2nd Battalion. His elder brother John (2BW) was killed in action in Crete on 20 May 1941 on the first day of the German invasion; another brother Christopher died in November 1942. He was serving on HMS Unbeaten (a submarine) that was sunk in the Bay of Biscay by one of our own Coastal Command anti-submarine aircraft. Bob had a third brother David who predeceased him.

He attended Sedbergh School before entering the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and after being commissioned into The Black Watch in December 1949, he was posted to join the 1st Battalion in Berlin.

As a Platoon Commander, he moved with 1BW to Buxtehude before returning to Perth to take up a post as a Training Subaltern at the Depot. Then in 1954, he was posted to join the 2nd Battalion serving firstly in Dortmund, as Motor Transport Officer and then moving with 2 BW to British Guiana until 1954. His next posting was as an instructor at the Small Arms School at Hythe before he returned to 1BW as 2 i/c of B Company in Cyprus (1959). He attended Staff College at Camberley in 1960 and was then posted to serve for two years in his first staff job at HQ Middle East Command.

He returned to 1 BW in Warminster as a Company Commander before carrying out an appointment at the Highland Brigade Depot



Bridge of Don, Aberdeen. He was then a student at the Joint Services Staff College, before becoming MA to C-in-C Far East in Singapore. In 1968 he returned to 1BW at Kirknewton for a six month period in command of D Company which included command of the Royal Guard at Balmoral with Jamie Campbell as Guard Second in Command, James Osborne as a spare captain, and subalterns Mike Melville, Jamie Hepburne-Scott and Hugh Rose. It was a most successful and enjoyable Guard being the last one before the situation in Northern Ireland started to cause serious security concerns. When the Royal Guard duties came to an end, Bob Tweedy decided the Company would march back to Kirknewton through the heart of the Regimental area. The Company marched about 20 miles a day. They stayed the nights, mainly in TA Drill Halls on route but some hospitable locals invited the officers to dine and stay in their private houses. One such invitation resulted in the two largest officers on the Guard being shown to a guest room late at night to find it contained only a small double bed – the final sleeping arrangements in this situation remain a well kept secret!

After working on the Directing Staff at Staff College between 1969 and 1971, he was selected for command of 1BW in Kirknewton and took over from Andy Watson in August 1971. 1BW had been warned for an Arms Plot move to Hong Kong early in 1971 but the Battalion's preparations for that posting were suddenly interrupted by being sent on a two month Emergency Tour to East Belfast, shortly after internment was introduced.

Most of the Battalion was accommodated in aircraft hangars on the Sydenham Airbase but A Company was housed in rather vulnerable lodgings in the Short Strand Bus Station and Battalion HQ was crammed into the Mount Pottinger Street RUC station. Terrorist activity in the city was fairly continuous with most of it taking place in the City Centre and West Belfast. 1BW was often tasked to carry out operations in support of Battalions in those areas but the Battalion was also involved in two serious gun battles in our own TAOR and various other serious incidents took place including the murder of LCpl Charnley and wounding of Cpl Robertson inside the Short Strand Bus station.

The move to Hong Kong should have been a welcome change after the Irish deployment but Bob Tweedy did not have an easy command. 1BW was well over strength (more than 800 strong) and was split between two locations many miles apart. Hugh Rose who took over as his Adjutant soon after the Battalion's arrival remembers that more than half the Battalion was married/accompanied by their families, many of whom were very young. Married quarters in the city were often small flats rented in multi-storey, tower blocks – a strange, oriental environment for a young wife with neighbours who spoke no English. Of course there was no family infrastructure to support the teenage wives far from home, so assistance, guidance and advice had to be given by senior ranks' wives and a Battalion Families Office staff which had to be increased to ten.

Training opportunities in Hong Kong were limited so a programme of overseas deployments was devised with Companies visiting Brunei, Malaya, Fiji, Australia and New Zealand. 1BW also regularly carried out the Korean Honour Guard commitment in Seoul. These opportunities to travel and to see the world were exactly what many Jocks had joined up to enjoy but the long periods of separation did not help their families' isolation and the domestic problems back in Hong Kong. Nor were the single men immune to the many temptations that abounded in downtown Hong Kong. The city had, for many years, hosted US forces on R&R from Vietnam with much money to spend and the Wanchai and Tsim Sha Tsui offered every risk to good behaviour that a young soldier could possibly imagine.

Colonel Bob worried much over the welfare of his soldiers and their families and, as Adjutant, I was constantly being told to develop various protective schemes. He also had an excellent memory and knew the names of all his men and usually from whence they came too. I was frequently embarrassed for not being able to remind him whether it was "Jock 36" or "56" on the far side of the square and which village in Fife he came from! I also remember getting a rocket for failing to produce a new draft for interview so that he could welcome them to the battalion on the day they arrived from UK.

It was largely down to his constant attention to the man-management side of his command that the Battalion did not suffer serious drug or other problems and he received enormous help with managing the married families from Dawn and other wives. He expected much of his officers and SNCOs and drove us as hard as he drove himself. He could

be brusque and demanding and seldom expressed gratitude for duty done but he was also honest to a fault and forgiving too when he saw that people had been trying their best. Both I and Philip Forster, my predecessor as Adjutant, were forgiven serious mistakes.

Philip recalls one occasion thus: "I dispatched the CO, bright and early by helicopter to Victoria Barracks for the Director of Infantry's conference, only to discover minutes later that I should have checked – the venue had been changed the previous day to 51 Brigade HQ (10 minutes away by car). To add to his joy, when he eventually arrived at the conference, he received a standing ovation from his peers and I expected to die on his return to the office. What I actually received was a wry smile, which forever endeared him to me. In my mind, as well as being fiercely bright and efficient, he was a kind and thoughtful man."

Hugh adds: "In my own case when I returned to the office having "rather too enthusiastically" welcomed my new godson and his mother home from hospital, I was just greeted with a deep sigh and sent off to bed – the rocket which I deserved was delivered instead to the baby's father for being a far too-generous host!

Bob Tweedy's last two postings in the Army were to command the British Advisory Team in Nigeria and finally to command 51 Highland Brigade in Perth.

On retirement from the Army in 1985 he became Commandant of Queen Victoria School, a job he did for nearly six years.

After he retired he bought a house in Dunkeld where he became the Treasurer of St Mary's Episcopal Church in Birnam as well as becoming Chairman of the Dunkeld and Birnam Recreation Club which runs the tennis and the bowls Clubs. He was also a helpful Trustee for the Regimental and Wavell Trusts.

He much enjoyed his hobbies of fishing and shooting and he dabbled in fly tying and painting. He was particularly keen on fishing the small West Coast rivers and had a lease on the Dundonald River for about 10 years in the 1980s/90s. On one occasion the factor went down on the first morning to collect the rent thinking he would find Brigadier Bob setting up his rod, only to meet him coming back across the bridge carrying a very nice 6lb grilse and two good sea trout – he had been on the water early!

One brother officer remembers him as a large, cheerful and usually loudly-spoken officer who took a long time to answer a question but when the answer came, it was invariably well thought through. Dawn would often chide him "Hurry up Bob or we will all have forgotten the question"!

Bob married Dawn Berrange in 1956 and they had three children Sareth, Christopher and Andrew. Christopher served in the Regiment from 1982 to 1994, retiring as a Captain.

**H R Rose and R M Riddell**

## GEORGE YOUNG BRYDON

George Brydon died on Sunday 4th March 2018 aged 92.

He was born and brought up in Newhaven, Edinburgh the son of a Great War veteran who was awarded the Military Medal and was Mentioned in Dispatches. George left school at the age of 14 and was employed as a delivery driver for a Lemonade Factory in Leith.

As a young 15 year old in 1940 he saw German bombers flying up the Forth to bomb Leith Docks. He joined the army in 1944 and after basic training, was posted to the 5th Battalion which was then serving in Normandy.

Very soon he was in the thick of the action around Caen. This was a transforming experience for an 18 year old. The 5th Battalion then took part in Operation Totalize which forced the German Army to retreat North after the Battle of Falaise. The Battalion were then tasked to take Chateau Mauny, near the river Seine, which was occupied by the elite 12th SS Panzer Division Hitlerjugend. Here, on the 28th August 1944 Pte George Hildred of 'A' Company was fatally wounded. Tom Renouf was also wounded but survived his injuries.

George was in 'B' Company which was sent the next day (29th August) to attack the Chateau defences. He was severely wounded as a result of intense mortar fire coming from the Chateau; five others who were standing close to him including the Company Commander, Major





Donald Mirrielees were killed. He was eventually rescued when the Chateau was captured the day after. George and many of the wounded were then taken 80 miles to Bayeux strapped to a jeep on a stretcher, face-down due to him suffering a severe lower back wound.

On the journey to the hospital, the convoy was attacked by two American fighter planes, resulting in everyone diving into the ditches, leaving the wounded strapped to the vehicles.

He was then transferred to a hospital ship heading back to Portsmouth where he underwent many operations to repair his wounds. He was demobilized in 1947.

After the war, he worked in printing inks works in Granton and then Edinburgh, from where he retired as Production Manager in 1986. George was awarded the Legion d'Honneur by the French Government and this was presented by the French Consul General at a family gathering at Gilmerton House Haddington in November 2016. He is survived by his wife Elma of 67 years, his four children, his many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He was a great family man and great character who will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

**G Brydon**

### DAVID COWIE

David was born on the 22nd December 1929 in Banff. On leaving school at the age of fourteen, took up employment in the sawmills and later as an apprentice baker. Itchy feet took David south to Essex and Shoeburyness as a sub contractor for Echo Wireless. Still searching for something different in his life, David decided to join up and in 1947 headed to the Recruiting Office and eventually the Black Watch. He served in the Korean War, Malaya, Singapore, British Guyana, Berlin, Cyprus, BAOR and the UK so I think those itchy feet were given good exercise. He was my Platoon Sergeant in Warminster and I found him to be a great source of learning in the craft of soldering. He took over the Pioneer Platoon in Minden and as you can see by the photograph, took up the tradition of wearing a full beard. On Demob he worked in Edinburgh as a Security Guard and then he joined the MOD Police until his retirement. He settled in Stirling.



He loved his garden, researching family history and wine making but his fist love was his family; unfortunately ill health confined him to his home. Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies visited David in his later years and found their chats to be informative and always good humoured. Sadly David died on the 15th of December 2017 just a week before his 88th birthday. I feel sure his family will miss his joyful outlook on life as will all who knew him.

**R M Scott**

### STANLEY DENCH

Johnny Dench passed away on the 23rd December 2017 aged 84 and was buried at St Thomas' Cemetery after a well attended funeral service at the Bruce Memorial Church, near the family home in Cambusbarron near Stirling.

Johnny was born in Dorset and although he was christened Stanley his mother and the rest of the family called him John the name by which he was known during his military service and civilian life thereafter.

He initially enlisted into the Royal Signals but later answered the call for volunteers to serve in Korea and transferred to The Black Watch and he served with the 1st Battalion both in Korea and Kenya. He subsequently moved to Crail in 1955 where he met his wife to be, Betty. They were married in 1955 prior to the Battalion's next move to Berlin in 1956.

He then served in Redford Barracks and Cyprus. By then he was a Corporal and was a well known regimental character who was a keen sportsman and regimental boxer who represented the Battalion in various competitions out with the battalion. In 1961 he decided to transfer



to the RAOC however after two years he decided to leave the army and he and Betty returned to civilian life and settled down in Cambusbarron, Betty's home town. He was employed in various jobs before he reached state retirement age and it was then that his health began to deteriorate.

He was always extremely proud to have served in The Black Watch and also that Stephen his eldest son followed him into the Regiment and was a member of the Battalion Bisley Shooting Team.

He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

**R J W Proctor**

### ALEXANDER FAIRHURST

Alexander, better known as Eck, was born in Lochgelly on the 23rd November 1943 and died on the 15th December 2017 aged 74. He was brought up in the Lochgelly area. On leaving school he had his heart set on the Army and The Black Watch in particular. Alex served with the Battalion in the UK, Gibraltar and BAOR and in his words, found a second family.

Alex married and had two children and on leaving the Army he returned to his native Lochgelly taking up employment as a miner in the Seafield Colliery, Kirkcaldy. Retirement came through ill health but he was a family orientated man and he enjoyed nothing more than spending time with his extended family but especially his grandchildren.

His other passion was supporting the Fife Branch of the Association and he attended most if not all of the events that meant wearing a Blue Bonnet. He was fiercely proud of his time in the Regiment and was buried, dressed in his blazer and treads.

He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.



**R M Scott**

### DAVID GEMLO

Dave Gemlo died on the 24th of November 2017 aged 84. His funeral service took place on the 5th December at Ferryden and he was interred at Rossie Island Cemetery, Montrose.

A time served butcher before being called up to do his National Service with The Black Watch, he was posted to the 1st Battalion in Kenya after completing his basic training at Queens' Barracks, Perth.

Dave spent his time both in Kenya during the Emergency and also on his return to Crail in a Rifle Company and in later years, remarked on how much he enjoyed his time in the Regiment.

On being demobilised he returned to his trade as a butcher in Montrose and worked there until he reached state retirement age. One of the founder members of the Angus Branch, Dave regularly attended Branch meetings and functions until ill health latterly prevented him from doing so. He also took part in all the rallies, events and marches throughout Scotland which were organised to save the Regiment prior to 2006.

Dave was extremely proud to have served in the Black Watch and although quiet and reserved in nature he was a great character with a great sense of humour. He is sadly missed by all who knew him

**R J W Proctor**

### ALEXANDER HAIN

Pipe Major Sandy Hain died recently. He had lived in the USA for a number of years. A full obituary will be published in the next magazine.

### TERENCE LIONEL HUBBLE

Joe Hubble joined The Black Watch in 1950, aged 17. Although born in Hertfordshire and brought up in various parts of South East England and Wales during the Second World War, he opted to join the regiment in which his brother had served in Burma and in which his cousin had been killed at the crossing of the Rhine. His recruit training was at the Highland Brigade Training Centre at Fort George and he joined the 1st Battalion in Berlin in 1951 where he trained as a driver and



joined the MT Platoon. Incidentally, Joe's full name was Terence Lionel Hubble but apparently his fellow recruits decided that there was no place for a Terence in The Black Watch, so he became Joe!

After service in Berlin, Joe moved with the Battalion to Crail in early 1952 and shortly after by troopship to Korea, arriving in June that year to serve in the Commonwealth Division in the latter stages of the Korean War. He was, by this time, in the Signal Platoon and took part in all the Battalion's operations in Korea, including both Battles of The Hook. In the second battle, he was involved in the dangerous task of repairing telephone lines, cut by both Chinese and UN artillery fire. The Army was at full stretch, so after Korea The Black Watch moved straight to Kenya in 1953 to take part in operations against Mau Mau insurgents. Joe rejoined the MT Platoon and was promoted to Lance Corporal, then Corporal as NCO IC Delta Company MT. For two years, he was fully involved in the Battalion's operations around Nanyuki, the White Highlands and the Aberdare forests.

Joe Hubble is so well known for the later stages of his career and life that many now will not be aware of this early period of his service as a young man, typical of many thousands of British soldiers of that time, including National Servicemen. We cannot do justice to it in these columns but readers can hear it all in Joe's own voice in his 'Oral History' recorded in 2011 and available on the Imperial War Museum's website at [www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80032303](http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80032303).

These fascinating records are detailed, opinionated, amusing, sometimes poignant but always real. They are recommended to anyone who would be interested in Joe's life and his service, particularly in those early years, as well as his later experiences in Germany, the Middle East, Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This archive and many others like it at the IWM are footnotes to British military history.

Joe returned from Kenya to Crail in 1955. He was married to Joy and left the Army for a short period. He re-enlisted and returned to the 1st Battalion in Scotland and then went back to Berlin in 1956-57 where he served as a section commander in A Company in the full range of duties and exercises required in the city at that time, including guarding Spandau Prison and its celebrated inmate, Rudolf Hess. In 1957, the battalion returned to Redford Barracks, Edinburgh for a short one year home posting which included the provision of the Royal Guard at Ballater. This was the first of Joe's many encounters with the Royal Family and Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother in particular.

The Battalion moved to Cyprus in 1958 towards the end of the EOKA terrorist campaign but Joe was in Bravo Company, detached for a year at Tobruk in Libya. Following this, he was posted to the Depot at Queens' Barracks in Perth as an instructor, the start of a long career as a trainer. He returned to the 1st Battalion in Cyprus in late 1960 as a section commander when he was much in demand as an accomplished instructor and specialist in weapon training. This experience was put to good use in the battalion's next tour as demonstration battalion at the School of Infantry at Warminster 1961-1963. On promotion to Sergeant, he was posted to the combined Depot of The Black Watch and Argylls, initially at Stirling Castle then at Fort George. On the establishment of the Highland Brigade Depot at Bridge of Don, Joe's solution for the move from Inverness was to march his recruits 90 miles to Aberdeen!

Sergeant Hubble returned to the 1st Battalion in Minden in 1965 and served as a platoon sergeant in Alpha Company. However, he was soon off again on another instructor posting as recruit training sergeant with the Trucial Oman Scouts in Sharjah for two years until 1967, returning to The Black Watch in Minden for the final year of its four year tour in BAOR as the first mechanised infantry battalion in the Army to be equipped with the AFV 432 armoured personnel carrier.

Joe's remaining five years of service with 1BW began in 1968, based at Kirknewton near Edinburgh, initially as CQMS and then CSM of Alpha Company. He took a mischievous pride in being one of several Englishmen who were prominent in the senior ranks of the 1st Battalion at that time. An unofficial duty at this time was the instruction of newly promoted sergeants in Sergeants' Mess etiquette – Joe would have enjoyed that role. This period included a major overseas exercise in Malaysia, a tour guarding the frontier in Gibraltar and four emergency tours by 1BW in Northern Ireland 1970-1972. The first of these included a night of sharp fighting with the IRA in Belfast's Lower Falls in July 1970. A Company was in the thick of the action. All Joe's skills and experience were shown in steadying and encouraging young officers and Jocks who were under fire for the first time.

Joe's final military service was once again in instructor posts: first at the Infantry Junior Leaders Battalion at Shorncliffe as CSM of the

Scottish and Light Divisions' Company and then, finally, as Training Warrant Officer at the Scottish Infantry Depot at Glencorse. Hundreds of young soldiers and recruits benefited from his experience and insistence on nothing but the highest standards. Warrant Officer (Class 2) Hubble left the Army in 1977 and settled in Kent with his family.

Joe's life after the Army was remarkable. For a short period, he was the Sergeant Major Instructor of the Combined Cadet Force of St Lawrence's College, Ramsgate. He then became a Yeoman Warder at The Tower of London – a role he carried out with aplomb, great presence and some humour for 20 years. Assisted by the most famous moustache in London, he was recognised by thousands and fêted by the great and the good as well as his comrades in the Royal British Legion (he was a standard bearer and parade marshal), the Korea Veterans and other ex-Service organisations. He was a Freeman of the City of London, an honour within The Black Watch that he shared only with Field Marshal Earl Wavell – not a bad pair! On one famous occasion, allegedly the only time that the famous 'Bee-feater' livery has been seen outside UK, Yeoman Warder Hubble escorted The Queen Mother as she inspected the 1st Battalion of her Regiment in Berlin in 1987, the 50th anniversary year of her appointment as Colonel in Chief of The Black Watch.

Despite his many other affiliations, Joe never forgot his own military roots and was a faithful supporter, attender and representative of London Branch of The Black Watch Association. Indeed, he became incontestably 'the face of The Black Watch' at many national events. He was a committee member and a key member of London Branch for many years, not least insisting on a smart and soldierly appearance of the contingent representing the Regiment on Remembrance Day each year at the Cenotaph. Joe was also the self appointed liaison officer of London Branch with the 1st Battalion and, latterly, The Black Watch 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland. He carried out these duties mostly on Burns Night in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess, wherever The Black Watch was stationed. I suspect that many a young sergeant met his 'Waterloo' on those nights at the bar with Joe. His interest in and encouragement of those who followed him was utterly genuine and inspiring.

Joe also became something of a First World War historian. He was a regular attender at commemorative events at Ypres and on the Somme (where his father had won two MMs) and was a member of St George's Church at Ypres. We should all be grateful that he was able to take part in some of the key events of The Great War centenary in the last three years despite his deteriorating health. His devotion to the memory of fallen comrades was quite outstanding. For many years, Joe single handedly prepared and placed the hundreds of crosses at The Field of Remembrance at Westminster for The Black Watch, The Tyneside Scottish and, latterly, The Royal Regiment of Scotland. On this parade, he would be greeted warmly by many people ranging from apparently random strangers to generals and members of the Royal Family.

Despite this characteristic dedication to former comrades, known and unknown, Joe enjoyed the family aspect of his retirement at Graveney in Kent. He was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. It is no surprise that he was also a highly respected pillar of that small community as church warden where his addiction to good order and discipline was brought to bear with good effect. Sadly, Joe lost a typically brave and uncomplaining fight with cancer on 9th January this year. For an Englishman turned professional Jock, it was particularly appropriate that at his funeral his coffin was draped in the Union Flag.

Joe Hubble was a true servant of, and ambassador for, his Regiment, the Army and, let us all celebrate it, his Country. I know I speak for so many when I say that I am privileged to have served with Joe for just a few years and I am proud to have been his friend.

The photograph shown with his obituary was taken in November 2017 on his final parade at the Cenotaph in London.

**Donald Wilson**

## STUART LYNCH

Stuart (Cowboy) Lynch joined the Regimental Band in April 1971 whilst the Battalion was stationed in Ritchie Camp, Kirknewton. He served in Hong Kong, Ballykinler, Catterick and Werl, West Germany and transferred to the Gordon Highlanders Regimental Band in 1983, whilst the Gordons were serving a few miles away at Hemer.

He was a great character in the band who was liked by all those who knew him.



**R J W Proctor**



## JAMES DOUGLAS MacLACHLAN

James Douglas MacLachlan who was known as Dougie to his friends died on the 18th November aged 84.

He was called up for National Service in January 1952 and after training at Queens' Barracks was posted to the 1st Battalion then serving in Korea. He took part in the Battle of the Hook and later moved with the Battalion to Kenya where he served throughout the Kenya Emergency. On leaving the Army, he then joined his local TA Unit where he rose to the rank of Company Sergeant Major.

Along with other Korean War veterans, Dougie was awarded the Republic of South Korea Ambassador for Peace Commemorative Medal and Scroll of which he was very proud. He was a longstanding and active member of the Fort William and District Branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland.

He was a great character who will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.



R J W Proctor

## DEREK PETRIE

Derek Petrie, retired estate factor, died at home in Braemar on 18th November 2017. Born on 12th November 1928 in Perth he was educated at Perth Academy during WW2. He became CQMS of the Cadets and was later called up for National Service in September 1947. Enlisting with The Black Watch and training at Pinefield Camp, Elgin with No.25 Platoon, 5 Company, XXX Leader Training Battalion. Following a spell in Edinburgh with a demonstration platoon he returned north to HQ Company, Highland Brigade Training Centre at Fort George until his release in Sept 1949. Fiercely proud of his hometown regiment he remained an Association member for many years and took pleasure in the Balhousie Museum development.



Always interested in farming and country matters he quickly secured a post as a factorial assistant with Perth solicitors and agents Condie, MacKenzie & Co, gaining valuable experience in a wide range of estate activities as well as knowledge in legal matters. During these years he was a keen sportsman within a circle of army and local friends. In October 1956 he married Elizabeth Boswell in Scone, having already accepted the assistant factor's post on Earl of Inchcape's Ayrshire estate at Glenapp. Son Martin was born there. In 1960 Derek had applied for the resident factor post at Glenogil Estate in Angus, another Inchcape property. More experience came with the varied farming, forestry and game enterprises. When Lord Inchcape added Tulchan Estate to his land holdings, further knowledge was added in high ground deer management; all making him a suitable candidate for his next post.

A Scotsman advert in late 1963 led to Captain Alywne Farquharson MC of Invercauld engaging Derek as Resident Factor in February 1964 on the almost 200,000 acre Upper Deeside estate. He gradually built up a strong working relationship with Captain Farquharson as the estate moved towards being one of the top sporting estates in the country. Discipline, honesty, loyalty and fairness were all qualities he employed in his duties. With over forty full time employees swelling to over 80 plus during the grouse season, a castle seasonally open to the public, in hand sheep and cattle farms, a forestry department as well as hill farm tenants and commercial tenancies to consider, his remit was wide ranging. The often-kilted factor, through his work and interests was a member of a range of countryside organisations including the Royal Scottish Forestry Society, Scottish Landowners Federation and Royal Highland & Agricultural Society of Scotland. He was a founder member and treasurer of The British Deer Society North East Branch. Constantly concerned about sustaining the deer forests he always looked forward

to "a day on the hill" if a space or time permitted and that continued into retirement.

Within the local community he had been a Church of Scotland elder from the early 1970's in addition to being property convener. As a keen hillwalker he had managed to see all corners of Invercauld Estate as well as many neighbouring high tops, often in the company of friends. He was a diligent Dance Recorder for the Braemar Highland Games for over 25 years as well as an honorary Highland Society member who also served a term as a Trustee. After retiring in 1993 he became Chairman of the Braemar Civic Amenities Trust who gained from his considerable local knowledge and enthusiasm. He was also a founding member of the Deeside Diner's club, from which he had recently retired as its Chairman.

Having been such a "well known" face in Upper Deeside area, he will be missed by his family, friends and those of the wider community. No matter what company he found himself in, he was always modest, welcoming, and respectful. One could say he was the epitome of a true Highland gentleman.

M Petrie

## FRED SANKEY

Fred Sankey was born in Dunscur Lancashire on the 27th of July 1927 and died on the 30th September 2017 in Glenrothes Fife. Fred had a varied and quite colourful career both in the Army and his civilian life. He served with The Black Watch, the Army Physical Training Corp and the SAS. He left school at the age of 13 taking up employment as an apprentice butcher in the local slaughterhouse. When he reached enlistment age he set off for Perth and joined The Black watch and it was during this period he met and married a local maid Nancy Innes.



In 1949 he joined the Army Physical Training Corp and was posted to Austria with the East Yorks. On completion of this tour he came back to Queens' Barracks and was attached to the Regiment he had joined some years earlier. At the onset of the Korean War Fred went with the Regiment to the Far East and was involved in the infamous Battle of the Hook. He then served with the 1st Battalion in Kenya.

Eventually peace reigned so it was back to Queens' Barracks Perth. Peacetime soldiering wasn't for Fred and he joined the SAS where he was successful and during this time served in Malaya, Borneo, Sarawak and the Arabian Peninsula.

On completion of his service Fred went to Leicester University where he qualified in Youth and Community Work, which in turn saw him apply and become an Assistant Governor in Barlinnie and Polmont Prisons among other establishments. Fred ended his service as Governor of the Inverness prison and from there to Glenrothes as Inspector of Prisons for Scotland. A keen traveller, one of his highlights was to revisit Korea and the area of The Hook, which is now a Nature Reserve.

He will be missed by a very caring family.

R M Scott

## PETER SCOTT

Peter enlisted into the General Service Corps in September 1943 and after his initial training, he was posted to The Black Watch joining the 4th Battalion. He served in North West Europe and at some stage transferred to the 13th Parachute Battalion before a further transfer to the Highland Light Infantry. He left the Colours in July 1947 having been awarded the War Medal 1939-45, General Service Medal and Clasp Palestine.



After his demob, he worked for Metal Box in London, married and had two daughters. He also worked in South Africa and then joined the



Police as a Special Constable working on a launch on the River Thames.

He was keen on collecting and mending barometers as well as antique cigarette lighters.

Peter was a very sociable man with a warm and friendly personality. He was a kind and loving husband, a proud father, a loyal friend and he was always proud as a Londoner to have served in the senior Highland Regiment. He died aged 91 on 21 December 2017.

**R M Riddell**

### **ALEXANDER SOUTER**

Sandy Souter who was also known as "Soapy" after the famous cartoon character died at home in Christchurch, New Zealand on the 21st September 2017 aged 71.

He attended Coupar Angus Primary School, before the family moved to Forfar where he later attended Forfar Academy. On leaving school he was employed as an agricultural worker and was also a member of 4/5 BW prior to enlisting into the Regular Army in March 1965. He joined Keren Squad at the Scottish Infantry Depot, Bridge of Don and after completing basic training was posted to the 1st Battalion which was serving in Minden, West Germany. A first class infantryman he was selected for specialist training and joined the Recce Platoon before the Battalion was posted to Hong Kong in 1972. He took part in



operational tours in Gibraltar and Northern Ireland and training exercises in Libya and Malaysia.

On completing his engagement, Sandy returned to Forfar where he was employed in both the food and textile industries with the latter contracting him to work in New Zealand. Marrying his wife Dusanka in Forfar in 1976 they emigrated to New Zealand in 1984 where their only daughter, Tracey was born in 1989.

The textile industry in New Zealand was fairly volatile but Sandy managed to keep himself employed in various managerial roles. He was latterly employed as a fork lift driver until 2016 before being diagnosed with an extremely aggressive cancer.

Sandy was a good soldier who was well respected by all who knew him.

**R J W Proctor**

The following deaths have also been recorded:

**Gordon Kirby** who served in 1st and 2nd Battalion died in December 2017. A fuller obituary will be published in the November issue.

**Peter McAughy** who was the oldest member of the Newcastle Branch died in December 2017. A fuller obituary will be published in the November issue.

**Rob McGregor** who served in Delta Company in Ballykinler (1989-91) died on 22 September 2017.

**Michael Urquhart** who served in Delta Company in Ballykinler (1989-91) died on 31 December 2017 aged 58.

## VICTORIA CROSS CENTENARY: ACTING LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEWIS PUGH EVANS VC

*By Colonel D C Thornycroft OBE*

The Victoria Cross is only awarded for gallantry “in the face of the enemy”. For a Commanding Officer to find himself in the face of the enemy tends to mean things are not going well. Sometimes, however, when a fight is balanced on a knife edge and a moment or two more of hesitation will see everything dissolve in ruin, then a dramatic intervention by a determined leader, even to perform a task that is not strictly his, can provide the example and the inspiration to bring men forward again to eventual victory.

Acting Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Pugh Evans of The Black Watch faced such a moment on 4 October 1917. It was the third year of a war that seemed endless. It was the third month of a battle that seemed pointless. The enemy had prepared line after line of defences, anchored by concrete machine gun emplacements that had to be taken yard by hard yard. The ground around Passchendaele, already soaked by heavy rain, had been beaten by weeks of artillery fire into a liquid mud that literally swallowed men and horses – and on the afternoon of 4 October it started raining again. His men came, not from his own Black Watch, but from The Lincolnshire Regiment, gallant fellows but ones he had only known since the end of March. Just as his fellow VC winner Colonel H Jones did at Goose Green in 1982, at the critical moment the Commanding Officer personally charged and took out an enemy machine gun post, which was enough to get the attack moving again. Ultimately, in the grim arithmetic of twentieth century warfare, the four month long Battle of Passchendaele hurt the Germans more than it hurt the Allies. Evans’s VC citation tells the story:

“Lieutenant Colonel Evans took his Battalion in perfect order through a terrific enemy barrage, personally formed up all units, and led them to the assault. While a strong machine gun emplacement was causing casualties and the troops were working round the flank, Lieutenant Colonel Evans rushed at it himself, and by firing his revolver through the loophole, forced the garrison to capitulate. After capturing the first objective he was severely wounded in the shoulder but refused to be bandaged and reformed the troops, pointed out all future objectives, and again led his Battalion forward. Again badly wounded, he nevertheless continued to command until the second objective was won, and, after consolidation, collapsed from loss of blood. As there were numerous casualties he refused assistance, and by his own efforts ultimately reached the dressing station. His example of cool bravery stimulated in all ranks the highest valour and determination to win.”

What the citation does not mention is that he was one of only 4 officers and 160 men left standing of the 15 officers and 570 men he had so carefully formed up that morning.

Lewis Pugh Evans left Eton intending to join The Royal Welch Fusiliers, but was “poached” by The Black Watch while at Sandhurst with the promise of immediate active service in South Africa. He was duly commissioned into The Black Watch in 1899 and served with them throughout the Second Boer War. By 1914 he was an experienced Captain. He served as a Company Commander with the Regiment and as Brigade Major 7 Brigade, before being appointed to command 1st Battalion The Lincolnshire Regiment in March 1917. It was with them that he won his VC. After recovering from his wounds, he returned to and commanded 1st Battalion The Black Watch in 1918, winning a Bar to the DSO he had already won with them as a Company Commander, before being promoted to Brigadier General and command of 14 Brigade just before the end of the war. Then, like so many others, he reverted to his substantive rank of Major and had it all to do again, serving as a Brigade Major in 1921, commanding 2nd Bn The Black Watch in 1926 and finally regaining his Brigadier’s star in 1933 as Commander 159 (Welsh Border) Brigade. He left the Army in 1938 (although he subsequently worked hard for the war effort on the home front) and died in 1962.

One hundred years to the day after the actions that won him the VC, on 4 October 2017, his hometown of Llanbardan Fawr, Aberystwyth on the Welsh coast honoured him in a civic ceremony at which The Black

Watch was represented by Colonel David Thornycroft, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Keating, Mr Jonathan Carthew, Mr Bill Finnigan and two pipers, Pipe Major Chic Mackie of the London Branch and Andy Jones. The Black Watch pipers led a parade of dignitaries that included Her Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant of Dyfed, the Sheriff of Aberystwyth, local MPs, Assembly Members and County and Community Councillors as well as Royal British Legion officers and standards and veterans of the two Regiments concerned. We processed to the War Memorial where Brigadier General Lewis Pugh Evans’ grandson, Mr Christopher Evans, addressed the crowd and a service of dedication was held for a new commemorative stone engraved in his memory, which was unveiled by the Lord Lieutenant. Both Regimental Collects were read and wreaths were then laid, ours by Jim Keating, and the Last Post was followed by Flowers of the Forest, played by Chic Mackie.

It was a moving and fitting tribute to a truly gallant Black Watch officer.



*Lieutenant Colonel Evans VC.*



*The site of the VC Memorial in Llanbadarn, Fawr, Aberystwyth.*



*Chic Mackie and Andy Jones piped at the ceremony.*



*From left to right: Andy Jones, Jim Keating, Christopher Evans (grandson of Brigadier Evans VC), Mr Bill Finnigan, Mr Jonathan Carthew and Colonel David Thornycroft.*



*The memorial to Lieutenant Colonel Evans VC.*

## ST ANDREW'S SCOTS MEMORIAL CHURCH (JERUSALEM) AND THE 2<sup>nd</sup> BATTALION THE BLACK WATCH OPERATIONS DURING THE PALESTINE CAMPAIGN 1918

*By Lieutenant Colonel R M Riddell*

The Society of Friends of St Andrew's Church in Jerusalem organised a tour to the Holy Land in December 2017 to mark the centenary of the capture of Jerusalem from the Ottoman Empire and to remember the sacrifice of all Scots soldiers killed during this campaign.

General Edmund Allenby, commanded the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) which fought during the Sinai and Palestine Campaign, driving the Turks from Palestine and Ottoman Southern Syria. The EEF reached as far as Damascus and then into the Lebanon.

The 2nd Battalion The Black Watch served in Palestine twice; firstly in 1917/18 and again from 1937 to 1938. Lieutenant Colonel Philip Halford-MacLeod wrote an excellent article about the latter tour in the November 2013 edition of the Red Hackle Magazine and this period of the battalion's history is also well covered in "Fighting in the Front Line" by Victoria Schofield.

After hard fighting in France (1914/15) and Mesopotamia (1916/17), the 2nd Battalion sailed in the Kinfauns Castle on New Year's Day 1918, disembarking on the 13th of January near Ismailia on the Suez Canal. The strength of the battalion was 30 officers and 1001 other ranks. They remained there for over two months whilst the rest of the 7th (Indian) Division assembled. Training continued and on March the 27th the battalion moved in stages to Ludd where steel helmets were issued for the first time.

The 7th (Indian) Division was assigned to XXI Corps and replaced the 52nd Lowland Division which had fought very valiantly from the

first Battle of Gaza through to the capture of Jerusalem. It was the latter Division which so inspired Scots at home to raise money to build the St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church in Jerusalem.

Deployed onto the coastal plain the officers and soldiers were ordered to wear long khaki trousers and short puttees to reduce the chance of catching malaria. The defences some five miles in from the coast consisted of small posts, some 3,000 yards from the most advanced Turkish posts. The battalion at once started a policy of vigorous patrolling up to the enemy lines.

Withdrawn to Brigade reserve on 17 April and then to Divisional reserve in early May, the men enjoyed sports of every kind as well as bathing in the sea.

The Battalion then moved into the line and took part in the successful action at Arsur on 8 June for which it earned much praise for the dash and skill of the officers and soldiers. The losses were 9 officers (2 who died) and 58 other ranks (13 killed). In July and August, periods in reserve and in the line followed and casualty figures were relatively light. They moved into reserve on 28 August and did not go into the line again until the great attack on September the 19th which was to destroy the Turkish Army.

The Battle of Megiddo was a masterstroke and included the clever use of deception and surprise to persuade the Turks and General Liman von Sanders of the German Army that the attack would come on their left flank. Like all great plans, it was a simple one. Its key-stone was the secret concentration of an overwhelming force against



the Turkish right and British air superiority played a major part in this plan.

The Battalion carried out several rehearsals for this attack, by both day and night, on ground well behind the lines, where the Turkish trench systems were marked out by flags. This proved invaluable. Early on the night of the 18th of September tapes were put down by a party, to mark the front of each Company and Platoon position. The artillery barrage was timed to move forward at the rate of 100 yards per minute.

The Battalion had officers attached from the HLI, RSF, Camerons, Gordons and KOSB and the men went into action in shirt-sleeves, tunics being left behind. Steel helmets were worn but haversacks were not carried.

All Companies were in position by 4.15 am and were deployed in eight waves and additional Lewis Guns were ordered to advance and support each attacking wave. At zero hour (4.30 am) the bombardment began on the fifteen mile front and the enemy were stunned by the suddenness and volume of fire. The plan worked very successfully and exactly fifty minutes after Zero hour the Reserve Company and Battalion HQ arrived at the last objective roughly 5,000 yards from the start point. Only two men had been killed.

After reorganising, the battalion cleared the ground to the north to a depth of 4,500 yards and later that day were ordered to continue their advance to carry out a further assault on a hill that was lightly defended by the Turks. The enemy withdrew but the battalion were by now in need of water resupply and rest. They were exhausted but the following morning, the Battalion were on the move at 5.45 am and advanced until 10 am.

The disorganised remnants of the Turkish Seventh and Eighth Armies began to surrender and word soon spread of the almost total destruction of the enemy forces. On the 23rd of September the Battalion were again on the move, this time towards Haifa. Evidence of the efficiency of the RAF was everywhere; corpses of men and horses and abandoned transport of all kinds littered the roads.

At Haifa the Battalion enjoyed four days close to the sea and under the shadow of Mount Carmel but by the 10th of October they were close to Beirut. At this stage malaria began to take a heavy toll and influenza also made its appearance.

On the 24th of October, orders to move to Tripoli were received. By the time of their arrival the officers and soldiers had covered in twenty marching days 287 miles, half of which had been over either sandy or rocky tracks. These marches were either in pouring rain or oppressive heat.

After the Armistice the 2nd Battalion stayed in the Middle East and faced many problems, the major one being that of demobilization but it was not until November 1919 that they were posted to Glasgow but in May 1919, a Cadre had marched through Perth.

During our tour, we only had time to visit three Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries in Jerusalem, Ramleh and Beersheeba and all contained the graves of Black Watch men.

St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church is outside the City walls of old Jerusalem and the Guest House beside the church is a wonderful place to stay for anyone considering visiting Jerusalem. Israel is an extraordinary country but is a land of historical, political and religious contradictions.



The view from the Jerusalem Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery.



The St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church has a Guest House attached to it that anyone visiting Jerusalem can stay in. It is owned and run by the Church of Scotland.



This carved memorial, which commemorates the officers and soldiers of The Black Watch who lost their lives in Palestine, is situated on the floor at the front of the church and was dedicated in 1937.



This memorial plaque in the Scots Memorial Church commemorates the lives of Captain Alistair Hamilton who was killed during the defence of Crete on 20 May 1941 and Captain Mungo Stirling who died of his wounds, sustained in Tobruk on 14 December 1941. The family of Alistair Hamilton presented the painting "Glasgow Green" to the Museum in memory of their son.

# A YEAR IN PARIS

By Lieutenant Colonel William Colquhoun SCOTS

Two years ago, after securing promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, I was faced with a choice of attending Staff College in Shrivenham with the vast majority of my contemporaries, or opting for École de Guerre, the French equivalent. It is not often in a career that one is given the opportunity to master a second language and spend a year in one of Europe's great capital cities and it did not take me long to make my decision. I took comfort in the fact that some of my more illustrious forebears had clearly come to a similar conclusion – Field Marshall Wavell spent a year in the Russian Staff College in Moscow before the First war and Brigadier Bernard Fergusson was an instructor in French at Sandhurst before the Second!

The first and most significant challenge was to learn French. I have never been a linguist, had not studied French since the age of 14 and my only time spent in France had been some very pleasurable weeks in the Alps. Fortunately the position at École de Guerre came with a 10 month language package at the *Defence Centre for Languages and Culture*. I had mistakenly thought that this course would be sufficient to turn me into a fluent French speaker, who would understand everything and be able to express himself perfectly. Whilst the training certainly gave me an excellent base knowledge and the confidence to deal with any situation in France, I have reluctantly concluded that the more you learn, the more elusive the idea of 'fluency' is!

École de Guerre itself started in August 2017. In theory, it covers the same curriculum as Shrivenham. However everything has a Gallic twist and there are fundamental differences in the way the French approach learning, and indeed Defence, which has made the experience wonderfully enriching. A case in point is the French love of history – historic case studies are used daily to illustrate and analyse topics; and a visit to an organization is not complete without a detailed account of their historical roots, which can normally be traced back to Louis XIV if not before! Inevitably my language skills have been the greatest inhibitor to progress; I often miss the nuance of a conversation and routinely suffer the frustration of not being able to express myself well enough to drive home a specific point in a discussion. As a result I would summarise the education as broader, whilst not deeper, than the one I would have received at Shrivenham.

My French colleagues have been wonderful hosts. The relationship between France and the United Kingdom is one of competitive siblings. There is a huge amount of respect between the two nations who are broadly similar in terms of size, capability and ambition on the world stage. However, at the same time, there is an air of competitive pride that one's respective nation has the upper hand. It is no coincidence that both the British and the French are renowned for their arrogance! The French President, Emmanuel Macron, has dramatically turned the mood of his country, and is, generally, popular with the military. He has given the country pride and a sense of direction both within Europe and on the world stage. His timing has been fortuitous given the decline of British influence in Europe following the Brexit decision,

and the recent decline in Angela Merkel's grasp on German power. The most regular criticism I hear of the British is their inability to act unilaterally and their over-reliance on the United States – De Gaulle's legacy remains very much intact. The critics point to a perceived need for House of Commons support before Britain can carry out any military action, and compare this to the more powerful position of the French President. The difference is also underlined by the French view that their home industrial base is sacrosanct, partly for the economic benefits, but more fundamentally because it assures their independence (hence there are some key capabilities, not made in France, which they lack – the Chinook helicopters that the British are contributing to the French effort in Mali are a case in point). As ever the facts behind these perceptions are somewhat dubious and, in reality, the French are just as careful to court US favour as we are, and remain heavily reliant on US capability.

The highlights of the course so far have been the various visits, which have allowed me to develop a much deeper understanding of the country. I will mention two here – Brussels and Djibouti.

We spent a week in Brussels looking at NATO and the EU, which brought into sharp contrast the differences between our two nations. All of our interlocutors agreed with the critical role of NATO in defending Europe against existential threats, such as the potential menace of a resurgent Russia. However there is now a growing momentum behind a more focused European Foreign policy and the ability of Europe to project force to implement this policy. The nations that border the Mediterranean, like France, are particularly vocal in their support for this policy as they see the threats emanating from the South (ie North Africa and the Sahel) as more critical than the threat on which NATO is focused to the East. Whilst there was a genuine feeling of grief, bewilderment and even disbelief that the UK is leaving the EU, there was equally a sense of opportunism that the UK's departure would enable the EU to move forward quickly with some of their more ambitious projects which the UK had generally blocked, such as an enhanced European Defence Force.

I was lucky enough to be involved in a week's visit to Djibouti with ten colleagues. Britain has the Commonwealth and numerous overseas territories. France has the francophone world and numerous 'départements d'outre-mer'. Whilst Britain is relatively discreet and 'hands off' in its relations with these countries, the same is not true for France. Historically, the French practiced a policy of assimilation in its empire seeking to integrate its territories as a part of France, this was a fundamentally different policy to the British. Today, France retains a large proportion of its forces forward based overseas in South America, the Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. Whilst we can claim the same in Cyprus, Gibraltar, the Falkland Islands and Ascension, the scale and ambition is altogether different. Djibouti is an old French colony, which gained its independence in 1977. However, it has since maintained a defence treaty with France, which results in a French garrison of about 1500 soldiers in the country. It is strategically positioned at the cross roads between Africa and the Middle East and is on the critical Bab-



Comparing French Equipment – the Véhicule Blindé de Combat d'Infanterie (VBCI).



Lt Col Colquhoun at the Ecole de Guerre with a fellow Officer, Lt Col Emmanuel Emond of the Armée de l'Air Française.



el-Mandeb straits which give access to the Suez Canal. It's strategic position means that there are a growing number of nations who have bases there in order to have influence in this key part of the world – in many ways it hosts the modern day 'great game'. The Chinese have invested heavily in the country and have a base which could easily hold 10,000 troops. The Americans equally have a base from where they conduct operations across East Africa and the Middle East. The Japanese, Italians, the EU and others also have contingents. Of all these nations, it is only the French that form a part of the Djiboutian community. Whilst the Americans rarely leave base, and treat it as an operational tour like any other in the Middle East, the French are there with their families enjoying a quasi-Colonial existence like we enjoyed in Hong Kong not so long ago. The French are immensely proud of this global network of francophone countries where they have a considerable amount of 'savoir-faire', commercial interest and emotional ties. Whilst the influence of the US and China dwarfs the French in terms of spending power, Paris remain focused on protecting and retaining

their influence in these areas as a matter of national interest and pride.

This article would not be complete without reference to the wonderful quality of life that I have been able to enjoy in France with my family. There are many French paradoxes – but one of them stands out – how does a nation which bases much of its culture on fine food and alcohol, retain one of the lowest obesity rates in the world? I do not have an answer to this, but can confirm that I still have 33 inch waist, despite doing everything possible to further my education in French wine and gastronomy! The École de Guerre is situated in central Paris, a stone's throw from the Eiffel Tower and we have been accommodated in a lovely house in the same 'arrondissement'. As a family we have had a wonderful time exploring Paris at weekends, and gallivanting further afield during the holidays. We have been thoroughly enchanted. From boar hunts in Normandy to swimming in Alpine lakes, to skiing in the Pyrenees and lounging in Provence, we have been bowled over by the diversity and sheer beauty of France. I look forward to many more adventures and discoveries to come!

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## LIFE IN THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN IRAQ

*By Captain TKH Towler SCOTS*

Baghdad is extraordinary. Some parts of the city could easily be mistaken for Oman, clean with green grass and fountains; in others, the cost of war is clear to see. Similarly, outside the city, there are signs of a country gradually getting back onto its feet but the devastation and challenges are significant as fighting and violence continues and sectarian schisms remain.

It is a fascinating time to be in Iraq too. I arrived just after the Kurdish referendum, have seen the impacts of increased regional tensions as geo-politics from Lebanon to Yemen play out on the ground and helped to deliver the Prime Minister's visit (the first in nine years) as the UK explores a new long term defence and security commitment with Iraq. All of this combined with the physical defeat of the Daesh caliphate, has made for an utterly remarkable time. I suspect it will only become more interesting as we approach the national elections in May, terrorist organisations look to re-emerge and regional tensions develop further.

My role here, as the Defence Liaison Officer, is eye opening, hugely fortunate and brilliant fun. I focus on the operational side to ensure that the Ambassador and his staff fully understand the security situation and are aware of Coalition military operations. This in turn informs their plans and it has been a great privilege to have a brief insight into the political-military interface. Working with a variety of international military forces, with the cross Whitehall team in the Embassy and the wider international diplomatic effort is fascinating and I am learning a great deal. More than anything, it is humbling to see the breadth and output of British efforts here; our support is truly valued and it is making a difference.

The Embassy has a wonderful mix of talented, fun, and engaging people from all over the world (the Embassy is also home to NATO, the EU, the World Bank, and the Canadian, Polish and Hungarian Embassies) and I am thoroughly enjoying my time.

Christmas was in many ways like being back in battalion, with a real 'Jocks' Lunch' feel to our Christmas day, as we celebrated alongside our resident Ghurkha Company. Lunch was much needed after a Christmas morning marathon as part of my training for the Marathon des Sables (Mds) and efforts to raise money for the NSPCC. Thirty eight laps of the compound was really rather dull but it was all in aid of a great cause. With only five weeks until

the race in Morocco, any sponsorship would be very gratefully received!

Other highlights have included trying to bring a bit of Highland life to the Embassy. Whisky and reels nights have been great fun but slightly challenging.

Drawing in diplomats from across the international scene, with the inevitable language barriers, tends to result in some rather amusing variation of Scottish classics.

Writing this article with one month left, I wish I could stay for longer. Currently, the economic and governance pillars are miles behind security efforts and the road to reconciliation will be long. In many areas the reasons Daesh were able to emerge and the grass root issues that enabled them to thrive, remain. The international community is determined to get it right this time but the Iraqis must be in the lead. Our commitment must continue into the future and I hope I am lucky enough to return to Iraq and that when I do, I find a country that has finally realised its full potential.



*Captain Tim Towler looking over Baghdad from the roof of the old Ba'ath Party Headquarters.*

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## MEMOIRS OF AN INFANTRY OFFICER (WITH APOLOGIES TO SIEGFRIED SASSOON)

*By Andrew Hamilton*

In 1966 aged 18, I found myself at a loose end. Brigadier Wingate-Gray, a friend of the family, suggested I try for a Short

Service Commission with The Black Watch. With no family connections, a Dorset address and little confidence, I attended an interview with the then Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier Mick Baker-Baker. His interview technique was flawless. "Where

did you go to school, do you shoot and what are your regimental connections?"

Some weeks later, I found myself at Mons Officer Cadet School, Aldershot. Rannoch School provided me with a fabulous all round education but it had not equipped me for military life. For example, I was not aware that the default response to an order was "Yes Sir", not "Do you think that is a good idea?" Mons became a bruising encounter. At the end of our first drill parade, Company Sergeant Major Cosgrove of the Gordon Highlanders ordered the company to stand easy. CSM Cosgrove not only looked like an army boxing champion, he was an army boxing champion; he despised officer cadets.

"Everyone who can sing" he said playfully "atten...shun!"

Three gullible officer cadets including me stood smartly to attention.

"So you think you can sing do you? Fantastic, you have just volunteered for the Church Choir".

Anyone who has ever sung in a choir knows that apart from mandatory attendance every Sunday, there is also the small matter of regular choir practice. Inwardly, I cursed. My irritation must have shown. CSM Cosgrove advanced. As he glowered, looking down his broken nose, he hissed:-

"And what is your name, sir?"

"Officer Cadet Hamilton, sir" I said

"Well now, sir, I am going to give you a bit of advice and I suggest you heed it ... don't ever purse your lips at me again, do you understand?"

Brilliantly and on day one, I had made an enemy of the most powerful man at Mons.

The surprise was not that I was back termed – a truly humiliating experience – but that I survived to finish the course. But somehow in the late Spring of 1967, I found myself with a commission (but still on open arrest) saying goodbye to CSM Cosgrove. Cheerfully, I said, "Goodbye Company Sergeant Major and thanks for everything." Resisting the offer of a handshake, he replied.

"There's only one thing I've got to say to you, sir."

"And what's that Company Sergeant Major?"

"God help The Black Watch".

With this ringing endorsement I joined the Regiment in Minden in the Spring of 1967. At this time, the Cold War was at its height and we spent most of our time training for the Russian invasion of Western Europe. The secret code for the order to mobilise for all out war was Quick Move. Lieutenant Hamish Gibson was on his way into civilian life and with a last parting military shot, he telephoned the Duty Orderly Officer pretending to be Lieutenant General Richard Ward, uttering the word Quick Move. The order went round not just 1 BW but the whole Division and within ten minutes the Regiment – minus Lieutenant Gibson – was assembled on the Parade Square with Armoured Personnel Carriers and guns pointing East. When the identity of the hoaxer was revealed, we feared the worst. However, Earle Nicoll, our Commanding Officer, decided that Lieutenant Gibson's punishment should be to visit each and every Regiment within the Division and apologise personally. Hamish set off on a week's tour of the various Officers Messes. No one was more surprised than Hamish to be treated everywhere he went as a visiting celebrity; no Black Watch Officer has ever assumed heroic status for such doubtful military input!

I joined Bravo Company, newly under the command of Major Campbell Parker. Campbell was a highly efficient officer. In a good Black Watch tradition, he enjoyed setting the highest professional standards; standards not always matched by his subalterns including those well known military luminaries, messrs Maconochie, Stopford and Hammond-Chambers. Fortunately, the conflicts in Borneo and Aden had ceased and the Northern Ireland troubles had yet to start. Life in the army had never been easier, particularly if your Platoon Sergeant was the legendary Fred Beattie. However, not even Fred could operate a 24 hour au pair service. One day, I found myself rock climbing in the Hartz mountains with Padre Donald Beaton and some Jocks. Being a complete novice, I was assigned to Private McIntyre, an immensely skillful climber but with a cunning eye for weakness. Halfway up a particularly difficult climb, he shouted down "Mr Hamilton, Sir this is going to be difficult – do you mind if I call you Andrew?" "Not at all" I said helplessly. "That's great" came the reply "and you can call me Alistair".

A week later, Campbell Parker asked to see me.

"Hello Major Parker, you wanted to see me?" I said breezily.

"Stand to attention Hamilton. My sources tell me that you are officially on Christian name terms with the whole regiment – is this true?"

"Umm..."

"This is unbelievable – if this continues Hamilton, you will be paddling your own canoe upstream without a paddle, do you understand?"

(The last words of CSM Cosgrove rung loudly in my ears!).

One of my last "commands" was to be put in charge of Inchdrewar House. This rather grand house was reserved for Generals needing somewhere to stay prior to taking the salute at the Edinburgh Tattoo. The country in the news at that time was Biafra – images of potbellied starving Biafran children nightly strafed our television sets.

Our head waiter was a particularly nice Jock called Lance Corporal Bell. I remember Corporal Bell particularly well for two reasons – firstly, because of the rather strange flairs in his tartan trews and secondly, because he had a strong moral conscience. The Generals sat down to lunch. Corporal Bell brought in a tray with the first course, mutton broth. The bowls were cold and the soup impenetrable beneath a layer a congealed fat. I remember the tip tapping sound of spoons like pickaxes on ice. There was plainly no appetite for this delicious Scottish fare and as the conversation drew to a desultory close, I said "Corporal Bell, please clear this away". Corporal Bell stood stiffly to attention. Staring into the distance, eyes aflame, he shouted, "Excuse me – I cannae believe this. Think of all those poor starving bairns in Bavaria".

Physically, I left The Black Watch in 1969. Mentally of course, I have never been away – once a member of this great family, always a member. The bonds of regimental friendship have sustained me through the snakes and ladders of life.

Notwithstanding the loss of regimental status in 2006, when The Black Watch became the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, it would be a double tragedy if The Black Watch name were to disappear. A letter sent to me after the second Iraq war brilliantly illustrates why:

*"That afternoon, the situation in Basra deteriorated and my company was sent in. My platoon, was dispatched to the centre of the city where we spent the next 10 days under mortar, RPG, sniper, machine gun and small arms fire. Now I ask what makes those boys tick? We were platoon first of all and we stuck together like glue. We would have done anything we could for each other and on several occasions we did. We were Company second and we had a name to live up to but we were also the Black Watch and the whole world knows who they are! And so on every occasion we could, we had our bonnets on with the red hackles out and standing proud among two companies of Cheshires. Not one of the platoon showed any sign of letting our good name down."* (an extract from a letter sent to me by Lieutenant Richard Holmes in 2005)



*Andrew Hamilton in his younger days.*



# LIEUTENANT COLONEL A C C BRODIE, DSO, OBE, MC

**Editor's Note:** This very amusing series of exchanges was sent to me by Keith Craig who served in the Regiment from 1983-86. He found it in John Julius Norwich's Christmas Cracker, a little booklet of interesting things he publishes each December.

In September 1959 I received a letter from my old chum Philip Ziegler. We were both in the Foreign Service; Philip was in Vientiane, I was in Beirut. The letter ran as follows:

My Dear John Julius

On Sept 11 or so a great, grotesque lobster will trip and fall heavily from a plane at Beirut aerodrome. It will wear a monocle and probably a kilt. It will be called Alec Brodie, will have D.S.O. and an M.C. and will be the ex Military Attaché in Laos and the new one in the Lebanon.

Alec first arrived in my life about three weeks before the War Office condescended to let us know that our pleas to be spared an M.A. because we had nowhere to put him were to be ignored. He telegraphed from Seoul: "To the Assistant Military Attaché: Will be glad to take over any stores left by former M.A. But do not like Ballantyne's whisky: Brodie" This took us aback, but we worked out who he must be and the correspondence began to work up speed. "Following for Brodie: There has been no M.A. consequently there is no A.M.A. and no whisky. When do you arrive?" "To the A.M.A. Then I will bring my own whisky. Did the M.A. have a dog which I should take on? Brodie" "There was no M.A. consequently no A.M.A. and no dog When do you arrive?" "To the A.M.A.: I am glad the M.A. had no dog. I do not like dogs. Should I bring a) tent; b) jeep; c) chauffeur; d) clerk; e) officer's servant; f) canvas-bucket? Brodie" "There is no A.M.A. Tent,

jeep and canvas bucket will all be useful. Advise against a) chauffeur; b) clerk and c) officer's servant since there is nowhere for them to live except a) tent; b) jeep and c) canvas bucket." "To the A.M.A.: Thank you, What about rope?" This was ignored and for fourteen blissful days we tried to kid ourselves that it was all a bad dream. Then "To the A.M.A: Arrive noon tomorrow. Chauffeur, clerk, jeep, officer's servant, tent and canvas bucket follow by road. Brodie".

Tomorrow was today by the time we got the telegram and even before the news had sunk in he was upon us, in a lorry commandeered from somewhere, with six cases of whisky, fourteen cases of beer and one very small suitcase, all flown overweight at the expense of the War Office.

I commend Alec to you heartily, tho' with certain reservations. If you ask him to dinner he will destroy – not just break, crush, annihilate – your coffee-cups, spill wine on your table and cigar-ash on your carpet, go to sleep after dinner, wake up with a start at ten o'clock and proceed to lecture the most Lebanese of your guests in execrable but determined French on the genealogies of the greater Scottish families. I have heard him talk for half an hour without stop on the ramifications of the Frasers to a Laotian captain who had once been to France on a course and had a vague impression that Scotland was somewhere in America. But for all this his goodwill and kindness are immense, his patience and tolerance inexhaustible, he has the most unexpected and charming humility and if the Lebanese have anything at all in common with the Laotians or Koreans they will love him.

Be kind to him. Love Philip.

PS. Despite his medals and great gallantry; his many wounds are all self-inflicted. Never drive with him if you can avoid it.

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## PERTSHIRE TO PICARDY

*By Mr W Young*

**Editor's Note:** On 29 September 2018 The Perth Branch of the Association will host a dinner called the Croix de Guerre Dinner which will honour the men of the 6th (Perthshire) Battalion, The Black Watch whose courage in the fighting at Bois de Courton in July 1918, earned the award of the Croix de Guerre in October 1918. The author of this article is the grandson of Major Thomas Edwin Young TD and it will be published in two parts.

The roots of the volunteer system in Perthshire can be traced back to the 1850's with the raising of eighteen Companies. Three reorganisations took place before the final and possibly most significant came in 1908 with the formation of the Territorial Force. Thus the 1/6th (Perthshire) Battalion, The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) was formed.

On the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 the Battalion consisted of eight Companies (later reorganised to four) which were based at Perth (2), Dunblane, Crieff, Blairgowrie, Auchterarder, Dunkeld, Pitlochry and Aberfeldy. Additionally there were detachments in Belfast and Dublin which served with one of the Perth Companies. Although he had retired from the command of the battalion in 1911, Sir Robert Moncreiffe returned to the Colours and again took over command about a fortnight later. Sir Robert was 59 when he rejoined and appeared not to want to miss out on a war that was, after all, going to be over by Christmas. One of the battalion's officers was Robert Ellis who was Sir Robert's estate factor who would win the MC at Beaumont Hamel but was fatally injured there and died at Etaples. Another mobilised at that time was my Grandfather, Captain T E Young, who commanded the Auchterarder Company. The Battalion's designated war station was at Carlingnose (North Queensferry) and was part of the Forth defences.

They moved there shortly after mobilisation and remained until November when they moved north to Dundee and Wormit taking over Tay defences. The third and final move was to Bedford in April 1915 to become one of four battalions in the 153rd Infantry Brigade of the 51st (Highland) Division.

At this time, the battalion consisted mainly of men, apart from the Irish contingents, who had either enlisted in the county or were born there – or both. However would this still continue to be the case by the war's end?

In fact recruitment was such that a Second Line battalion was formed and consisted mainly of men unfit for service overseas and in time, a Third Line battalion which would be used for the training and despatch of drafts overseas.

The battalion arrived in France on 2 May 1915 and less than three weeks later they were in the line. The area to which they had been sent, French Flanders, was not just physically a long way from Perthshire, it was a long way in appearance as well. The ground was low lying and flat, and where a feature of no more than 100 feet or so was regarded as a hill or ridge. The water table was only about eighteen inches below the surface and this made the construction of trenches difficult. Defences often consisted of breastworks and in places what were known as "grousebutts". After undergoing training for the trenches they took over a sector from a battalion of the Coldstream Guards and it was here on 1st June that they suffered their first fatality, Private P McNaughton who has no known grave and is commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial. It was a supreme irony that the first officer to be killed was Lieutenant Pat Haldane who was a nephew of the man responsible for the foundation of the Territorial Force, Lord Haldane.

Their stay in this area was to last until the end of July, during which time they carried out the normal duties of a battalion in the line, in reserve and at rest, although rest is a bit of a misnomer as requests for working parties had to be frequently met. On 26 July the battalion entrained and travelled south. On 1 August they relieved a French regiment in the front line opposite the village of La Boisselle, near Albert. This area was very different to that which they had previously experienced – the front lines in this area were very close, the ground was chalky and both sides had tunnelled under each other's lines and so there was the constant fear of mines being fired. Contemporary aerial photographs reveal the area to resemble a moonscape. Trench maps reflect the 1/6th's tenure of the line south of the Amiens-Albert-Bapaume road and the 1/7th to the north. The sector occupied by the

1/6th was known to the French as the "Ilot" and to the British as the "Glory Hole". The remains of the farm that stood there have recently been the site of an archaeological dig, which also extended underground, during the course of which the remains of some soldiers, both French and British were discovered.

During their stay on this part of the line the 6th sustained 47 men killed and 2 Officers and 70 other ranks wounded and on Christmas Day 1915, their long serving Commanding Officer Sir Robert Moncrieff was forced to relinquish his command due to illness and to return to the UK.

On 21st February the Germans opened their offensive against the French at Verdun and in consequence the French requested that the British take over more of the front, from the north end of Vimy Ridge to Hebuterne, a distance of about 28 miles. Accordingly the 51st (Highland) Division was transferred to the First Army and by 12th March the move had been accomplished and the 1/6th took over from a French unit and again in an area of intensive mining activity. This area was known as the Labyrinth and had an unenviable reputation for being a dangerous place both above and below ground. One of the craters formed by a mine explosion, named Zivy, is today one of the tangible signs of the area's past as it was used as a burial place and was later made into a permanent Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission Cemetery. During their stay in this sector, which came to an end in July, the battalion suffered losses of 2 Officers and 23 other ranks killed and a further 7 Officers and 57 other ranks wounded. These and other losses were replaced by drafts from the UK; 60 other ranks arrived in September and a further 21 in October 1915 and in the first six months of 1916, 17 Officers and 211 other ranks reinforced the Battalion.

The Somme offensive had been going on for 12 days when the 1/6th arrived at the town of Bray and from there they moved forward by stages, finally arriving in the battle zone at Mametz Wood where they were held in reserve. This must have been a horrible place to have been introduced to the battle as the area had been the scene on bitter and costly fighting a short time earlier. A further move forward saw them at the windmill near Bazentin-le-Petit and on the 29 July they were in the front line just to the right of High Wood. At 18.10 hours on the next day, on a two Company front ("D" on the right "C" on the left and "A" in support) the battalion advanced up a slight rise towards their objective, Wood Lane Trench which was between 300 and 350 yards distant. They went forward under cover of a barrage but once this had lifted from Wood Lane Trench the defenders opened fire with devastating effect. Although some of the attacking force managed to get within 30 yards of the enemy line, the survivors went to ground and eventually moved to a new trench which was dug 200 yards in advance of their old line. The night was spent digging this position, bringing in the wounded and burying the dead. In a short time the battalion lost 4 Officers, 23 NCO's and 74 men killed and 6 Officers and 200 other ranks wounded. The majority of those who died have no known grave and are commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing but 29 were identified and are buried in Caterpillar Valley Cemetery. In mute testament to the ferocity of the fighting in the area, both before and after, a total of 808 dead were recovered from this area, some 220 x 220 yards when the battlefield was cleared. Just as 1st July 1916 was a bad day for the towns and cities where the "Pals" battalions had formed, so 30th July was a bad day for Perthshire.

The 1/6th was withdrawn from the line on 1st August and moved by stages into the rear area of the battle zone before entraining at a station near Amiens and journeying north to near Hazebrouck. Their destination was a sector of the front by Armentieres and they relieved a battalion of New Zealanders on 17th August. This part of the front had seen little action since late 1914 but this was to be no rest period as during their time there, they spent 255 days either in the front or subsidiary line and of course there were also numerous working details to be carried out. To alleviate these duties the battalion spent ten days in a rest camp and there was also a Divisional Horse Show. To replace the losses, drafts of 8 Officers and 150 Other Ranks joined from the UK.

The respite from the Somme lasted until the end of September when they were on the move again going south by train and detraining near Doullens. The 12th October saw them once more in the line, on this occasion near the village of Hebuterne at the northern end of the battlefield.

Although there had not been "pushes" in the area north of the Ancre since the disastrous first day of the Battle of the Somme, planning was in hand to change this.

In the build up for the attack, which was scheduled for the end of October, but was postponed because of the weather, the 1/6th was employed carrying stores and unloading trains. On occasions up to 450 men were thus employed. Over and above these tasks they had to continue with their military training which included a rehearsal for the attack and there was another tour in the trenches.

The attack was timed to start at 05.45 hours on 13th November 1916 and the battalion was in its "jumping off" trenches by 11 November. A and B Companies were in the front line and C and D behind them and all must have spent a miserable night in the cold, wet muddy trenches before filing out into "no man's land" and lying down to wait for the attack to begin. The attack began with the firing of a mine containing 40,000 lbs of the explosive ammonal, under Hawthorn Ridge. After a day of hard fighting, Beaumont Hamel fell and the battalion whose strength prior to the attack had been 29 Officers and 666 Other Ranks had lost 4 Officers, 12 NCO's and 51 men killed, and a further 3 Officers and 8 Other Ranks were to die of their wounds. My grandfather's service with the battalion ended here as he was evacuated to the UK suffering from shellshock.



*Major Thomas Edwin Young TD.*



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



## BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

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

## COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

Dusk is setting. The air is thick with a fine white dust whipped up by a strong south westerly wind but still carries the heat of the day. In the backdrop, the noise of a C-130 military transport aircraft grows, drowning out the Islamic call to prayer that had previously been the dominating sound in the area. For some, work is about to start; for others their day's work is done and I can see Red Hackles heading to the DEFAC (US parlance for cookhouse) to seek food and a coffee. To many of you the scene playing out in front of me will be most familiar for I am writing this foreword in Anbar Province, Western Iraq where 213 members of the battalion are currently deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, the US military mission to rid Iraq and Syria of Da'esh.

It is a particularly fascinating time in Iraq. Da'esh were defeated as a ground holding adversary in late 2017 but were certainly not destroyed. Since then the Iraqi forces have consolidated and now seek to rid their country of the remaining Da'esh cells. The bonds between competing Iraqi organisations and sectors of society that were formed to collectively defeat Da'esh are just still holding firm but already organisations are starting to jostle for position and influence. So we find ourselves at a crossroads. We all hope that sectarian differences can continue to be put to one side, that Da'esh can be completely eradicated before it resurfaces as a destructive insurgency but none of this can be taken for granted. We remain sitting in the middle of all of this, watching with fascination as future chapters in history books are defined all around us.

We deployed in early January 2018 after a hugely successful Mission Rehearsal Exercise in late 2017 in which the Jocks covered themselves in glory – the best for some time was the consistent message from the Directing Staff. Our mission here comprises three elements. First, through the A (Grenadier) Company Group, we provide the mainstay of the security force for Al Asad Airbase, including the manning of all defensive positions, entrance points and Quick Reaction Forces. Second, we contribute a Company towards training the Iraqi Border Guard Force (structured around D (Light) Company) and, third, we provide a Squadron of Engineers (77 Squadron, 35 Engineer Group) who turn their hand to a myriad of jobs around the airbase both in regards to force protection measures and real life support improvements. They are all vital tasks, each contributing to the overall mission and we are proud to be fulfilling them. We share our base with many different nations. Perhaps predictably, the US are the majority stakeholder but I have so far also met Danes, Norwegians, French, Spanish, Estonians, Lithuanians and a few Australians. It is truly a coalition effort and every nation contributes, not only in a professional capacity but also in their own individual way. For us this has taken the form of running an outstanding Highland Games courtesy of LCpl Kyle, fitness classes run by LCpl McRobbie and LCpl Fleck and the Padre delivering church services. Of course, out of the 3500 men and women on camp we also have the only pipers and they are in regular demand! Although to some such activity may seem like a distraction from our core operational output, genuine interoperability stems not only from equipment compatibility but also from conceptual compatibility and in this regard forming relationships and building an esprit de corps with our multinational partners is fundamental. As you would expect, the Jocks have been superb at it.

Tragically, the battalion has also had to cope with the loss of our Detachment Commander, Captain Dean Sprouting, who was killed in

Iraq in a road traffic accident in late January. He was a tremendous man, and although he had not been in the battalion long, he had already made his mark with us and was universally popular. His death hit everyone hard, both in Iraq and Fort George, but as professional soldiers everyone has done what Dean would want us to have done – get up, get on and keep going. He is continually in our thoughts, and I still half expect him to come wandering in to see me about something, normally with a huge grin and a large dose of his Geordie humour. Passionate about the Army, and even more so his loving family, it is they who are very much at the forefront of our thoughts.

Of course just over half the battalion has not deployed but instead remained in Fort George under the command of Major Brian Cooper. As is always the case, they have been particularly busy managing all of our contingency tasks, sending soldiers away on adventure training, preparing soldiers to join us in Iraq and indeed for the series of tasks we will deliver later this year. Lieutenant Guest led the battalion team to second place at the 7 SCOTS shooting competition and Sgt Wedgewood and LCpl McDonald have been heading up battalion entries into 'Warrior Fitness' competitions (if you have not encountered 'Warrior Fitness' competitions before, you will have to trust me that they are not for the faint hearted!).

So, as is always the case, everyone is busy. After the tour concludes we will reunite as a battalion and we have much to look forward to. Perhaps of most interest to this audience is our plan to march through parts of our traditional recruiting area in September. With so much on our plate, manning levels remain of paramount importance and we will be bringing some of our vehicles and weaponry with us to show off our wares. There are a plethora of sports tours and adventure training trips also heading off in September and the battalion will compete at the Regimental boxing competition in November. The RSM plans to lead a team in a 500 mile race around the north of Scotland, and, to ensure we are as conceptually developed as we are physically, Captain Herbert is leading a battlefield study to France to study light mechanised tactics employed in World War Two as well as visiting some of the battlefields our predecessors fought on.

I will conclude by highlighting a few notable achievements. First, huge congratulations are due to; WO2 Young on being awarded a Meritorious Service Medal for her selfless service to the battalion over the last few years; to WO1 Fraser and Sgt O'Gorman for their Three Star Commendations in recognition of what they have done for the battalion on the technical side of the house; and to Captain Timothy Towler for his Two Star Commendation for his superlative efforts as Adjutant. LCpl Cunningham also deserves praise for successfully passing the Pathfinders Course, as does Sgt Lavery for passing the RMAS selection cadre. By no means are these the only individual successes the battalion has enjoyed over the last six months but they certainly give you a flavour of the superb work being put in by so many.

## THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee: Major Lee Curson  
Mess Secretary: Captain James Farrall

This report covers another period during which a significant majority of Mess members have been deployed away from Fort George either on individual professional development courses or collective training in support of the current deployment on Op SHADER 6. Regardless, we have managed to enjoy many events in and around the Mess.

Due to an early Christmas leave period, we held a winter party in November with an *Après Ski* theme. Early discussions with Historic Scotland allowed us to exploit some of the infrastructure within the Fort and we decked out a number of casements which offered a *Val D'Isere* feel to Inverness for one night. There were no doubt many a teary eye from Subalterns unable to deploy on the annual skiing trip due to the deployment to Iraq!! As ever all guests got fully involved with the theme and there were some outstanding costumes whilst perhaps too much Lycra!

Deployment on the Mission Rehearsal Exercise ran the Battalion straight into Christmas week on return to Fort George. With much

preparation of freight and equipment going on throughout the week, we did manage a few social gatherings. After serving the Jocks and JNCOs their Christmas supper, we hosted the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess members. This afforded both Messes the opportunity to develop the strong bond we have with each other prior to deploying to Iraq but also to say farewell to those members of both Messes not deploying. The final social event of the week saw the Mess descend upon the patch to be hosted by the Company Commanders and their wives whilst partaking in some Christmas carolling and then moving on to the Commanding Officer's home to enjoy further carolling and a curry supper.

Since the departure of the Battalion to Iraq, we have tried to maintain a sense of normality within the Mess. The pace of life has not dropped and many of us are away from Fort George for long periods which has unfortunately defeated us from coming together for a dinner night or party but we have hosted the wives for coffee each month, allowing us to catch up and ensure everyone is aware of all Battalion matters and what the Mess is planning for later in 2018.

Planning is already in progress for when the Mess comes together again in July with a return to Fort George party being planned before summer leave stand down and for an autumn ball in early September.

As with all Royal Regiment of Scotland Officers' Messes, reeling is an important part of Mess life and adding to the atmosphere at functions. However, last year we had Capt Rab Loudon partaking in his penchant for ballroom dancing and he competed in Strictly Inverness finishing a very respectable 3rd place. The bug hit a few Mess members, so much so that Capt Paul Naismith signed up for the Poppy Scotland Come Dancing event. I am delighted to report that his efforts in training (mind that glass ankle Paul!!) ensured he romped the competition and won the event!!! Paul was also presented with the award for raising the most sponsorship money (in excess of £4000). The Adjutant has already submitted his name for the 2019 competition so we will hopefully hear back before the next report if he has been successful in his application.

As with every report there have been a number of celebrations. I am delighted to report that Major Rob Smith, Rachel and Freddie were joined by a baby girl called Margaret and Captain James Farrall and Amelia were joined by a baby boy called Huxley. There have also been a small number of arrivals and departures since the last report. We welcomed Capt Paul Brown as RAO, Capt Dean Sprouting as Det Comd and 2Lt Kenny Nicol from RMAS and PCBC. We have said farewell to Capt Neil Fidler who has returned to the warmer climes of England and is now under the care of the Royal Signals.

I will finish this report with comment to Captain Dean Sprouting who was killed whilst deployed in Iraq. Despite his recent arrival, Dean quickly settled into the Battalion and the Officers' Mess. He was an outgoing individual who went out of his way to meet Mess members and become part of Mess life. He was an excellent addition to the Mess who brought with him much Late Entry officer wit and banter.



*Red Hackles gather at Aldershot for dinner with Lt Col McInroy.*

### WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Presiding Member: Warrant Officer Class 1 (RSM)  
K Stacey

President of the Mess

Committee:

Warrant Officer Class 2 C Weir

As Regimental Sergeant Major and presiding member of the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess it has been an absolute privilege to have been involved with setting the direction for the Mess. It's never an easy task and you can't please everybody, but hopefully Mess members will appreciate the fair approach and desire to improve our lot under my tenure. One particular highlight was the amount of time it took Sgt Wishart (Mess Improvements member) to procure new toasters for tea and toast! Following some ribbing from his fellow members, they eventually came into play some ten months later. Special thanks go to RQMS (T) Ian Carlisle aka Objective Lawrence Goldmember (real name Miguel Rodrigues Fenton) for all the excellent work he has put into improving both the main bar area and in changing the tea and toast location to the library, with the help of CSgt Blake and all living in Mess members. Now called the Aberfeldy room, it has much better acoustics and atmosphere during tea and toast, allowing for a lot more interaction between Mess members. My final project to get nailed down before I depart is to turn the back courtyard into an area where Mess members will want to sit and perhaps have a beer when the hot weather comes (not in Inverness I hear you say!). We have bought enough decking to make a boat with, it just needs started. It's all about making the most of our Mess.

So, what have we been up to? Due to not being able to get a Christmas function in, CSgt Sean Pratt ran a JOKTOBERFEST on Friday the 2nd November which was the best Mess function I have been to in recent years. It just goes to show you don't need a massive budget (band, drink and food will suffice). The German Umpa Loompa band was something else, hailing from Cowdenbeath of all places. The real ale from the keg was provided by Cairngorm brewery and of course the food cooked by our chefs (pomme frites mit curry sauce bitte!). Everyone who attended that night had a blast. Worryingly CSgt Blake was very convincing as a German beer girl!

Mid November saw the Battalion get ready and subsequently deploy down to Thetford (Bodney Camp) for a two week Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX). This was to be our final test exercise before deploying with a report being written on how well we performed. Whilst it was predominately a section level battle it still needed co-ordination and cool heads to ensure that our Jocks (for many their first tour) performed. And perform they did! We received a cracking write up with the directing staff stating that this was the best they had seen from the previous five Op SHADER deployments.

We recovered back to the Fort over the weekend and went straight into our Christmas week, which was a much muted affair, as we still had a lot of pre-deployment activity to conduct. Everyone was looking forward to some much-needed leave. Thank you to the Officers' Mess for hosting the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess so excellently. This year, Christmas jumper was the order of the day with the plan to get together and socialise rather than the obligatory games that usually occur.



*It is a 10 from Capt Paul Naismith on his dancing efforts!*



We also found out on the day of the Jocks' Christmas dinner that almost 50% of the deployment force's visa had not come through in time to depart in early January. This caused some angst for the top corridor and we are still feeling the effects of this now in March, albeit we have almost got all who were initially supposed to deploy out. The very next day (8th December) we went onto Christmas leave with an early report back time in January. We were to then fly out and assume post as UK Training Team West on Op SHADER 6. A total of 26 SNCO's deployed. We are well into our rhythm and life is ticking along very nicely with the days merging into one.

The Mess would like to welcome the following newly promoted Sergeants; White, Gray, Fay, Smith, Miller, Ritchie, Wells, McFadden, Morrison, Watson, Lilley, O'Gorman, Reay and Paterson. It's great to see new members come in and bring a different perspective to life. We have had a few promotions as well; RQMS (M) Hannah to Warrant Officer Class One (he will assume post as RSM of Tayforth UOTC on return from tour); CSgt Young CQMS HQ Coy to CSM HQ Coy, CSgt Hunter CQMS B Coy to CSM B Coy. CSgt Robb and CSgt Couper both currently RMAS instructors are due to assume post as CSM A Coy and CSM C Coy respectively in the summer. WO2 Couper has spent several years away, serving with the MERCIANS and then 1 SCOTS and it's about time he came home.

Well done goes to Sgt Lavery on his successful completion of RMAS selection. He will promote to CSgt in due course and start his two years instructional post at Sandhurst later this year. Congratulations and welcome must also go RQMS Pedder currently at 1 SCOTS, selected to be the Regimental Sergeant Major of this fine Battalion and will assume post by 1st July.

There has also been a lot of departures. Farewell and best wishes go to WO1 ASM Tommy MacMillan, also to WO2 Rab McCready and WO2 Craigie Weir. Sgt Scott Mackie, Sgt Sam Watt, Sgt Bernie Turner (LAD) and Sgt Natasha Robertson have also left the Battalion.

All leave with best wishes, the obligatory Comrades picture and massive thank you for the work they have put in whilst serving in the Watch. Some may return, however, if not then all are welcome back at any time throughout their lives as once you have served in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess then you are a member for life and can come and visit at any time of your choosing.

It would be wrong not to mention the passing of Joe Hubble, a true Black Watch legend and friend to many. He was an active member of the Mess who loved a dram and he will be missed. To give you an idea of his legendary status he attended every single Burns supper weekend, wherever the Battalion was posted, from the late 80's until 2016. He has had a remarkable influence on the Mess often imparting his experience and knowledge to those who needed it.

I personally will be saddened to leave my post as Regimental Sergeant Major. My family have 115 years continuous service in The Black Watch and I am exceptionally privileged and honoured to have presided over the Mess. I am grateful for the support of many people both serving and retired. Special mention goes to our Black Watch Association, which I can say with authority is the best run Association in The Royal Regiment of Scotland. Lt Col (Retd) Riddell and Maj (Retd) Proctor and all members have done a remarkable job in securing the future of our illustrious history. This is the best battalion in the British Army.

Forward the Forty Twa!



WO1 Stacey with a few friendly faces before the Cenotaph Parade.



The RSM pictured after the London Cenotaph Parade.



Tucking in to a few jars at the Octoberfest party.



CSM Wilson directing the Highland Games in Iraq.



## CORPORALS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee: Corporal Kelly  
President of the Entertainments Committee: Corporal Robertson

Corporal Kelly shortly after taking over as PMC was deployed onto his Tailor's Course which is particularly long, therefore the PEC, Cpl Robertson assumed the role of President of the Mess Committee overseeing a frantic couple of months in the run up to both Christmas leave and deployment onto Op SHADER 6.

We welcome the following soldiers on promotion to Lance Corporal; Ptes Ross, Madsen, Spring, Gray-Gardener, Adamson, Mitchell, Gunn, Kachimanga, Smith, Duthie, Clark, McRobbie and Clements. A massive well done also goes to the following for promoting from Lance Corporal to Corporal; Steel, Roy, Livingstone, Brown, Farmer, Hanlin and Bosman.

Due to Christmas week being too tight to fit in a Christmas Ball the Corporals' Mess had a Halloween function on Saturday the 3rd November held in Jury's Inn, just down from the married quarters. Mess members were encouraged to dress up with the obligatory ghouls and scary movie characters dotted around. Best dressed male went to LCpl Hawkes dressed as the Joker from Batman and best dressed female went to LCpl McCallum dressed as a scary Jack in the box from Alice in Wonderland. The back end of November was taken up with the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX). What was particularly impressive was the grip that our JNCO's had, which resulted in the high grade report. We finished the MRX on the 30th November to recover back to the Fort over that weekend. The following week was taken up with kit checks and final freight packing. The Jocks' Christmas lunch was held on Thursday the 7th December. The Battalion then enjoyed a well deserved Christmas leave until January the 4th.

The Corporals' Mess was then split with some 77 or so JNCOs deployed, with Cpl Richardson holding the Fort in taking the reigns as PMC for the deployment. Op SHADER 6 is akin to a Northern Ireland Maze Prison tour in that there is always a threat, however, it's predominately sanger bashing for those in SECFOR (Security Force) and training Iraqis for those in BPC (Building Partner Capacity). There is a massive coalition effort with numerous NATO countries and our American friends

providing the force here. JNCO's have been instrumental in executing the role we find ourselves in out here and are to be commended for their efforts in being the professional face of UK Armed Forces. Some of our coalition partners have never met a Brit before let alone a Jock! It makes for some quite fun exchanges. Of particular note was the Highland Games run by LCpl Kyle. He managed to pull it all together and pulled off an absolute cracking event. Special mention must be made of LCpl Kev Mackie who entered the strongman element of the games. He was piped into second place by one second with an American soldier winning it.

Cpl Couper of the QM's department is doing a great job networking our Coalition partners for the benefit of the Battalion. The connections he has made have stood us in good stead for the months we have spent out here. He is very good chaffing and buttering folk up but get him behind a computer and it's a different story!

Currently at the time of writing this our Rear Ops Group JNCO's are planning a Casino themed night to be held in the Fort some time April. There will also be JNCO's going to La Manga again in either the Football team or Rugby 7's team which was an excellent experience for all who took part last year.

Looking ahead to the back end of this year there is a lot of fun stuff coming up in the form of adventure training opportunities, expeditions to far flung countries and cycling the North Coast 500. There will also be an opportunity for soldiers to catch their breath and take some leave.

Finally, I would like to wish the following farewell on promotion out of the Mess to Sergeant: White, Gray, Fay, Smith, Miller, Ritchie, Wells, McFadden, Morrison, Watson, Lilley and Paterson. The following have also since left the Mess for pastures new; Cpl Chamberlain off to ITC Catterick, Cpl Smith on his transfer to the RLC, LCpl Gurung on his transfer to the Adjutants General Corps and LCpl Baco to AFC Harrogate.

Forward the Forty Twa!

## ALPHA (GRENADE) COMPANY – SECURITY FORCE to Al Asad Air Base, IRAQ (Op SHADER)

Officer Commanding:	Major OGW Beard
Second-in-Command:	Captain JA Young
Executive Officer:	Captain COT Ritchie (Royal Dragoon Guards)
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 Wilson
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant McMaster
OC 1 Platoon:	Lieutenant M Gray
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Gray
OC 2 Platoon:	Lieutenant T Fortune
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Wells
OC 3 Platoon:	2nd Lieutenant T Thorpe
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant McFadden

After a long training cycle, the newly formed SecFor (Security Force) Company finally deployed to Iraq on Op SHADER 6. D-Day was, for the bulk of the Company, the 3rd of January, leaving people slightly tired after Hogmanay.

A 12 hour bus trip to Brize Norton and a short hop to Cyprus saw the first troops onto the Hercules to complete a night time landing. This was a first for many of the soldiers and putting on body armour and helmets for real was a new experience!

Due to the nature of this tour, the Government of Iraq requires that each British soldier should have a Visa to enter the country. This has proved somewhat problematic and even in mid-March we are still waiting for the originally earmarked soldiers to deploy. Needless to say this has been very challenging for those left at home, to keep motivation high and ensuring they are at the correct start state. Capt Ritchie and Sgt O'Gorman were just two of those who were without Visas for the initial deployment. With about 30 troops left behind, it was essential they made sure the daily running of the Company went smoothly.

Meanwhile, after arriving in Al Asad Air Base, the handover with 2 RIFLES was moving ahead. Each job was fully explained and passed onto the next incumbent and with the help of the Americans and Danes in the Company, we were able to fill the gaps. Lt Fortune stepped up to fill the position of XO until Capt Ritchie was able to deploy and became the most knowledgeable man in the Company about who to talk to in camp to fix any problems. An invaluable skill!



Cpl Couper with his American counterpart.



The soldiers started taking over sangars from the RIFLES and the Jocks very soon got to know the ground. This didn't just mean being on guard but learning where all the welfare facilities were, which the best cookhouse on camp was and exactly when the freshly baked cakes appeared in the Danish coffee shop! They were however very busy with work. Casualty exchanges with the Iraqi Security Forces, patrols out into the Iraqi zones and going outside into the Red Zone (bandit country). They also assisted in training the Iraqi Air Force (IAF) with their security, training on vehicles and their use, urban fighting skills and teaching heavy weapons. This was aided by Capt Young having a weekly Key Leader Engagement with the IAF battalion commander. He was invited to lunch once and came back complaining that he wouldn't eat that well again for the entire tour!

An award for Jock and JNCO of the month was introduced to recognise the hard work that was being put in by all the junior soldiers. Pte McRobbie, a signaller in SecFor was the best soldier in the Battle Group in January. This was for starting a Kickboxing class for all nations in the gym. It has a regular attendance and is often overbooked. LCpl Kyle was awarded best JNCO in February for his fantastic effort in creating from scratch, a Highland Games for the Coalition to enter. It included Stone Putt, Welly Toss, a Gun Run and Tug of War. Ten teams from the US, Norway and the UK entered and went head to head. It was a close run thing and the Strongman competition at the end was a great event. LCpl Mackie was pipped at the post by a mere 2 seconds despite a superhuman effort, which meant that the SecFor UK team finished in 3rd place overall. The Norwegian team triumphed but all teams who competed deserve huge credit.

Patrols have been an important part of our task, dominating the ground around the base to deny the enemy freedom of movement and this has been an ongoing task. All the platoon commanders have led the Protected vehicles out to conduct these missions alongside our Iraqi Army partners. Maj Beard has been working hard with all units within SecFor to spread the load evenly and make sure everyone gets the chance to leave camp and do something apart from guard duty.

We must also say good luck to Cpl Brogan who is away to attend the Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course in Brecon, LCpl Kyle who is off to attempt PTI selection and Cpl Laughland who is away to be an instructor at ITC Catterick. Congratulations are also due to the six soldiers who were promoted to LCpl during the tour. LCpls McRobbie, Clarke, Madsen, Katchimanga, Gunn, Ross. Hanlin and Farmer were promoted to Cpl.

So far, the deployment has been going well and the partnerships being built between our Coalition Partners are bearing fruit. Bravo 2-2 Company from 10th Mountain Division, US Army, are an excellent Company who have integrated well with the Jocks and enjoy having in depth debates about Donald Trump and the merits of country music. There are two platoons of Danish troops, one from the Royal Guard Hussars and the other from the Royal Danish Engineer Regiment. They often require assistance translating what the Jocks say but they aren't shy of a bit of banter!

The tour has got off to a good start and with the worst of the weather behind us we are all looking forward to the start of R & R.



*LCpl McRobbie receives his promotion from Maj Beard.*



*Highland Games caber tossing.*



*The Imm-Bru is always the top prize at the Highland Games prize giving!.*



*A Foxhound ready to deploy.*



## CHARLIE (MOBILITY SUPPORT) COMPANY AND THE SHOOTING TEAM

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

As Charlie Company reformed for the New Year, it did so as the Battle Casualty Replacement Company for the Battalion's deployment on Op SHADER 6. This brought numerous new faces to the Company including new Platoon Commanders Second Lieutenant Kenny Nicol and Lieutenant Ashley Guest AAC, fresh from the Infantry Battle School and additionally Capt Liam Herbert, who last graced these hallowed pages in 2015 as an attached INT CORPS officer, though subsequently saw the light!

Best laid plans going astray is nothing new, however, the Savages started the year with a bang, deploying many of its BCRs to Iraq due to visa issues. This then necessitated the speedy training of many more soldiers in order to maintain the Battalion's manpower reserve. The first quarter of 2018 has been a frantic stream of range days, heavy weapon, driving and infantry skills training to ensure that our soldiers deploying on operations did so at the highest possible standard. Further, selected Machine Gunners were deployed on Ex JEBEL STORM in Oman, supporting Balaklava Coy, 5 SCOTS.

For those delayed in their deployment who fell into the BCR pool, attention was focussed on the "back to basics" approach recently emphasised by Commander Field Army, Lieutenant General Sanders. The Company therefore created Ex SAVAGE SOLDIER to provide a shake out after the Christmas stand down and most importantly as a chance for the Company to refocus on the fundamentals of dismounted infanteering. Second Lieutenant Kenny Nicol was tasked with planning and organising the exercise under the watchful eye of Sergeant Watson who was keen to squeeze as much as was physically possible into the exercise. With the Company CP in full tactical swing, with Captains Herbert and Ritchie RDG at the helm, the troops deployed from "FOB George" in an exercise scenario that mirrored current operations and events in Eastern Europe. The following 36 hours would see the sections tested as they were required to deal with multiple ambushes, conducted by Sergeant Kyle and his band of merry enemy; multiple sets of orders, recce patrols and serials such as a trauma serial expertly delivered by the Battalion's medics. The activities also involved sections conducting deliberate offensive action against enemy positions. Despite the lack of sleep due to the frenetic pace of the exercise, every section managed to successfully complete every serial which was testament to the standards set and the drive of the Corporals in charge of each section.



*GMPG (SF) Training in the Oman.*

## OPERATIONAL SHOOTING TEAM

Officer Commanding: Lieutenant Ashley Guest (AAC)  
 Second-in-Command: Colour Sergeant Hendry

The Battalion took part in their first Operational Shooting Competition of the year at Barry Budden where they competed against competitive teams from 7 SCOTS. A chilly training period on Fort George ranges, under the direction of CSgt Hendry, resulted in a noticeable improvement in all the firers' ability. The build-up training included POA up to 500m, a run through of the competition shoots and practice with the GLOCK pistol. Regulars against the Reserves; we were determined to prove our status!

The team started the competition well with a competitive score achieved on the pistol shoots. This initial success was not capitalised on in the afternoon during the short range 'Rural Contact' and 'Falling Plates'. Going into the final day the battalion had it all to play for. The pressure was on to win the March and Shoot which would hopefully have enabled us to gain enough points to win the competition. Time spent perfecting our point of aim at the 500m and 400m firing point paid dividends, resulting in a win on the March and Shoot! Overall the Battalion were runners-up at the 7 SCOTS SAAM, with team captain Lt Guest being runner up for individual top shot.

This was a promising start to the season for the shooting team. Lessons learnt will be addressed and range time will be utilised to set the conditions for a successful performance at the 51X Operational Shooting Competition in April.



*Shooting Team from left to right – Pte Sneddon, Pte Wilson, Pte Grieg, Pte Taylor, Cpl Steel, Lt Guest, LCpl Scott, Pte Macdonald, LCpl Mataisau, Pte Smith.*

## DELTA (ISR) COMPANY – BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY (BPC)/DELTA (LIGHT) COY

Officer Commanding: Major R A Smith  
 Second-in-Command: Captain R C W Doughty  
 Company Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class 2 A Ferrier  
 Company Quarter Master Sergeant: Colour Sergeant S Pratt



*Cpl Purse overseas the Savages training on Tain Ranges.*



T E Lawrence wrote in “The 27 Articles”  
“Cling tight to your sense of humour.”

With such wise words to guide us, these notes are penned from the Headquarters of the United Kingdom Training Team (West) in dusty Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. The reader may feel as though they are watching the latest chapter of the Star Wars series: flash back to the cold, wet and snow of the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) in November 2017 on Stanford Training Area.

In the weeks running up to the MRX the Company had re-ORBATed to become the Building Partner Capacity (BPC) Coy. Sadly, there was no re-entry of Luke Skywalker or Han Solo, but the coming together of D Company and elements of B and C Companies into four training teams. With the new team formed, we completed the MRX with a superb showing. Whilst we thought that only five days in camp stood between the Company and some well earned leave, one factor remained unanswered: visas.

Some hasty planning in the final 24hrs before Christmas leave meant that we departed with a shadow ORBAT – just in case the number of visas being approved didn’t come to fruition. The reader may be unsighted to the current situation whereby every British Serviceman deploying to Iraq must do so on a six month visa; quite different to the last time many in the battalion found themselves in Iraq!

Thus, with less than half of the Company with a visa, everybody paraded on 2 January and those that could, did deploy to Iraq via Cyprus. Thankfully, the Company 2IC and CSM remained back in Fort George with the remainder, waiting for outstanding visas as the initial wave got to grips with life in Al Asad. Al Asad is an enormous air base that was previously occupied by US forces during the 2003-07 Gulf War – think small city and you will have a feel for the size. True to form, the base is equipped with numerous gyms, cookhouses (DEFACs) and portacabin-type accommodation, with air conditioning! These ‘arduous conditions’ have prompted some of the Jocks to comment they are more comfortable in Iraq than Fort George! Comforts aside, the Company quickly got to grips with their role.

The British BPC Company is part of the Danish led line of operation that trains the Iraqi Border Guard Force (BGF), headquartered in the aptly named ‘Morgue’ – the very same building that used to house dead bodies – transformed of course to house the BPC. We linked in with our Danish counterparts and began conducting training and instructing 48hrs after landing in Iraq. In addition to the Corporal instructors teaching the Iraqis, the Company also provided the critical Force Protection task of Guardian Angels (GAs) – dismounted close protection to all instructors (British and Danish) – and protected movement in Mastiff vehicles, both of which allow the BPC to operate freely in the surrounding area. No sooner had we arrived, than we said farewell to the outgoing Danish Contingent (DANCON) ‘Team 6’, and so before we knew it, the Company were suddenly the experienced old sweats in the BPC. DANCON Team 7 arrived at the end of January, along with the rest of the Company and we have established a friendly and harmonious relationship with the new team.

The last few weeks and months have therefore been spent conducting mainly dismounted infantry training to the BGF. We have delivered live fire ranges, counter-explosive/counter-IED training, infantry tactics and all through the medium of an interpreter testing fluent Jockenesse with Arabic. Despite being on operations, many of us have found time to enjoy some of the highlights of being overseas; this has ranged from lots of fitness and sport (Op MASSIVE has been in full swing for two months) to movie nights, to simply enjoying a brew in the Danish KFUN. Op SHADER 6, despite the initial challenges of getting the Company ‘out of the door’ has been a great experience.

It is appropriate to say farewell to our superb Company Clerk, Lance Corporal Bell-Bailey as she heads south for her next posting to Frimley Park Hospital and slightly closer to home, we say farewell to the recently promoted Corporal Ratumaisese, as he moves across to C Company. We have also seen success in being the champion Company (again) on Red Hackle Day, immediately prior to deploying. Similarly, the Company have seen success with promotions; all of which have been named in the Training Team notes; congratulations to you all.

Who knows where the Golden Don will be by the time the next chapter is written; what we know is that it will be eventful and always fun!



*BPC soldiers conduct part of the Reception and Onward Integration (RSOIs) package on the ranges in Al Asad Air Base.*



*Sgt Simpson training the Border Guard Force on the marksmanship principles.*



*Sgt Passiful conducting checkpoint training.*



*Members of the BPC training teams with some of the Border Guard Force.*



*LCpl Kah providing a watchful eye as a Guardian Angel.*



*Cpl Chadburn conducting Counter IED training.*

### **TRAINING TEAM 1**

Team Commander: Captain Atterbury  
Team Sergeant: Sgt Morrison

With the idyllic British summer behind us and deployment to Iraq fast approaching we adopted our new ORBAT at the end of October, ready for the challenges ahead. A new team is always interesting, and with Jocks drawn from all three specialist platoons and a Rifle Company this team was no exception!

First up was the MRX in November, the first proper run out for instructors and Guardian Angels alike. The first challenge to be overcome was how to work with an interpreter, especially given how well the COEFOR played the game. Experience from Op VOCATE (Training of the Libyan Army) was key here, although those who had missed it were quick to catch up! On the Guardian Angel side of life, things were also falling into place. Once we realised that not every serial was going to end in a contact, things quickly settled down. The team left the MRX confident in our abilities and keen to get to Iraq.

Back in on 2 January 2018, and flying on the 3 January, was the New Year that awaited some of the Team. There was disappointment that shenanigans over visas meant that not everyone deployed when expected, although this was out of our control! Nonetheless, the Team has come together in Iraq and has enjoyed its first couple of months immensely. It has been great to see some of the younger members deliver training to a high level. There has also been plenty of opportunity for time in the gym and Pte McIlraith is now struggling to find enough weight to put on the bars! All bodes well for a good tour and a safe return in the summer.

Finally, congratulations go to the following on their promotions; Lance Corporal to Corporal: Livingstone, Roy and Steele and from Private to Lance Corporal: Raoba and Mclean.

### **TRAINING TEAM 2**

Team Commander: Colour Sergeant Roadnight  
Team Sergeant: Sgt Smith

Training Team 2 arrived in Thetford for the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) for Op SHADER 6, feeling well prepared and confident that we would be able to take anything that the instructors could throw at us.

The first week offered an opportunity to conduct some team training incorporating the Mastiff vehicle platform for the first time. We were fortunate to have some highly experienced vehicle crews headed up by Sgt Smith as the Force Protection Commander. Each of the four Cpl instructors had gained significant experience delivering lessons through an interpreter on Op VOCATE, thus the team was able to train and adapt for the challenges that the MRX offered.

During the final test exercise (FTX) the team was tested on its ability to deploy force protection and react to various scenarios. The instructors delivered high quality lessons on various subjects including Counter IED, to a simulated training audience and collectively the team responded to a casualty scenario involving a downed helicopter.

Having received a strong pass on the FTX, the training team departed on Christmas leave. Despite the relief of leave, it was evident than in the back of our minds was the upcoming deployment in January.

Writing these notes at the end of the first course training the Iraqi Border Guard Force, the training team has built a good rapport with the students. It is hard not to be humbled by the situation that the students face. Many have significant combat experience, having lost one or more family members or friends to the fight with Daesh. Even with this, they remain committed to learning and trying to improve their situation.

Finally, congratulations go to Lance Corporal Gray-Gardner on his promotion from Private to Lance Corporal.

### **TRAINING TEAM 3**

Team Commander: Captain Kelly  
Team Sergeant: Sgt Ritchie

Comprehensive pre-deployment training that ran for the majority of 2017 meant that the team were itching to deploy and learn on Op SHADER 6.

Team 3, the majority of which is made up from members of the Recce Platoon have spent the first few months of the tour testing and adjusting to life in Al Asad Airbase. Al Asad possesses a staggering level of comfort and a complimentary routine that is turned on its head with even a chance of rain is sighted. This is not the case for Team 4 Commander, CSgt Blake (Recce 2IC) who has been caught suited and booted in full "Gary Gore-Tex" on dry days, 'just in case'.

The team operate with four Cpl Instructors (Connor, Marshall, Jones, McLaren), who deliver the training to the Iraqi Border Guard Forces (BGF). The BGF have enjoyed various aspects of the training provided; most notably, the aggressive level of competition and the complete cancelling of training on the wet days involving fire and manoeuvre. Clearly, the BGF have been taking a leaf out of the Sniper Platoon SOPs.

Force Protection is commanded by Sgt Ritchie and conducted by the rest of the team. Acting as 'Guardian Angels', the soldiers operate on a 20 minute full PPE rotation; this has proven interesting of late as the weather has begun to warm up. Factor 5000 sun cream will be in full force in the coming weeks.

Finally, we offer congratulations to LCpl Mitchell and LCpl Clements who were promoted recently and we look forward to returning to conventional training after the summer with a Recce Cadre planned for October 2018.

### **TRAINING TEAM 4**

Team Commander: Colour Sergeant Blake  
Team Sergeant: Sergeant Fay

From November 2017, Training Team 4 have been preparing for the deployment on Op SHADER 6.

The Team is comprised of mainly C Company personnel from the Mortar and Machine Gun platoons, with the Guardian Angels coming from B Company. We spent the first few weeks of the tour teaching EHAT (Explosive Hazardous Awareness Training), paired up with a Danish Engineer Training Team. Once the Training Team had deployed out a few times with the Danes, it was quickly the turn of Sgt Wilson and Cpls Cameron, Chadburn and Leith to take the lead in delivering the training to the Border Guard Forces (BGF). Perhaps the most enjoyable element for the BGF and challenging for the training team, has been live fire ranges and marksmanship training. The BGF are always eager to see what score they achieved on the shoot and apply



their enthusiasm to all aspects, although occasionally there is the odd disappointed look when the scores are read out.

Force protection is commanded by Sgt Fay, and is constructed from the rest of Training Team 4. Their role is to be the Guardian Angels for the instructors which involve a rotation of guarding the instructors, a period on top-cover with the Heavy Machine Gun (HMG) or the General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG) and then finally some rest from the hot sun.

As the tour progresses, we look forward to the next courses to instruct and of course some R&R!

Finally, congratulations go to Lance Corporal Adamson on his recent promotion.

### HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Officer Commanding: Major Brian Cooper  
 Company Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class 2 Bryan Young  
 Company Quartermaster Sergeant: Corporal Josefa Taroga

Headquarter Company has been through a period of change over the past few months having worked its way through several Company Quartermaster Sergeants. As always, when the Battalion deploys, HQ Company becomes a lot busier with assets split between forward and rear and inevitably the departments pick up the extra tasks. We have also continued to support other commitments as well as Battalion duties.

CSgt Young returned from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) to take on CQMS all be it for a short period of time before being handed the reins from WO2 (CSM) Weir who moves to Tayforth UOTC; CSgt Cooper has moved to become the Unit Welfare SNCO.

The Company seem to have an ongoing outing at Skeebo Estate and yet again enjoyed another day out pheasant beating. Whether it is the food or the fresh air that keeps the Jocks going back there no one knows but a day walking in the hills is one way to get some miles on the legs. The OC is adamant that it is a sheer coincidence that his hobby is shooting.



*Cpl Shepard finds shelter in the back of a vehicle when out beating.*

### TRAINING WING

Training Officer: Gapped  
 Training Warrant Officer: Warrant Officer Class 2 D Taylor  
 Training Colour Sergeant: Colour Sergeant S Hendry  
 Training SNCO: Sergeant A Lavery

Training SNCO: Sergeant M Belshaw  
 Training JNCO: Corporal D Ure  
 RAPTCI: Staff Sergeant R Fielder  
 Gym 2IC: Lance Corporal J McDonald

The Training Wing has recently seen slight changes in staff and a couple of people move on. Captain Mikey Fairweather has taken over as the RCMO which he is relishing. We have also had to say farewell to Colour Sergeant Cooper who has moved to the Families Office and also Sergeant Mackie who has been posted to Chillwell as part of the Military Training and Mobility Centre (MTMC).

Staff Sergeant Fielder is currently enjoying a period of time in the Falkland Islands with the penguins and left the Gym in the capable hands of his 2IC, Lance Corporal McDonald.

The Training Wing was tasked to help facilitate key training events during the Pre Deployment Training (PDT) for Op SHADER. These tasks took the usual form of running ranges both on Pre Deployment Training (PDT) and the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) conducted at Lydd and Hythe Ranges and also Stanford Training Area (STANTA).

Battalion training continues at pace with the Battalion deployed. We have been supporting the Rear Operations Group to conduct Battle Casualty Replacement (BCR) training and fine tune the Shooting Team training. Driver training on Foxhound and Mastiff vehicles has been continued to ensure we have sufficient drivers to maintain operational effectiveness.

We will conduct the pre-beat up courses for the Potential JNCOs and career courses at the Infantry Battle School (IBS). The soldiers are tested on a number of skills including navigation, fitness, tactics and military knowledge.

Congratulations must be given to Sergeant Lavery who was recently successful in selection to be a Colour Sergeant Instructor at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS). We wish him and his wife Kirstin and of course the newly arrived baby Lucy all the best on their new adventures.

In conclusion it has been a very busy period for the Training Wing, we look forward to the Battalion returning in the summer.



*The Adjutant addresses a steamy CO's PT.*

### MOTOR TRANSPORT PLATOON

Officer Commanding: Capt A Cunningham  
 Second-in-Command: CSgt A Pratt  
 Motor Transport Sergeant: Sergeant R Gilmour  
 Details JNCO: Cpl R Richardson  
 Driver Training: Cpl A Tod /Cpl R Aitken  
 Green Fleet Manager: Cpl I Koro /Pte A Clunie  
 Service Bay Manager: Cpl Andrew Brown

The MT Platoon are central to everything going on within the Battalion. Currently we have soldiers in Iraq in support of OP SHADER and personnel about to deploy to Kenya, Belize and a myriad of supporting exercises across the UK.

Capt Cunningham continues to encourage the platoon with his marathon training, though his efforts to lead by example have led to several members of the Platoon joining the Battalion Darts Team under the watchful eye of Cpl Richardson. I'm sure this is not what he meant

by taking up some sporting activity but small steps lead to great things, so we will wait and see where it takes us!

Cpl Brown remains determined to train the Battalion's drivers of the future with a very impressive success rate and there is no truth that the only reason for his positivity is an endless supply of "Yorkie Bars" from his trucker friends. He did, however, manage to fit in a sightseeing visit whilst deployed on the Mission Rehearsal Exercise at STANTA to Skegness. Apparently Cpl Brown who is the unit driving instructor was only receiving a route to train some of his drivers!

In other news Pte Murdoch who has recently joined the Platoon was asked to answer the MTO's phone as the boss was delivering a brief, sadly he had no idea who Capt Cunningham was!

That is all from MT for now and to all Red Hackle wearers past and present wherever you may be never forget the Motor Transport Platoon always "lead the way".



*Cpl McTernan, Pte Jones and Cpl Todd checking a vehicle engine.*



*Pte Murdoch learns the basics of the RWMIK+.*

### **RAO'S DEPARTMENT**

During an eventful and demanding few months, the AGC(SPS) Detachment have worked relentlessly to prepare and support the multifaceted G1 Administration requirements of our Battalion in the lead into Op SHADER.

Since our last entry to the Red Hackle, the Detachment has seen the arrival of the RAO and RAWO (Capt Paul Brown and WO2 Al O'Neill) and departure of Capt Neil Fidler and WO2 Sharon Young. The Battalion's Military Clerks have continued to ply their trade both at home as an integral part of the ROG and abroad, as forward based Administrators on Op SHADER.

The primary focus for the Detachment during the pre-deployment phase was to prepare the personal administration for the soldiers deploying whilst concurrently readying our own AGC (SPS) soldiers for deployment. Our AGC clerks rose to the occasion and delivered good results with their 'can-do' attitude.

With the FSA taking the lead on the seemingly insurmountable task of applying for second passports and visas for all those officers and

soldiers deploying (including the potential deployments, almost all were delivered albeit with blood, sweat and tears). This was no mean feat as the requirement to get an Iraqi visa seemed to be and continues to be, a perpetual, thankless and clunky activity.

The MRX went almost without a hitch but in true British Army tradition, the IT (namely the WIFI access to Dii) let us down; by improvisation, adaptation and determination, the G1 service was delivered via the slightly more traditional route of spreadsheets and subsequent transfer via USB memory stick. On the whole, the MRX was successful and had great utility, enabling us to practice our IDF and Mass casualty systems and processes as part of OP ACCOUNTABILITY. This allowed us to establish who exactly was missing or could be involved in an accident or incident. The other, more routine functions of G1 in the field were also exercised including printing, reproduction of records, scanning and of course the ever present JPA move and track which enabled all our people to be paid and administrated correctly.

Almost immediately into the New Year we saw the first wave deploy to Iraq via Brize Norton.

Over the coming weeks the Battalion increased their strength in Theatre up to the required level.

Having assumed control of the J1 Cell in Iraq on the 5 January 2018, Captain Dean Sprouting set about establishing a functioning and effective deployed J1 Department

Organisation and planning for R&R, pay and PERSREPs were set in place and the daily battle rhythm began; of course the irritation and availability, not to mention speed, of the IT systems all conspire to extend the day just that bit more.

Regrettably, Captain Dean Sprouting AGC(SPS) was involved in an accident which proved fatal. This was a massive blow to us all and it was an exceptionally testing period for the remaining J1 Clerk, LCpl Rhodes. Lt Paul Hemsley joined the team from 2 SCOTS and provided J1 command and control capacity up until the arrival of Sgt Craig Alderson a few weeks later.

Following repatriation, Captain Dean Sprouting AGC(SPS) was buried with full Military honours in his home town of Denny near Stirling. The Service was attended by a large number of AGC(SPS) personnel, including the whole 3 SCOTS ROG detachment, as well as Royal Regiment of Scotland personnel.

Life in the ROG continues and the J1 team in Theatre will rotate and be replaced in May, although the tireless LCpl Rhodes will continue in Theatre for the full six months and provide much needed continuity and advice to the inbound Capt Brown and Cpl Senehang.

Although busy and challenging, life at Fort George is good. Inverness may seem distant, but in reality it is littered with opportunity to achieve almost anything one would aspire to, be it skiing, rock climbing, mountain biking, sailing or in the case of this writer's wife, shopping! If you are wondering what to put on your next APP (dream sheet) you could do a lot worse than placing 3 SCOTS as your No.1 choice. We even managed to get a Military Helicopter ride in for good measure. *Animo Et Fide.*



*LCpl Jones and Pte Al Mamun living the dream.*





*Pte Bbaale airborne during helicopter training.*

### **BATTALION ARTICLES ADVENTURE TRAINING**

The Rear Operations Group has exploited nearby Cameron Barracks, sending soldiers on Mountain Biking courses and an Introduction to Winter Mountaineering. The latter epitomised the aims of Adventurous Training, most notably incorporating controlled exposure to risk, developing physical courage and personal skills and working in arduous conditions. Throughout one week the wind chill on the Cairngorms hill tops was in the region of -20°C to -30°C and regular white outs honed the navigation skills of the students.

Initial instruction included lessons on how to use winter mountaineering equipment in different circumstances. Pte Jones was unaware that a few hours later he would be using these skills for real when he fell whilst traversing a steep wall of ice. By carrying out an ice axe arrest, he was able to stop his 100m sliding descent, much to the amusement of Cpl Aitkin.

Students have been enthused by the courses and several individuals are keen to build on the skills and experiences they have gained throughout the weeks. Fortunately, Fort George has no shortage of hills nearby.



*Pte Oboubi asks "How much longer do you want me to hold on for".*



*Introduction to winter mountaineering.*



*LCpl Chelenga pauses to take in the view*

### **BRITISH ARMY WARRIOR FIT**

BWAF Team Captain:

Lance Corporal E McDonald

BWAF Team:

Lieutenant A Guest

Sergeant Wedgewood

Corporal L Salter

British Army Warrior Fitness (BAWF) is a military fitness competition which is based on the fitness phenomenon of CrossFit. What is CrossFit I here you ask? It encompasses workouts that are varied functional movements performed at high intensity and are based on functional movements that reflect the best aspects of gymnastics, weightlifting, running, rowing and more.

3 RIFLES hosted the first round of the regional championship at Redford Barracks in February which the Battalion sent a team to. The workouts covered muscular strength, muscular power/anaerobic capacity, muscular endurance, and aerobic capacity. The Battalion's powerhouses LCpl McDonald, Cpl Salter and Sgt Wedgewood put in a respectable effort on the bench press 1 x repetition max with 120kg, 115kg and 90kg respectively. The next event involved 20m sprints pushing a heavily weighted metal weight rack that ensured all competitors were pushed to their anaerobic limits! The third event was a demanding circuit, called Chipper, where teams of three cycled through a circuit at best effort pace. Exercises included wall ball throws, kettle bell swings and burpees to name a few. It is safe to say the team spared no energy throughout this event. The final event of the day was in the 25m pool where each team had to complete 30 lengths between them.

Overall the team put in a good effort and came away inspired to keep up their training regime that had helped them achieve a high standard during the BAWF competition. LCpl McDonald's commitment to leading the training and knowledge of physical training greatly assisted the BAWF team during the build-up and throughout the event.



*Lance Corporal McDonald and Corporal Salter competing in the British Army Warrior Fit Competition.*

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



## BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

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

## HEADQUARTER COMPANY

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

## COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

For a Reserve unit there is a lot going on. At the time of writing, BHQ are frantically pulling together an exercise for approximately 200 Qatari Officer Cadets in Lydd, Kent as part of the wider Brigade Defence Engagement initiatives. The Companies are running at pace, focussing on the delivery of the Soldier First Syllabus and Basic Battlecraft, incorporating the usual live and dry training weekends and completing any outstanding annual mandated training requirements to qualify for the certificate of efficiency. In the background but all importantly, we maintain our recruiting efforts and are on track to bring in approximately seven new recruits per month to the battalion.



*The Army Reserve Highland Tour – Recruiting in the Highlands and Islands in January 2018 led by Captain Malcolm Dalziel-Job.*

Recently there has been an extremely encouraging increase in the number of regular attenders to training. Drill Nights are usually well attended across the battalion and more are turning out for weekend activities. The resurrection of the battalion football team has seen the re-engagement of several disengaged, who consequently have returned to military training too. This all bodes well for the forthcoming summer

season of community engagement events, annual camp, adventure training and the leadership and conceptual development programme.



*7 SCOTS Alpine Ski Team during Exercise SNOW LION 2018 led by Sg McNiven of A Company.*

Professionally, we have seen a significant increase in the number of attendees at the Section Commanders' Battle Course (six have passed since November 2017, more than we have had in the last 3 years!), Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course, Junior Non-Commissioned Officers' Cadre and various other important career courses. Special mention must go to Pte Rosalind Wildman who was awarded Top Student on her Junior Clerks' Course.

We have had several high profile visits to the battalion too. In November we welcomed the General Officer Commanding of 1st United Kingdom Division, Major General RW Wooddisse CBE MC; in January Lieutenant General (Retired) Sir Alistair Irwin KCB CBE kindly visited training in the Elgin Army Reserve Centre and most recently Brigadier G C Deakin CBE Commander 51st Infantry Brigade and Headquarters Scotland paid a routine visit to be updated on battalion and operational matters. All left impressed not only by the work going on in 7 SCOTS but also the attitude and quality of the team as whole. It is a pleasure to be able to show off the good work done by our people. The dedication of the Army Reservist in addition to his or her 'mortgage paying' professional employment, family and social commitments never ceases to amaze me.



*Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin promoting Sergeant Cadden to Colour Sergeant.*



*The Guard of Honour on parade in Elgin awaiting the arrival of Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin. Colour Sergeant Sharp MC is third from the right; he served with 3 SCOTS before joining 7 SCOTS.*

In the next few months we look forward to welcoming back those deployed with the 3rd Battalion on Op SHADER and whilst we have continued to conduct joint activities with those on Rear Operations in Fort George and the Recruiting Teams, we will hopefully step this up a level and support them more routinely for key events. As in the case of LCpl Foxcroft (Combat Medical Technician in C Company) who recently supported the 3rd Battalion Medical Centre for two weeks professional experience, there are plenty of obscure yet engaging opportunities to assist our Regular counterparts.

Finally, it has been great having the support of the Honorary Colonel, Brigadier (Retired) The Honourable HBHE Monro CBE. His support for battalion events and encouragement to all ranks has been particularly beneficial and his anecdotes and observations are helpful and rather amusing.

#### **ALPHA (FIRE SUPPORT) COMPANY**

Officer Commanding:	Major A Cameron
Company Second-in-Command:	Capt K Rehman
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 S Woods
PSAO:	Captain J Langdale
RSUSO:	Captain M Dunnigan
Anti Tank Platoon Commander:	2nd Lieutenant A Caddick
Mortar Platoon Commander:	Gapped
Rifle Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant R Hand
SPSI Dundee:	Sergeant E Mortley
PSI Aberdeen:	Colour Sergeant A MacDonald
CQMS (FTRS):	Colour Sergeant S MacGregor
CQMS (Res):	Colour Sergeant B Knowles

The last six months has been a very busy period for A Company due to having soldiers involved in an array of exercises, competitions and courses. In addition, the Company has seen several changes to its command team as we bid farewell to some long standing members.

The penultimate weekend before Christmas leave saw the Company head up to the Norwegian Lodge in the Cairngorms for our annual Christmas weekend. A clay pigeon shooting competition set the tone for the weekend and was followed by a winter walk in the shadow of the Cairngorm ski resort. The traditional 'Jocks' dinner' and all its festivity was a fitting end to the weekend and calendar year, allowing the Company to rest over the break before our LFTT shoot at the end of January.



*LCpl Burnage showing how it's done during the clay pigeon shooting competition.*

The LFTT shoot at Barry Buddon allowed the Company to build on the previous marksmanship training on the LMG before carrying out day and night defence shoots. A very successful weekend was the result, not only due to the slick execution and support from the enablers but for many Jocks, it provided a good step up into previously uncharted shooting territory.

A Company has also excelled in numerous competitions, picking up silverware in and outwith the Battalion. February saw the Companies come together for the annual Battalion shooting competition. Strong performances from A Company's select team amounted to winning not only the overall competition but Lt Hand was the best overall shot. The quality of shooting within the Company also sets us in good stead for the 51X Operational Shooting Competition in April. The success has also translated onto the ski slopes as four of our Company represented the Battalion by competing in EX SNOW LION 18, the tri-service alpine racing championship in Aviemore. Under the leadership of Sgt McNiven, the team picked up silverware with strong individual performances from all.



*A Company shooting team were awarded overall best Company and best shot prizes.*

We continue to develop our individuals and we welcome our two newly qualified drill instructors back to the Company, CSgt Knowles and Sgt McNiven, in addition to Cpl Smith who adds a SAA qualification to his repertoire. Ptes O'Rourke and Crawford have both achieved a well deserved pass on their JNCO Cadre and have been providing current insight for other soldiers who will attend the course in the future. Currently still on SCBC, we wish every luck to LCpl Henderson down at Brecon.

We have experienced turnover of key positions across all three Platoons as we bid farewell to a number of our soldiers. WO2 Bustard leaves the Army Reserves as a stalwart of 7 SCOTS having served over 37 years. CSgt Twine (CQMS) has switched with previously HQ Company's CQMS, CSgt MacGregor, as he relocates closer to his home. Sgt Barr (PSI Aberdeen) leaves the Army and is replaced by CSgt MacDonald, and CSgt McKenzie takes over as Platoon Sergeant of Kirkcaldy whilst CSgt Knowles assumes the vacancy of CQMS (Res). Finally, we welcome Captain Rehman to A Company as he takes over the post of Company Second-in-Command. Looking forward into the new training year, the Company looks to continue to develop its Support Weapons capability on EX LION RISING in lieu of cancelled training due to serious winter weather in March! A Company is also set to embark on three FTXs across May and June with the focus on developing our newly course qualified leaders and aspiring Jocks. This will be an invaluable training period in preparation for the Brigade level ATD in September, EX RAMPANT LION.



# HMS MONTROSE

By Lieutenant Commander Hugo Floyer

Since we last sent news, the ship has progressed from a refit mindset to a war fighting stance. In November 2017, to mark the occasion of completing the 10 week post-refit trials period, the Ship's Company paraded in front of the Ship at 16 Wharf HMNB Devonport. In attendance was the Duke of Montrose as the guest of honour, as well as dignitaries from the Angus area. The tradition behind the dedication is to officially welcome a Ship back into the fleet and includes a blessing from a naval Chaplain (known as the Bish in naval parlance). We were honoured to have the Chaplain of the Fleet perform this deed. A dinner was held onboard in the evening, and to mark the occasion a Quaich was presented to the Commanding Officer, Cdr Conor O'Neill, by Councillor Ronnie Proctor, the Provost of Angus.

In February the ship sailed for a period of Ship's Operational Capability Assurance. Stripped of jargon, this is a test of the ship's sensors and weapons on a NATO range in and around the fjords of Stavanger in Norway. Not missing an opportunity, the ship used the Army AT stores at Bicester to acquire cold weather adventurous training equipment, even persuading some Royal Marine Mountain Leaders to come out for the week to teach skiing, hiking in the snow and, strangely, curling. The ship managed to land 16 people a day from the ship's company of 190 to try out the Nordic (and Scottish!) sports.

Never wanting to shy out of the lime light, late February saw the ship hosting the comedian Rhod Gilbert in his filming of an episode of his work experience programme. First shown on the 12 April on BBC Wales (later on BBC 2 and available on iPlayer now!), the ship is extensively shown whilst hosting 30 trainees from the Principal Warfare Officer, Anti submarine Warfare Director and Aircraft Controller courses who were onboard for final assessment. To say the ship was full would be an understatement, and with some adverse weather it was somewhat of a testing time for the students.

The cramped conditions and long days nicely segued into the planned 6 week Basic Operational Sea Training (BOST). As I type, the ship has just finished an F7, which is a Flag Officer Sea Training staff code for and exercise to test the response to the Ship running aground or having a collision, causing massive flooding which if not stopped will lead to its sinking. Yesterday saw us undertake a DCX 1.2, which means an air defensive exercise fighting an external battle whilst overcoming internal damage. So, having successfully bunged up all the holes from our pretend collision, tomorrow we will be fit for action again to sail for a Thursday war, which will see us commanding a task group made up of Royal Navy vessels, the USS Ross, USNS William McLean and the Danish ship HDMS Absalon. To finish the week off, there is a full disaster relief operation planned for Friday, which recruits 100 actors and training staff representing survivors of hurricane Dawn in the make-believe country of Brownia. The crew will go ashore in strength to save lives and relieve suffering, no doubt learning useful lessons along the way. But with just one more week to go of this very busy period, all are looking forward to a long weekend before gearing up for further training.

Looking forward, over the next 6 months the ship will sail post-BOST for the Minches and the areas off Cape Wrath for the international, UK led Joint Warrior exercise. This will be followed by a 4 week maintenance package, a week's shake down, and then deployment to the Baltic, travelling to Belgium, Finland, Stockholm, and back to Montrose for the first time since 2014. As the ship is now entering a steady period of sustained readiness for operations, it is hoped that we can get some of the soldiers and affiliates onto the ship when the opportunity arises. Keeping OPSEC in mind, please keep your eyes peeled for a last minute invite to the ship for some good old fashioned naval hospitality.



*Gunnery practice on the NATO range in and around the fjords of Stavanger.*



*The Ship's Company parade at Her Majesty's Naval Base Devonport to welcome HMS Montrose back into the Fleet.*

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# The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada

As mentioned in our last article, the Battalion was busy adapting to new operational tasks and a domestic operational deployment in the Spring of 2017.

As it is often said, events often take over best laid plans and Mother Nature decided to show that she can surprise us at any time. In the early days of May 2017, many regions of southwest Montreal were threatened by spring floods. After being ordered to be on high readiness, our unit performed our annual Church Parade in our combat uniform for the first time in memory.

On this occasion we proceeded with the change of Regimental Sergeant Major between Chief Warrant Officer Mario Carmosino who passed the RSM cane to Chief Warrant Officer Stephen Campbell, after four years as RSM. The parade also witnessed the change of Pipe Major. Master Warrant Officer Cameron Stevens, who served in this position for seventeen years, passed the responsibilities of this highly sought position to Master Warrant Officer Dan Smith. MWO Stevens is the longest serving Pipe Major in the history of the Regiment. We also said farewell to Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Charles McCabe who unselfishly served the battalion as Honorary Lieutenant Colonel for six years. He will continue to serve as a member of our Advisory Board, as he has done for more than two decades. His successor is Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Bruce Bolton. Lieutenant Colonel Bolton has served with the Regiment successively as Pipe Major, RSM, and Commanding Officer (twice) and is still actively involved in supporting various Regimental projects and activities over nearly half a century. It is a privilege to have him representing The Black Watch and be able to count on his knowledge and experience. Recently Bruce was named a "Chevalier" in France's Legion d'Honneur. This high distinction is a recognition of the more than 40 years that the Macdonald Stewart Foundation has been involved in various projects in France where Bruce was a key player.

It was a solemn event and it was quite impressive to see the parade conducted with the soldiers personal and deployment equipment in the background, ready to leave the Armoury as soon as the parade was dismissed to go out and help their fellow citizens.

Fall brought us yet another significant change in our unit. Our Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas MacKay has been selected and promoted to the rank of Colonel to become the Director of the Army Reserves at Canadian Army Headquarters in Ottawa making him the senior serving Black Watch officer in the Canadian Armed Forces. We wish him the best of luck in what will undoubtedly be a challenging job. The new Commanding Officer has been filled by Lieutenant Colonel Bruno Plourde, former CO of the unit, who had just returned from a deployment in Africa with the United Nations and accepted a second tour of command in our unit. The change of command parade was conducted on September 9th and was presided over by Commander 34 Canadian Brigade Group, Colonel Christian Mercier.

Soon after, the unit got back to their normal tasks and our operational training. Troops, freshly back from their career or specialist courses joined the rest of the unit for yet another training cycle that started with a range exercise completed by validations of individual operational tasks standards. The unit has been entrusted, in addition to our normal infantry contribution and support to our Divisional Influence Activities Company, to train and deploy the Brigade Battlegroup Reconnaissance Platoon. As the training cycle progressed I was very pleased to see our Highland soldiers being successful in the accomplishment of these diverse and demanding tasks.

In late November, a delegation of officers of the Regiment, lead by our Honorary Colonel, Daniel O'Connor, traveled to Philadelphia to attend the 1-111th Infantry Battalion Annual Mess Dinner. It was a momentous occasion as our Honorary Colonel was the Guest of Honour of the event. He highlighted the historical relationship between The Black Watch of Scotland, now perpetuated by their Canadian counterpart and the Franklin Associators that started in 1763 during the French and Indian War. It was a great opportunity to celebrate a special relationship and keep it alive. Earlier in November at our Annual Officers' Reunion Dinner, the former CO of 1-111th Infantry Battalion and currently Commander of 56 Stryker Brigade Combat Team was our Guest of Honour.

The operational demands did not stop the unit from remembering and caring for its own. The Black Watch led the Remembrance Day parade in Montreal while supporting many other parades either with troops or Pipes & Drums. During the holiday season many members of the unit and the Pipes & Drums joined our Association Branch of Montreal to visit our veterans at Ste Anne-de-Bellevue Veterans Hospital. Bringing with them gifts and smiles, they visited our veterans and the Pipes & Drums performed a holiday concert for the pleasure of all.

At the time of submission of this article, every available member of the Battalion is deployed with our Brigade battlegroup for its operational validation exercise. True to their forefathers that served wearing the red hackle, we are all convinced that their performance will be second to none.



*111th Dinner left to right Capt Thibault RCH, Capt Serapins, Capt Maghakian, Capt Cooke, Col O'Connor and Chantale Menard, LCol Plourde, Capt Hickson, Lt Duma, 2Lt Smith and Cpl Matt.*



*Award of Legion d'Honneur (left to right) Hon Col Dan O'Connor, Okill Stuart, Hon LCol Bruce Bolton, LCol (Ret) Gordon Lusk, LCol Bruno Plourde as CO.*

**ARTEFACTS FROM  
THE BLACK WATCH OF CANADA COLLECTION  
RAM'S HEAD TABLE SNUFF MULL, c.1875**

*By Earl John Chapman*

Snuff is powdered tobacco that is inhaled through the nose. The practice of 'taking snuff' became common in Europe in the 1600s and was hugely popular throughout the 1700s. The ram was "almost certainly a former regimental mascot" whose faithful service would have been commemorated by preserving its head in this fashion. Snuff was well-liked for its aroma, taste and nicotine boost. It was also believed to ward off colds and "to be good for the relief of ear, nose and throat problems." The large ram's head table snuff mull shown here was originally presented to the Metropolitan Club of Montreal in December 1880 by its president, Joseph Hickson. It is not known how or when this mull was acquired by the Regiment, but it was created in 1872 by James Aitchison who operated a shop in Edinburgh, Scotland, which specialized in "Scottish Jewellery and Highland Ornaments." Its ornamental sterling silver snuff container, set into the top of the ram's head, features a large "smoky quartz" Cairngorm, a semi-precious stone found in Scotland's Cairngorm mountains. The two sterling silver horn tips are engraved with a thistle pattern. Two tiny silver utensils, a rake and spoon used for serving, hang from silver chains, as does a rabbit's foot pendant used by gentlemen to clean their moustaches. The word *mull* originates from a Scottish dialect word for *mill*, where the snuff would have

been ground to a powder or meal, much like pepper is ground today. While mulls come in a variety of shapes, large and small, the grandest snuff mulls of all – and the choice for a regimental officers' mess – were made from an entire ram's head and mounted on castors so they could roll down the dinner table. Three other similar mulls adorn the Officers' Mess of Canada's Black Watch. One of these was originally owned by Richard Bladworth Angus, a Scottish-Canadian financier, banker and philanthropist, and a generous friend of the Regiment, having contributed to the building of its Bleury Street Armoury in 1905. The mull was passed down to his son, D. Forbes Angus, who in turn presented it to the Officer's Mess in 1943. Another mull was presented to the Mess by The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) in 1911, the attached silver plaque reading, "to their Comrades of the 5th Royal Highlanders of Canada," the name by which the Black Watch of Canada was known between 1906 and 1930. The fourth mull, considered by some to be the "best" in the Mess (i.e. "the biggest and hairiest"), once belonged to George Stephen, 1st Baron Mount Stephen, a prominent Scottish-Canadian businessman – the first Canadian to be elevated to the peerage of the United Kingdom – and the financial genius behind the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It was later acquired by his nephew, Frank S. Meighan, a former battalion commander in the Regiment. When Meighan transferred to the Canadian Grenadier Guards in 1910, he took the mull with him and it "languished there for many years." It was presented to the Regiment in 1953 by the officers of the Canadian Grenadier Guards.



*Ram's Head Table Snuff Mull (Image Credit: Black Watch of Canada Museum and Archives, photo by Peter Ferst).*



# 204 (Tyneside Scottish) Battery

204 (Tyneside Scottish) Battery Royal Artillery, continue to fly the flag and Red Hackle. It has been a very busy and exciting period with members of the Battery deploying to many different locations around the globe.

This year saw the first female Battery Sergeant Major (BSM) appointed in 101 Regiment RA, when WO2 (BSM) Dianne Hillary was appointed BSM of the Tyneside Scottish Battery.

The Annual Training Camp, Ex Southern Magpie was a two week exercise which culminated in live firing of the Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) which saw 48 live rockets fired down range. The exercise was held on Salisbury Plain Training Area and commenced on the 16th September; this was the Regimental main effort and 36 members of the Battery attended.

Other major exercises in the training year included an MLRS detachment deploying to White Sands Missile Range in the USA to live fire Full Bore GMLRS rockets. In February and March 2018 two members of the Battery deployed with 19 Regiment RA on Ex Dynamic Front, a Brigade level artillery exercise held at Grafenwohr training area in Germany.

The Battery continues to conduct joint training weekends throughout the year with other sub units to practice MLRS deployments and operating skills in a hostile environment. In addition to military training, six members of the Battery attended Ex Northern Magpie, an arduous ski training exercise. The one week exercise qualified students to Ski Foundation Level 1 and 2. The Exercise was held in northern France in January 2018 and SSgt Hunter attended as a lead instructor. In November 2017, four members of the Battery deployed with 269 (West Riding) Battery on Ex Jungle Monkey an Adventure Training Exercise in the mountains of Borneo.

In March eighteen students from the Battery, plus SSgt Hunter as an instructor, deployed to Austria on Ex Tartan Finn a Ski Foundation level course. The Battery Commander, Major Barry Frost presided over an all ranks "Somme" Dinner night which was held on the 1st of July 2017, with some 90 people attending. It was an excellent evening and special thanks are due to WO2 (BSM) Sharp and his committee who organised the event. A presentation was given during the dinner about the Battle of the Somme and a moments silence was observed. The evening was rounded off with a magnificent display from the Pipes and Drums of the Tyneside Scottish Association.

On Remembrance Sunday, the Battery under command of Major Barry Frost paraded thirty six all ranks, at the Civic Centre in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, to mark the Festival of Remembrance. After the parade the Battery Officers and Warrant Officers returned to Kingston Park to entertain our guests, the bars being 'alive' to the sound of animated chatter with a fair number of local 'old and bold' soldiers. Approximately 100 personnel came to the Army Reserve Centre, including Royal Artillery Association members from the Tyneside Scottish and Tynemouth Volunteer Artillery Branches. The Pipes and Drums, returned to Kingston Park Centre to play for assembled guests.

We held an all Ranks' Christmas Party on 11 December at the Kingston Park Reserve Centre. About 60 personnel enjoyed the evening which was extremely well organised by Sgt Moore. The social calendar for this year was rounded off with a Battery Burns' Night held in January which was attended by 64 members of the Battery, the Association and their guests.



*WO2 Sharp hands over to WO2 Diane Hillary the first female BSM in 101 Regt RA.*



*Battery members carry out Counter Improvised Explosive Device Training.*



*Live firing Multi Launch Rocket System (MRLS) during Ex Southern Magpie.*



# Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force

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

The Battalion is now actively preparing for the new Training Year. In particular the new challenge of a Two Week Annual Camp faces the Cadets and Adult Volunteers. This will be the first two week Camp for the Battalion in over 20 years and for the majority of the Battalion, this will be a new experience. Wathgill Training Camp in Catterick is this year's venue. After a successful recce, various Training Programmes and EASPs are being pulled together to provide challenges for all Cadets training in the various Star Levels. Our Green Training will be taking place on the Catterick Training Area and at the excellent Range complex in Wathgill. We have also negotiated an exciting Adventure Training package with "Caves and Canyons" who are based in Ingleton, North Yorkshire.

We are continuing in our mission to encourage more young people to join the Army Cadet Force. In particular we continue to record a drop in Cadet Numbers particularly from the Fife Area. To combat this we have recently set up a Battalion Recruitment Team who are using our continued presence at public events to promote the Army Cadet Force and the benefits it can give to young people. We have been very successful in recruiting new Adult Volunteers who

are currently going through their Induction Training. However we are still finding it difficult to recruit from the Perthshire area. The Recruitment Team are currently looking at potential solutions.

## NETWORK AWARDS

AUO Jacob Black and Cdt CSM Emma Gove from Dunfermline Detachment supported the CVQO Award at a Scottish Parliamentary Reception in January. The CVQO Awards provide qualifications for both Cadets and Adult Volunteers throughout all the MOD Cadet Forces. These are linked to the individual's training achievements and provide nationally recognised Awards.

## MASTER CADET COURSE

Cadet SSgt AJ McGregor from Blairgowrie and Cadet SSgt Low from Cupar recently took up the challenge of the Master Cadet Course at Frimley Park, Surrey. The Master Cadet is the highest Training Award achieved by Army Cadets. It can be both physically and mentally demanding involving various challenges in both fieldcraft and navigation. This is open to Cadets over 16 years old and on successful completion of a Senior Cadet Instructors Course.

## MILITARY BAND

The Band arranged two excellent events in November and December. A Festival of Remembrance at Dunfermline Abbey supported by the Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland brought in a full house with a selection of both modern and classical music. The event was live on Facebook and involved many positive comments from viewers around the world. A Christmas Carol Concert in Kinross Parish Church also proved to be very popular with the local community.

A Band Concentration will be going ahead at Redford Barracks at the end of March supported by other Cadet Force Bands from throughout the UK including the RAF and Sea Cadets. A Beating Retreat performance will be taking place on the Inch, Perth during the evening of Friday 6th April with a Reception in the Black Watch Museum.



*Cadet Staff Sergeant McGregor (2nd right) and Staff Sergeant Low (far right) pictured at Frimley Park whilst undertaking their Master Cadet Course.*





*Colonel Hubbuck gives a reading at the Battalion Festival of Remembrance at Dunfermline Abbey.*



*Adult Under Officer Black and Cadet CSM Gove discuss the CVQO Awards with Shirley-Anne Somerville, Scottish Minister for Education.*

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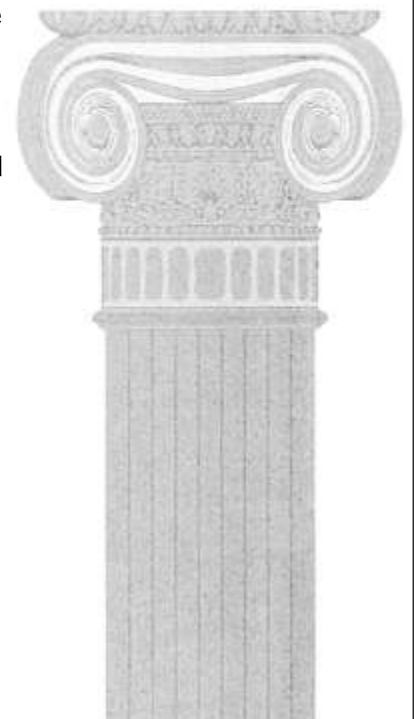
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## ANGUS BRANCH

President Elect:	Major Peter Burnett
Vice President Elect:	Lieutenant Colonel Matt Sheldrick
Chairman:	Major Ronnie Proctor MBE
Vice Chairman:	Mr Peter Tindal
Secretary:	Mr Steve Reid
Treasurer:	Mr Jim Penny

We have had three changes to our Orbat since the last edition of these notes as Lieutenant Colonel Fred Beattie, Major David McMicking and Mr Tom McCluskey intimated that they wished to stand down as Office Bearers but to remain as active members of the Branch. Each one of them has given great service to the Branch over a number of years and we are all extremely grateful for their hard work and support. Although Tom McCluskey has handed over the reins of Branch Secretary he and his wife Anne continue to manage the Branch Facebook page which they set up a number of years ago. This continues to be a popular method of communication within and out with the Branch membership.

The normal autumn and winter activities have come and gone with the El Alamein Dinner being well attended with Tam McCluskey giving a short talk on the Battle of Passchendaele in keeping with the Great War centenary, however next year we will revert back to talking about the Battle of El Alamein. Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Kevin Stacey currently Regimental Sergeant Major of The Black Watch Battalion attended the dinner as Guest of Honour and gave a very interesting talk on the Battalion's current programme and their future deployment to Iraq. He passed around the latest equipment and body armour on issue to the serving soldiers today and this was of great interest to all present. We congratulate Regimental Sergeant

Major Stacey on being selected for commissioning and hope that he will have a fulfilling and interesting future career.

The Christmas Buffet at the December Branch meeting continues being as popular as ever and was well attended. We would like to thank Doug Cunningham for his kind donation of steak and gravy pies. The distribution of the Christmas Hampers to Senior Branch members again ran smoothly, like a well-oiled machine under the guidance of John and Jeanette Glen. Peter Tindal our Vice Chairman has volunteered to take on this onerous but most rewarding task at the end of this year to give John and Jeanette a break and has already commenced planning his strategy for 2018!

At this year's Burns Supper our guests of honour were Major Brian Cooper and his wife Yvonne. Although well attended and enjoyed by all, it was fraught with incident prior to the event. Pipe Major Peter Snaddon our Branch Piper and resident reciter of Holy Willie's Prayer and Tam O' Shanter had to call off due to a close family bereavement some two weeks prior to event. Pipe Major Alistair Duthie very kindly stepped into the breach and Vice Chairman Peter Tindal picked up the reins on reciting Tam O' Shanter only to be struck down by the flu virus which was going around at the time. Luckily the Perth Branch Chairman Captain Alan McEwen came to the rescue with a day's notice and gave an excellent rendition of the epic poem complete with Bonnet and props much to the great appreciation of the audience. Bob Mitchell recited the Selkirk Grace and the Ode to a Mouse whilst Eric Summers gave an excellent and novel account of Burns' life in his Immortal Memory.

It was great to see Billy Whytock back in full flow with his impeccable rendition of The Soldier's Return after being absent for a couple of years due to health issues. Ewan Smith our youngest member who is currently serving with The Black Watch Battalion acted as Posey Nancy and carried in the Haggis. Ronnie Proctor then addressed the Haggis and chaired the evening with humour and aplomb. Gordon Marshal has again produced a vintage Atholl Brose which was consumed with great gusto with not a drop left at the end of the night. Musical entertainment was again produced by the Jim Brown Quartet supported by Billy Whytock on the "Mouthie" and a song by Mike Mooney. Lastly our President Fred Beattie gave a rousing vote of thanks to all who had taken part in the evening.

Some four years ago during the Branch's commitment to highlight the Great War to schools and organisations within Angus, the Branch Chairman along with Tam McCluskey and Dr Fraser Brown came across a large oil painting titled "Backs to The Wall" in the Meffan Institute and Museum in Forfar. This was the last major work carried out by Robert A Gibb RSA. Gibb was a prolific Victorian and early twentieth century military painter whose well known works include: Comrades, Forward 42nd and The Thin Red Line.

With the centenary of the final German Spring Offensive, Branch member, Gordon Marshall asked if the Branch Chairman could influence the showing of the "Backs to the Wall" painting to commemorate the heroic stand made by the British Forces and their allies against the Kaiser's last throw of the dice. Not only has the painting been put back on display but the Chairman in his role as Provost of Angus managed to contact surviving members of the Webster family who originally donated the painting in 1932 to Arbroath Library (and Comrades to The Black Watch Museum in the late 1970s). He invited them to attend a presentation which, he along with Tom McCluskey, Fraser Brown and the Collections Officer from Angus Cultural services gave, in the Arbroath Library where the painting was first hung. The event was well attended by Branch members, pupils from the local secondary schools, teachers and members of the public. A copy of Field Marshal Haig's handwritten order of the day was also on display courtesy of Mr Marshall.

Veterans' Breakfasts which take place in the RBLs Forfar Clubrooms every third Saturday of each month are well attended by members of the Branch who enjoy meeting up with veterans from other services. The Branch has also welcomed the local Forces Hearing Project Officer to monthly meetings whose advice to Branch members has been invaluable.

The Branch is currently preparing for the Annual ANZAC Day parade and commemoration service in Arbroath and John Glen is to represent The Black Watch Association as Standard Bearer in Arras on the 8th of April. Our AGM is to take place on Easter Monday at RBLs



Arbroath where we look forward to confirming the appointment of our new President and Vice President.

## DUNDEE BRANCH

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



*Some of the top table guests at the El Alamein Dinner.*



*"Backs to The Wall" from left to right Mr Francis Webster, Mrs Sheila Ferguson-Smith, Major Ronnie Proctor and Mr Tom McCluskey.*



*RSM Stacey showing his piping skills at the El Alamein Dinner.*

The Dundee Branch continues to thrive albeit that the membership numbers are slightly down on this time last year. Members are asked to try and get at least one new member each this year.

On the 7th October 2017 some Branch members with their wives and partners attended the Perth Branch Croix de Guerre Dinner in the Salutation Hotel, Perth and on the 14th October a good number of members attended the Angus Branch, El Alamein Dinner in the British Legion Club, Forfar.

The 20th October saw Roland Rose, Willie Barr, Colin Gray and Alan McEwen from the Perth Branch attend a Liverpool Scottish Dinner Night in Liverpool and hosted by a local young lad called Mick Molyneux. We had a great time as you would expect when Mick is looking after you.

The 4th November saw the start of the Remembrance season with the Laying of Crosses service at the St Mary's Church, Dundee with many Branch members in attendance. That same night, there was more Branch participation at the Festival of Remembrance in the Caird Hall, Dundee.

8th November was our designated Poppy Selling day with Jimmy Killorn, James Crawford and Colin Gray all doing their bit in the City centre. On 9th November a Remembrance Service was held at Caird Park Stadium, Dundee to remember those men from the Mains Parish who served in The Black Watch and who paid the ultimate sacrifice during the First World War. The Branch were also very well represented at the Remembrance Services at Balhousie Castle and Dundee City Square on the 10th and 11th November respectively.

On 12th November the Dundee Branch turned out in great numbers for our annual Remembrance Service at Powrie Brae and on the same day we had representation at the Service on The Law.

Along with the other Scottish Branch Standard Bearers on 18th November Chris Thomas carried the Branch Standard onto the pitch at Dens Park, Dundee as part of Dundee FC's support to the Armed Services campaign.

After the festive season, the first function of the year was the Edinburgh, Lothians' and Borders' Branch, annual Ceilidh which was held in the Ex-Servicemen's Club, Leith on 13th January. Once again the Branch was well represented at this function.

On 19th January, the Dundee Branch held its annual Red Hackle Dinner in the Black Watch Club. We were honoured to have as guests that night, Lt Col Matt Sheldrick (CO 7 SCOTS), Lord Provost Ian Borthwick and Provost of Angus Major (Retd) Ronnie Proctor. The Dundee Branch as expected was very well represented by its own members as were the Branches of Angus, Edinburgh, Fife and Perth. It was a great pleasure to see, yet again, our great Liverpool friends and Honorary members in the shape of Mick Molyneux, Bobby Lynch, Hughie Campbell and Jimmy McVie who made the trip up from Liverpool.

Matt Sheldrick, gave an excellent talk on the current role of 7 SCOTS and of Reservists in general. A very informative and amusing talk albeit the Branch President took most of the flak, with Matt recounting his early memories in 1BW.

After the Dinner we were regally entertained by Jock Menzies, Ally Alcorn and Billy Whytock. Their songs and music rounded off a great night. I would also like to thank Mick Molyneux and Ray Lawson for their renditions of Sweet Sixteen and the Green Green Grass of Home although let's hope they don't repeat it next year. A vote of thanks goes to our own Branch Chairman, Willie Barr who organised the evening as well as preparing and cooking the meal, organising the serving staff and the behind the scene staff without whom the evening would not have been the undoubted success it was.

27th January saw various Branch members attend the Angus Branch Burns Supper in the British Legion, Forfar and again at the Perth Branch Burns Supper in the Salutation Hotel on 10th February. Another two fantastic nights of poetry, food, banter and sairheids the next day. We as an Association are truly blessed that we have so many talented individuals in our ranks. Alan McEwen, Billy Whytock, Jock Menzies, Jock Gilfillan, Davy Stacey and Ally Alcorn to name but a few.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on 24th February with all current Office Bearers being re-elected. This meeting was followed by a Families Function, which attracted many families and friends and was a

roaring success. Ally Alcorn provided his usual high standard of entertainment and Willie Barr served up a great buffet in the form of a rather hot curry, sausage rolls and hot dogs. A fun afternoon was had by all but especially the bairns who ensured the floor got the best polish of its life.

A huge vote of thanks to our Committee members who unselfishly gave their time and effort in support of the Branch, Willie Barr as Chairman and Branch Standard Bearer, Colin Adam as Secretary, Len Mitchell as Treasurer, Harry Ellis as Hospital Visitor, Mike Lindsay as Auditor and Brian Kelly as the monthly meeting Raffle Coordinator. Another note of thanks to Chris Thomas who volunteered (at least it used to be called that) in acting as an additional and our future Standard Bearer.

**Colin Gray**



*Afternoon drinks before the Liverpool Dinner Night.*

### **EDINBURGH, LOTHIAN'S AND BORDERS' BRANCH**

President:	Lieutenant Colonel Julian McElhinney
Chairman:	Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies
Secretary:	Major Alex Stewart BEM
Treasurer:	Captain Ramsay Macdonald
Events Coordinator:	Mr Rory McIntyre

The Edinburgh Lothians' and Borders' Branch and guests gathered in the Ex Servicemen's Club Leith on Saturday 13 January 2018 to celebrate Red Hackle Day. Pipe Majors Alistair Duthie and Ross McNaughton rolled back the years by playing all the traditional regimental tunes followed by some great individual medleys. After some traditional Scottish Fayre, Ally Alcorn treated the guests to a full evening's worth of entertainment. Two surprise cameo acts on the night were performed by Tam Dick singing songs from the 60's and 70's and Billy Whytock on the "moothie" playing a mixture of Scottish and American Folk tunes.

The Scottish American War Memorial in West Princes Street Gardens was erected in 1927 and funded by Americans of Scottish descent who wished to recognise the bravery and sacrifice of Scottish Soldiers during the Great War. Members have been invited to represent The Black Watch at a memorial service which will take place on 29 May 2018. The invitation is open to all Branches and anyone wishing to attend should contact our Branch Secretary Alex Stewart, for further details.

Looking forward to other events: Armed Forces Day will take place on 30 June 2018. The parade will take place on the Royal Mile and will be followed by a reception hosted by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh. A memorial service to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the Korean War will take place at the Scottish Korean War Memorial Bathgate on 27 July 2018.

The 10th of January 2018 marked the fourth anniversary of the reforming of this Branch of the Association. The support and comradeship provided by members of all Branches is very much appreciated. Our annual calendar of events has now hopefully settled into a standard routine and where possible we have deconflicted from other Branch activities. In outline our two main events of the year are, Red Hackle Night in early January and the Al Basrah Dinner which will be held in late April or early May. Branch meetings take place in the Scots Guards Club Haymarket and we meet regularly in March, June, September and December. Anyone wishing to join the Branch is more than welcome to do so and in the first instance should contact one of the committee members or make contact through one of the members of the Branch. Serving or retired

members of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland are reminded that they are also welcome to join.

**J A Menzies**



*It all started at the Infantry Junior Leaders Battalion Oswestry, Tam Dick, Jock Menzies and Ramsay MacDonald.*



*Pipe Major Ross McNaughton entertains on Red Hackle Night.*



*Two former military band members, Bryan Elliott and Charles Fraser.*

### **FIFE BRANCH**

It was only a matter of weeks after our Ladies Alma Lunch before we hit the road on our visiting tours. The first being Perth and the Croix de Guerre Dinner in the Salutation Hotel. A contingent from the Branch attended the dinner as support to our Regimental family and friends. It was now into November and again we set off for Perth and Balhousie Castle with the Branch Standard for the annual Remembrance Service. From there we went to our local towns and villages to show the Hackle at various parades and Memorials. December was fairly quiet with only a well attended Branch Meeting during that month. Red Hackle Day was a wake up call after the festive period and members met in the Rothes Halls Glenrothes for a hearty breakfast and Gunfire, the latter being supplied by David Thomson. Getting the visas looked out we were off again this time to join our friends in Dundee for their Annual Soup and Steak Pie Dinner supplied by our trusty Willie Barr. Thank you Dundee. Even with a busy start to the month some members managed to get over the water to Edinburgh to



join their Branch Ceilidh. No time to rest we are now heading towards February and again a trip to Perth for the Burns Supper and as always, the entertainment was first class. It's back to the Kingdom and our annual Games night with the resident TA Artillery Battery in Hunter Street and I am pleased to report we retained the trophy for another year; "weel done Cutty Sark (or Fife)". No time to rest on our laurels though, because the month of March was looming fast and that meant planning the Rhine Crossing Dinner. On Friday the 23rd exactly 73 years after the famous crossing we sat down to dine. Major Brian Cooper was our main guest and in support were Corporals Muir and Gonzales along with Private Lindsay. It was good to see them break bread with us but I should mention Corporal Muir had been with us before; he wrote and presented a Pipe Tune to honour the occasion. The tune being 7th Battalion The Black Watch Crossing the Rhine. Brian Cooper gave a short update on what the Battalion and the Rear Party were up to and pointed out that history in a way had repeated itself as it was the 23rd of March 2003 that the Battalion crossed the Iraqi border. I have to say his stories of that night went down a treat and within minutes had everyone in stitches, Other guests came from Dundee, Aberdeen, the Borders, England and East Kilbride and a couple of more way out places, like Cowdenbeath. I should also mention that Susan Truscott from the Cadet Battalion and some Adult Instructors joined us for their first time and by all accounts can't wait

until the next one. The entertainment for the night was second to none. Pipey Snaddon not only calling us to dine but giving us a set of his choice during the evening. Jock Gilfillan also entertained us with poetry and songs. I am very grateful to Branch members who turn out for funerals in all weathers.

**Rob Scott**



*Fife Branch Red Hackle day 2018.*

***Faces from the Rhine Crossing Dinner***





## HIGHLAND BRANCH

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

The Highland Branch continues to meet regularly although due to the geographical location it will never be possible for all members to attend meetings and functions, especially now as many of our serving members are deployed.

We held a small but enjoyable Christmas function in the Community Centre. The Secretary laid on a buffet and organised a raffle and the QM, Gary Wallace seemed to spend most of the evening collecting raffle prizes. This event culminated in a fleet of taxis delivering a large number of people back to the RSM's house until the small hours.

Throughout the year members (mostly Gordon Kennedy and Alec Beattie) have travelled far and wide attending functions at other Branches, the most challenging being The Dundee Dinner in January. It was then on to Perth for the Burns night which once again was superbly organised by Ally Alcorn. Unfortunately, due to deployment and work we have had to postpone our own Aberfeldy Dinner in May this year. A new date is being discussed and it is hoped the event will take place later in the year when the Battalion deployment ends.

From our serving members the QM and QM (T) are due to move on later in the year on postings. Congratulations to our President Kevin Stacey on his forthcoming Commission and to Eddie Nichol on his promotion to Warrant Officer Class 2.

The Branch continues to hold its regular monthly meetings in The Community Centre, Wimberley Way, Inverness on the second Friday of the month commencing at 18.30 hours. New members are always welcome.

**Joe Barbour**



*Donald Etherington at the National Memorial Arboretum.*

## LONDON BRANCH

President: Major General AL Watson CB  
Chairman: Major AAL Watson LVO  
Vice Chairman: Lieutenant Colonel TA Coles MBE  
Secretary: Lieutenant Colonel M Smith MBE

The year end brings a flurry of activity within the London Branch as the capital readies itself for the Remembrance events that receive worldwide attention and media coverage. We focus on the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on the Thursday before and the actual Remembrance Sunday Service on Whitehall which is followed by the Royal British Legion's organised march that passes the Cenotaph. This includes numerous Regimental Associations, emergency services and other organisations wishing to pay tribute to the fallen.

On the social side we have our flagship event of the Branch Annual Dinner held at the Victory Services Club near Marble Arch. In addition, this year smaller ceremonies to remember former veterans have been conducted in and around London and 'the South'.

## The Field Of Remembrance Westminster

Each November the Royal British Legion establishes a Field of Remembrance in the grounds of Westminster Abbey. The field is a sea of remembrance crosses with scarlet poppies – the symbol of remembrance and a tribute to the memory of ex-Service men and women. This year, on Thursday 9th November, His Royal Highness Prince Henry of Wales opened the 89th Field of Remembrance.

The representatives of the Regimental Association this year included our regular worker, Joe Hubble, with Arthur Barty in support and as 'understudy' for the setting up of The Black Watch and The Tyneside Scottish plots. On each occasion an officer is nominated to stand in front of the plots in order to speak with the member of the Royal family, if required. While the Chairman of the London Branch normally guards the Black Watch plot it was thought fitting that Joe Hubble should take centre stage. Prince Harry took the opportunity to thank Joe for his dedication to the task.



*HRH Prince Harry with Joe Hubble and Arthur Barty at the Field of Remembrance.*

## The Nation Remembers at The Cenotaph

At the form up point on Horse Guards Parade there is a great atmosphere as all the veterans from other Regiments, Arms and Services meet up and enjoy the camaraderie that prevails. In 2017, thanks to the commitment of the Branch Members and Kevin Murphy representing the Scottish Branches, we increased our marching numbers on the Cenotaph parade. This participation is most welcome as it puts the Red Hackle firmly in the public eye and has become a regular feature of the television coverage of the event. It was good to hear the commentators making reference to Joe Hubble as he was being pushed in a wheel chair (for the first time) by his son. The November gathering is followed by a good, and much needed, hot lunch in The Albert on Victoria Street from where we can watch The London Scottish march past with Pipes and Drums leading the way to their own parade.



*Lieutenant Colonel Richard Cole-Mackintosh, Hugo Allen and Piers Bishop discuss the finer points of drill before the march past.*





*Rob Sergeant, Jim Sandilands and John Nicoll after the Cenotaph Parade.*



*Joe Hubble chats to the Royal Patron at the London Branch Drinks Reception in 2017.*



*Jimmy Russell, Brian Morris, Boris Reid, and Colonel Edward Cowan (Second-in-Command 1BW in Werl) chatting before the parade.*



*Joe Hubble at the Field of Remembrance.*

**Commemoration – Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Pugh Evans VC**

On 4 October there was a dedication ceremony to celebrate the valour of acting Lieutenant Colonel of The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders), Lewis Pugh Evans, who at the time was Commanding The Lincolnshire Regiment. On 4 October 1917, while leading his Battalion near Zonnebeke, Belgium, Evans won the Victoria Cross. A full article appears elsewhere in the magazine but the ceremony was attended by Pipe Major Chic Mackie, Jim Keating, David Thornycroft, Jonathan Carthew and Bill Finegan along with representatives of other regiments.

**Commemoration – Thomas Edwards VC**

He was 20 years old, and a private in the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders), during the Mahdist War when the following deed took place for which he was awarded the VC.

“On 13 March 1884 at the Battle of Tamai, Sudan, when both members of the crew of one of the Gatling guns had been killed, Private Edwards, after bayoneting two Arabs and himself receiving a wound from a spear, remained with the gun, defending it throughout the action.”

We are grateful to Jeremy Hulme who has run with the annual commemoration to Private Edwards VC over the last few years.



*Brigadier Wilson introduces Joe Hubble to Her Majesty The Queen.*

**Branch Annual Dinner**

A total of 83 members and guests sat down for the 98th Annual Dinner at the Victory Services Club on the 23 November 2017. Entertainment was provided by the Branch Pipes and Drums led by Pipe Major Chic Mackie.

**Joe Hubble**

At the London Branch’s AGM on 4 April we shall acknowledge the sad passing of one of our most loyal Members – Joe Hubble, who died peacefully in the Pilgrims Hospice, Canterbury just after Red Hackle Day 2018. He was well known within the Black Watch family and the British Army, The Tower of London, The Royal British Legion and scores of other places including the community at his home in Graveney, Kent. He was also recognized by people around the world. There is a full obituary elsewhere in this publication but we, the London Branch, salute our friend and thank him for all he has done for those who proudly wear the Red Hackle.

**Mike Smith**



*WO2 Hubble with Black Watch recruits at IJLB.*

## NEWCASTLE BRANCH

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

Our oldest member, Peter McAughey, aged 96, died on New Year's Eve. An obituary will be published in the November issue of this magazine.

The Branch has been kept busy since our last notes; in particular wreaths were laid at the grave of a WWI Black Watch soldier, on the Saturday and at the Eldon Square Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday.

November brought us to our Annual Dinner. Rather late this time round but the purpose was to commemorate the Battle of the Hook and the event fell on the 65th anniversary of the battle. The opportunity to recall the Battle of Passchendaele was also taken. We had been offered the use of the Royal Navy Shore establishment HMS Calliope, which provided magnificent views over the river. Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin was Guest of Honour and Lieutenant General Robin Brims also attended. General Brims was delighted to see Andy Lambert and was most impressed by the attendance of serving personnel from the Royal Regiment of Scotland, making up the top table. Corporal Kris Hart represented The Black Watch Battalion, whilst Colour Sergeant Neil Watson represented the Highlanders Battalion. The meal was outstanding, the venue superb and the event a great success. A commemorative booklet was distributed to guests, outlining the nature of the two battles being commemorated.

On Saint Andrew's day we supported the Tyneside Scottish Association at the Eldon Square Cenotaph, where a Service of Remembrance was conducted. Members of the Northumberland Fusiliers Association also supported this annual event.

Burns Night was celebrated in traditional style by the Tyneside Scottish Association and considerable support was given by both our Branch and the Fusiliers Association.

At the January meeting, the Secretary advised that he was no longer able to give the time necessary to carry out the duties of his post and said that he would stand down at the AGM in February. The AGM produced a new Secretary in Peter Dodds and I am sure that he will provide a safe pair of hands for the members. That said, the hand over will take a little time and these notes are part of the overlap. Who said clinker built?

March 17th and we stood once again in Eldon Square, this time alongside the Irish Brigade Association. The Tyneside Irish Brigade, at that time, part of the Northumberland Fusiliers, had achieved their objective on the 1st July 1916 although, lack of support led to the loss of the position later in the day. After a cold and seemingly long explanation of the events leading to the formation of the Brigade, a slow, stiff walk to the Irish Club and sustenance, brought relief to our frozen joints. We arrived just in time to see Scotland secure their victory in the Six Nations and then, it was the turn of Ireland and England to lock horns. Given it was St Patrick's day and we were in the Irish Club, you will easily appreciate the noise level. Victory and the Grand Slam achieved, despite the dubious work of the England No12, the noise reached

a new crescendo. I headed for the train home, with my brain being assaulted by the combined effect of the dark red beer and the noise trapped inside my head. It was an unsteady Malky who reached home and, thankfully, hung up his kit to sit with a dram, relaxed at last. A great day.

**Malcolm Dunn**

## PERTH BRANCH

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

The Perth Branch is very pleased to report that it remains active and continues to foster comradeship and our members have enjoyed each other's company at a number of remembrance, memorial, sporting and social events throughout this period.

### Charitable Activity

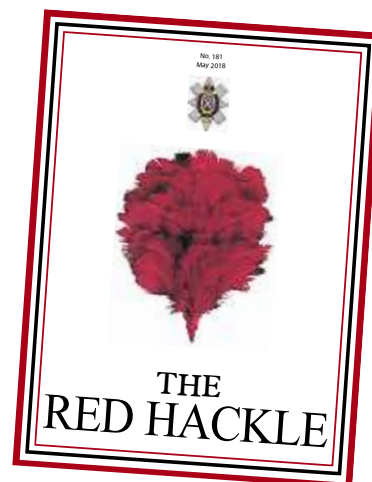
Greg MacGillivray was delighted to present a cheque for £500 to The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) Association. This money was raised by means of a raffle held during the Inter Branch Games Day in the Ex Servicemen's Club, Perth in September and the cheque was gratefully accepted on behalf of the Association by Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Roddy Riddell. The Branch would like to pass on their sincere thanks to all those who attended the Inter Branch Games Day for their kindness and generosity in raising this amazing sum of money.



*Mr Greg MacGillivray presented the cheque for £500 to the Association Vice Chairman in February 2018.*

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## Croix de Guerre Dinner 2017

The Branch held its annual Croix de Guerre Dinner in the Salutation Hotel, Perth on Saturday 7th October and was delighted to welcome Mrs Georgiana Osborne, President of The Black Watch Association as our principal guest.



*The Reverend John Duncan, Mrs Ina Murdoch and Captain James Osborne.*



*RSM Kevin Stacey, Jenny Davidson (RSM Stacey's aunt) and Mrs Diane Stacey.*



*Mrs Georgiana Osborne (President of the Association) and Colonel Alex Murdoch.*



*Major Colin Gray, Mr Willie Barr, Lieutenant Colonel Roland Rose and Mr Jo Barton.*



*Captain Alan McEwen and Mrs Christine Couser.*



*Rob Scott and young Cluggie Wood.*

As we look forward to the Croix de Guerre Dinner in 2018 we will mark the 100th Anniversary of the award. The Branch will hold a Croix de Guerre Dinner in the Salutation Hotel, Perth on Saturday

29th September. The Regimental Association and Perth Branch intend to mark this 100th Anniversary by laying on a unique and special occasion.

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### Burns Supper

The Branch held its Burns Supper in the Salutation Hotel, Perth on Saturday 10th February and were absolutely thrilled to see so many of its members being joined by so many of the 'great and the good' from our sister Branches across Scotland. Our principle guests were Dennis Melloy, Provost of Perth and Kinross and Mrs Libby Melloy.

The Branch, but Ally Alcorn in particular has worked tirelessly to make the annual Perth Branch Burns Supper, what is now seen as

the absolute 'not to be missed' party in The Black Watch Association social calendar, with his meticulous attention to detail, dogged determination, riotous banter and infectious humour. All those who entertained us on the night, recitalists, musicians (Guitars and Pipes) and singers alike, during the supper or afterwards in the bar, thoroughly deserve massive and heartfelt thanks. You are strongly encouraged to book early for our 2019 Burns Supper to avoid disappointment.



*Jenny Riddell and Provost Dennis Melloy at the Burns Supper.*



*The Fife team.*



*Billy Whytock and Arty Keith enjoying the evening.*



*A brace of Johnstons.*

### Branch Meetings

Monthly meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month (less the AGM which is held annually in March) in the Ex Servicemen's Club, Milne Street, Perth starting at 7.00pm. Our members would be thoroughly delighted to welcome you into the Branch so please do come along and join us.

**Alan McEwen**

### 1739 CLUB

The 1739 Club met in the Queens Hotel in Dundee on the last Saturday in November 2017 with 37 members sitting down. The group started to arrive during the afternoon, to be greeted by the news that the lift was out of order but an engineer had been sent for; thank heavens for small mercies. The average age being in the latter half of their 60s we were glad of the nice broad window sills at each level giving us a well earned rest. Returning to the bar area via the front desk we were informed that it was not going to be repaired during our time in the Hotel. This gave us a choice; we can either endure the long trek up and down stairs or maroon ourselves in the bar until nearer the time to get changed. George Wood who is now the Chief Administrator, then told me they had the tables all laid out wrongly and that his first hour was taken up putting things right.

The dinner itself was of the usual high standard and the drinks and port flowed freely. After the meal the entertainment was provided by Rob Scott, Jock Menzies, Alex Stewart as well as Johnnie Brown. The starting song was to help commemorate the 1914-18 War and

Jock Menzies sang The Road to Passchendaele which in itself set the tone for the evening. At the close of the evening I think all were in a jolly mood and the thoughts of the trek up those long stairs had gone from the mind. In the morning, as is our custom, we all met for breakfast and then said our goodbyes for another year. The list to join our Club is growing so hopefully the name of the Regiment and its customs will continue to flourish.

**R M Scott**



*The 1739 Club held a dinner at the Queen's Hotel in Dundee and 37 members attended the event.*





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Left to right: Siobhan Weller, Les Fryatt, Kenneth Kwogyenga - Charity beneficiaries

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