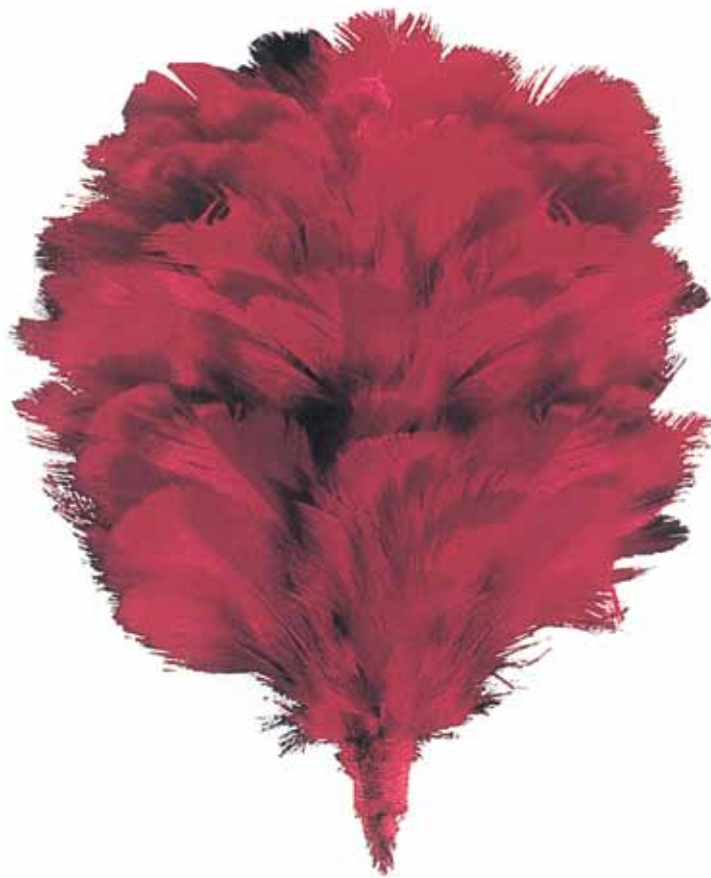


No. 102
November 2010



THE RED HACKLE

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HAVE YOUR SAY



No. 102

42nd



73rd

November 2010

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*



Private Sam Morgan receives his Afghanistan campaign medal during the visit of the Royal Colonel to Balhousie Castle on 1 June 2010.



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THE RED HACKLE



*The Chronicle of
The Black Watch
(Royal Highland Regiment)
its successor
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The Black Watch Association*

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No. 102**

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Editorial

As part of the Perth 800 celebrations His Royal Highness Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay visited Perth on 1 June and, in his capacity as the Royal Patron of The Black Watch Heritage Appeal, he visited Balhousie Castle. During a busy schedule he was briefed by members of the Appeal Committee using the scale model of the proposed build; was introduced to most members of Regimental Association Welfare Committee; presented an Afghanistan campaign medal to Private Sam Morgan as well as meeting Corporals Richard Clark and Craig Sharp who had both been awarded the Military Cross for gallantry on the recent operational tour. He also met TA soldiers from Queen's Barracks who deployed to Afghanistan with the Battalion and the MOD and Regimentally employed staff at Home Headquarters, as well as a number of Black Watch cadets. Finally he presented the Elizabeth Cross to the family of a Black Watch soldier who had been killed in action in Korea.

On 26 June the Regimental Association formed up in Rose Terrace. They marched from the North Inch, with Branch Standards flying and lead by the Angus and Dundee Battalion Cadet Pipes & Drums, to Balhousie Castle. The salute was taken by Lord Provost John Letford, the Association President. This very well attended annual Regimental Reunion was greatly enjoyed by all those present.

On 2 July the Armed Forces Day parade that marched through Perth on a beautiful, warm and sunny day was lead by The Black Watch Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland and the salute was taken by His Royal Highness Prince Edward, Duke of Wessex. The Black Watch battalion took block leave in early July before deploying to Kenya for a demanding and surprisingly wet training exercise. They returned in early September to take over the role of Spearhead Land Element.

A report on Project Balhousie and the Museum is incorporated in this edition.

Due to the huge financial deficit facing the coalition Government further Defence cuts are predicted and on this occasion the review is called the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). Rumours of manpower and equipment programme cuts and possible reorganisation to all three Services are inevitably rife, however, until there is a formal announcement in mid October it is business as usual.

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

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

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

Bulk orders are supplied at a rate of £4 per copy. Individual copies are sent out to permanent subscribers, both in the UK and abroad, at a subscription rate of £8 annually for UK subscribers, £14 annually to Europe and £16 annually Worldwide by Airmail. A Gift Aid Scheme is available for individual subscribers who are subject to UK tax. The magazine fund benefits from tax reclaimed in this way. All subscriptions should be sent to The Editor, "The Red Hackle", Home Headquarters, The Black Watch, Balhousie Castle, Hay Street, Perth PH1 5HR, and those interested in the Gift Aid Scheme will, on request be provided with the requisite forms for completion.



Regimental and Battalion News

CONGRATULATIONS

To **Lieutenant Colonel A J Aitken MBE** on his selection for promotion to Colonel.

To **Major R R E Lindsay** on his selection for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.

OPERATIONAL HONOURS LIST NO 35

The following officers were recognised in the Operational Award List for OPERATION HERRICK:

The Distinguished Service Order Brigadier J M Cowan OBE
Military Cross Lieutenant Colonel A D MacGillivray.

MISSING BROADSWORDS

The broadsword that belonged to Captain The Honourable Fergus Bowes-Lyon who was killed in action on 27 September 1915, is missing from the battalion pool. If any officer serving or retired has it "on loan" can they please let Lieutenant Colonel Riddell or the QM of The Black Watch, 3 SCOTS know. Fergus Bowes-Lyon was the brother of our late Colonel-in-Chief, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

A full list of broadswords and accoutrements missing is shown below:

- Broadsword blade number 105857 (Bowes-Lyon) with chrome and leather scabbard
- Broadsword blade number 00985 (Gurdon) with leather scabbard
- Broadsword blade number 11853 with leather scabbard
- Broadsword blade number 65561 (Campbell-Adamson) with leather scabbard.

FORECAST OF EVENTS

17 December 2010	Officers' Regimental Ball	Perth
17 March 2011	Highland and Lowland Brigade Bonspiel	Perth
16 April 2011	Black Watch Association AGM	Perth
16 April 2011	WOs' and Sgts' Past and Present Dinner	Perth
21 May 2011	Officers and their ladies lunch	Perth
22 May 2011	Aberfeldy Muster	
16 June 2011	Officers and their ladies lunch	London
21 July 2011	Officers' Cocktail Party	Perth
22 July 2011 (tbc)	Regimental Golf Meeting	Kinross
23 July 2011	Regimental Reunion	Perth

AFGHANISTAN 2009

A painting was commissioned by the officers of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland to commemorate the Battlegroup's tour of Afghanistan in 2009. Jointly funded with the Trustees of The Black Watch, the painting was executed by James Hart Dyck.

The oil on canvas depicts an Afghan landscape from the Upper Sangin Valley in Helmand Province. The scene shows men of Alpha Company boarding Chinook helicopters ready for extraction whilst a sniper (Private Blake) and commander (Corporal Wells) from 6 Platoon, Bravo Company provide overwatch.

Operation OUBA 3 took place from 31 May-6 June 2009 and focused on disruption and destruction of insurgent activities and leadership in the Sapwan Kala area of the Upper Sangin Valley.



Afghanistan painting.

ABERFELDY MUSTER 22 MAY 2011

The Black Watch Association is planning to hold the biennial Aberfeldy Muster Parade on Sunday 22 May 2011. Further details will be sent out in the New Year but the Chairman of the Association is hoping that as many 2nd World War veterans as possible will make the journey to join the muster.

Whilst the Association does hold a list of veterans who served during the period 1939-45, they would appreciate being sent additional names from Branches and readers of the Red Hackle.

A dinner for the veterans will be held on the evening before the Muster.

NEW COLOURS PARADE JUNE/JULY 2011

The seven battalions of The Royal Regiment of Scotland are to be presented with new Colours during Royal Week in 2011. At the same time the Colours of the 1st Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) will be marched off parade for the last time.

The Chairman of the Association has asked the Colonel of The Royal Regiment of Scotland to allow antecedent Associations to take part in the parade in a meaningful way. If that happens then the Association will use the parade as a chance to hold the Regimental Reunion in Edinburgh and to allow as many ex Black Watch soldiers and officers to witness this sad but historic event.

REGIMENTAL REUNION 2011

If the New Colours Parade (see above) for the seven battalions of The Royal Regiment of Scotland involves antecedent Regimental Associations then the New Colours Parade will take the place of the Regimental Reunion in 2011. If the parade does not involve antecedent Regiments then the Regimental Reunion will be held in Perth on the fourth Saturday in July, **23 July 2011**.

HEROES RETURN 2

Second World War veterans can still benefit from a Lottery-funded scheme, enabling them to revisit the places where they served their country.

The Big Lottery Fund pledged to fund World War 2 veterans resident in the UK and Republic of Ireland to make commemorative trips to mark anniversaries throughout 2009 and 2010.

Funding is also available for a carer or spouse and widows and widowers of veterans can also apply.

Grants have been provided through the Heroes Return 2 programme to nearly five thousand veterans.

The Heroes Return 2 programme will fund trips to Second World War theatres of war around the globe, such as Arnhem, Burma, Libya and the Far East.

Funding is not means-tested and applicants can apply for a fixed amount grant of between £150 and £5,500 depending on the number of people partaking and the chosen destination.

Veterans must have travelled by 31 December 2010, although claims can be made retrospectively until 31 January 2011.

To find out more about the programme, call the Heroes Return 2 Helpline on 0845 0000 121 or visit the Big Lottery Fund Website at www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/heroesreturn or email general.enquiries@biglotteryfund.org.uk.

IMPERIAL SERVICE MEDAL

Maureen Brace who retired in May 2009 was presented with the Imperial Service Medal on 30 August 2010. Maureen worked in Regimental Headquarters (and latterly Home Headquarters) for seven years and had completed 30 years service as a Civil Servant.

During her time at Balhousie Castle she was a most loyal and diligent member of staff and her period of service spanned a time of great upheaval. Operations in Kosovo, the invasion of Iraq and subsequent deaths and casualties that occurred all had to be managed by RHQ; she was involved in the successful project to modernise the Museum and then helped in the campaign to save the Regiment. She and the other members of the small MOD team provided an extraordinary level of support to the Regiment.

The Imperial Service Order was instituted in 1902 by King Edward VII who wished to recognise more fully the services rendered by Civil Servants. She was presented with the medal by the Chairman of the Trustees and former Colonel of The Regiment, Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin.



Maureen Brace was awarded the Imperial Service Medal after 30 years service, 7 of which were at Balhousie Castle. (Courtesy of D C Thomson.)

NEWLY COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

Second Lieutenants Tim Towler and James Tait visited Balhousie Castle on 19 August 2010 having recently been commissioned into the Royal Regiment of Scotland. The former was awarded the Sword of Honour and had first visited the old 1st Battalion in 2004. He is one of the last of Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Lindsay's potential officers, showing just what a long term investment had to be made to secure high quality officers.

Tim is a Wykehamist and he read Economics at Exeter. His home is in Hampshire. James Tait is from Devon but his father was an officer in the Intelligence Corps. He went to Blundell's School near Tiverton.



Newly commissioned Second Lieutenants James Tait (left) and Tim Towler pictured during their visit to Balhousie Castle in August 2010.

COLLECT FOR THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Readers may be interested to see the Collect of The Royal Regiment of Scotland. At most funerals of soldiers serving with The Black Watch, 3 SCOTS, both this Collect and the Collect of The Black Watch are said.

God of our fathers, whose hand shapes the coastlands and hills of home, fashion likewise our lives. Guard the Royal Regiment of Scotland; keep us brave in battle, resolute in adversity, loyal to comrade and Crown; that inspired by the faith and cross of St. Andrew, we might secure lasting peace and eternal rest; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen.

THE ELIZABETH CROSS

The families of the following Black Watch Soldiers who were killed in action or died on operations have been presented with the Elizabeth Cross:

Name	Date of Death	Theatre of Operations
Private D A Gillespie	4 November 1952	Korea
Private F G Hyde	19 November 1952	Korea
Private J Graham	1 January 1955	Kenya
Lance Corporal E Charnley	18 November 1971	Northern Ireland
Private R Donkin	14 November 2001	Kosovo
Private M A Ferns	12 August 2004	Iraq
Private K T McHale	29 October 2004	Iraq



Mr David Donkin, the brother of the late Private Robert Donkin who was killed on duty on 14 November 2001 in Kosovo, proudly displays the Commemorative Scroll presented by the Duke of Wessex to his family. The presentation took place on 2 July 2010 in Perth, as part of Armed Forces Day.



Norman Charnley, the brother of Lance Corporal Edwin Charnley with The Elizabeth Cross and scroll presented to commemorate his brother who lost his life in Northern Ireland on 18 November 1971.

DOUVRE CLUB REUNION 2010

The word Douvre was the name the Australians used for a slit trench. Prior to the battle of El Alamein the Highland Division learned the art of desert warfare by secondment to the Australian lines and adopted many of their ways. As a token of respect held for the great 9th Australian Division, the 5th Battalion adopted the word Douvre for the name of their Battalion Reunion Club formed in 1946. Since then the Club has held a Reunion every year. A few years ago when numbers fell, the Club was opened up to all WW2 Highland Division veterans.

This year thirteen members reunited in the George Hotel, Perth for lunch on 26th June. The bond of comradeship that unites us kept conversation going until 4pm. Members who had attended the 65th Anniversary of the liberation of Vught and La Roche reported that their presence was greatly appreciated and that they were treated royally. Four of our members had recently returned from the 70th Anniversary of the battle of St. Valery and were able to give a detailed account of the ceremonies.

A number of wives joined the company after they had lunched separately and were quite astounded at some experiences that were being discussed. After tea some members lingered on to enjoy a social evening together.

Douvre Club members look forward to their 65th Anniversary next year.

Tom Renouf

WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' DINING CLUB

As this was our fifth year of dining in the Salutation Hotel in Perth, it was deemed appropriate to present them with a suitably inscribed regimental plaque. This took place on Saturday 17 April 2010. We then held our meeting prior to the dinner. It was proposed and seconded that the present committee remain, in post. The office Bearers are:

President	George Grant
Chairman	Fred Beattie
Secretary	Bob Ritchie
Treasurer	Ronnie Proctor

We were pleased to see Bob Duplessis from Canada and from the south Tony and Gordon Firth accompanied by Tony's son Darren, a serving soldier. In our midst were two serving members of The Black Watch and members from the now strong Highland Branch from Inverness.

Our guest at this dinner was Brigadier Duncan Cameron who gave a fine speech. We also had the privilege of listening to Colour Sergeant Pearson who gave us a fine speech of life in the Battalion and the horrors of Afghanistan. We were indeed grateful to have both of them with us. Peter Snaddon provided, his normal high standard of piping during and after the dinner.

A raffle was held and £112 was raised and donated to the battalion's cycle ride, raising money for BLESMA.

Our next meeting and dinner night is to be held in the Salutation Hotel on Saturday 20 November 2010. For details about membership speak to Ronnie Proctor at HHQ or e mail me at r.ritchie@sky.com

R Ritchie



The Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Dining Club on 17 April 2010.



(From left to right) Tony, Gordon and Darren Firth and Dougie Stark at the 17 April dinner.

HIGHLAND AND LOWLAND BRIGADE GOLFING SOCIETY

The Highland Brigade Golfing Society met for the annual Spring meeting at Panmure in early May for three rounds of competitive golf over the famous links course. The sun shone throughout and 14 former Black Watch officers combined well to beat off the opposition in both the singles and the foursomes competition to win the Martin Holt and Fort George Cups.

The Society has been meeting for over 100 years and despite dwindling numbers is determined to keep the Spring Meeting and other golf fixtures against notable clubs and other societies going. Matches are played against the Royal and Ancient over the Old Course, the Seniors at Muirfield and The Guards at Prestwick, amongst others. Any serving or retired officer of a reasonable golfing standard is encouraged to

contact the Black Watch Golfing Convenor, Bruce Osborne if they wish to play in any of the matches and not wait to be asked. Best form of contact is by email: bruce.osborne@homecall.co.uk



Bruce Osborne (left), Colonel John Rankin (centre) and Jamie Farquhar of The Black Watch with some of the silver spoils from the Highland and Lowland Brigade Golf Match.

THE BLACK WATCH GOLF MEETING

The Annual Black Watch Regimental Golf Meeting took place at Kinross on Friday 25th June 2010 under clear blue skies and a record turnout of participants. We were delighted to welcome a strong contingent down from The Black Watch Battalion from Fort George which reduced the average age of the participants considerably! We were also delighted to receive the support of a great number of people who helped to make this meeting possible and affordable for everyone. The Kinross Golf Courses always make us very welcome and nothing is too much trouble. It really is a very enjoyable place to play golf. The Regimental Association lend us tremendous support which is in turn matched by a long term sponsor and patron of the event, Charles Arbuthnott of Sidey Ltd. This year, we were delighted to welcome on board a second headline sponsor in Coop Funeral Care who have been helping us quietly in the margins for a few years now.

Together all of these supporters enabled us to enjoy an excellent day's golf at Kinross. With the weather playing its part, there were some very good scores achieved in first class conditions. It was quite a different experience in Scotland to hear comments like – "the courses are in great shape despite the dry weather we have been having". The greens ran true, unlike some of the tall tales later in the bar! For the record, the main prizewinners on the day were:

- Best Scratch – Brian Gilfillan
- Best Net – Stuart McCrae
- Best Officer – Bruce Osborne
- Best Other Rank – Paddy Marshall
- Best Stableford – Dougie Graham
- Best Greensome Pairs – Jamie Montgomery and Mark Wood.

We were delighted to welcome Mrs Justine Mutch along to the Regimental Golf Meeting this year. Justine is the widow of WO2



The Prizewinners at the Regimental Golf meeting, including Mrs Justine Mutch who presented a memorial trophy in honour of her husband, to Mr Stuart Macrae.

Alan Mutch who died earlier this year. Alan was a strong supporter of Regimental Golf and his many friends and colleagues clubbed together to initiate a new trophy in his name – "The Alan Mutch Memorial Cup". The cup was presented by Justine to the first winner – Stuart McCrae. We hope Alan's name will live long in the memory.

All in all, a great day in the Black Watch Regimental calendar and we look forward to many more to come.

Major Alex Stewart

100th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Pipe Major Alistair Duthie attended Hew Dalrymple's 100th birthday celebrations on 27 April 2010.



Pipe Major Alistair Duthie presents a birthday cake on behalf of The Black Watch Association to Hew Dalrymple on his 100th birthday on 27 April 2010.

LANCE CORPORAL EDWIN CHARNLEY REMEMBERED

Lance Corporal Charnley was killed in action in Northern Ireland on 18th November 1971, shot by a sniper. He was one of only two soldiers that the 1st Battalion lost during its many tours in Northern Ireland. He was a product of The Scottish Infantry Depot (Bridge of Don) where he won both the Best Recruit and Best Shot Prizes, going on to represent the winning British Army team in the 1971 CENTO shooting competition. He had made many friends in the Queen's Own Highlanders and The Royal Scots during his time as a recruit and in the shooting team.

After nearly 40 years, the Black Watch Association had lost touch with his family but as a result of the award of The Elizabeth Cross his brother Norman was tracked down and was found to be living in Australia. The Association helped him to apply for the award.

On Wednesday 18 August 2010 a memorial service was held in Preston (Edwin's home town) to remember his life. It was organised by Eric Taylor (ex Royal Scots) who had been a close friend of Edwin's during his time in the shooting team. The short service was attended by Alex Lackie, Secretary of the Stoke on Trent Branch, a piper and drummer also from the same Branch as well as a number of friends from his days in the Army Shooting Team.



Alex Lackie pictured with Eric Taylor and three of Edwin Charnley's friends from the Queen's Own Highlanders, as well as a piper and drummer from the Stoke Branch, at a memorial service in Preston.

TEN YEARS WITH THE ZULUS

A short but interesting history of "Z" (Black Watch) Company of the 1st Battalion 51st Highland Volunteers has been written by Michael McEwan an ex Corporal in Zulu Company.

The Company was formed in 1982 as part of the Home Service Force and was disbanded in April 1992.

Anyone wishing to buy a copy should get in touch with Michael McEwan on 01738 631287.



A NEW BOOK

Professor Norman Drummond FRSE, MA, BD, DUniv who was Padre of the 1st Battalion from 1978-1982 has written a new book called "The Power of 3" and is a follow on to his book "The Spirit of Success". The book was published by Hodder in July 2010.

MAJOR J C F CAMPBELL OF KINLOCH

Readers may be interested to know that The Lord Lyon acknowledged the right of Major Colin Campbell to be addressed as Major J C F Campbell of Kinloch. Colin served as a Black Watch officer from 1954 to 1971.

HOUSES FOR HEROES

The Scottish Veterans Garden City Association (SVGA) was founded during the 1st World War to support wounded ex Servicemen returning from the front. The Association raised funds from benefactors to build houses so that the ex servicemen could be given accommodation.

On 23 July 2010 a new housing development for veterans was officially opened in New Scone, Perthshire. Poppy Court comprises ten flats and is already housing an ex Black Watch soldier who was wounded in Afghanistan.

SVGA has accommodation spread across Scotland and relies heavily on volunteers to support its aims. To find out more about Houses for Heroes visit www.housesforheroes.co.uk.

CHARITY CLIMB

Ex Sgt Jock McInnes (Centre) recently completed the ascent of Mount



Ex Sgt Jock McInnes (Centre) recently completed the ascent of Mount Elbrus (18,400 feet), the highest point in continental Europe and raised £5,500 for the Braveheart Charity.

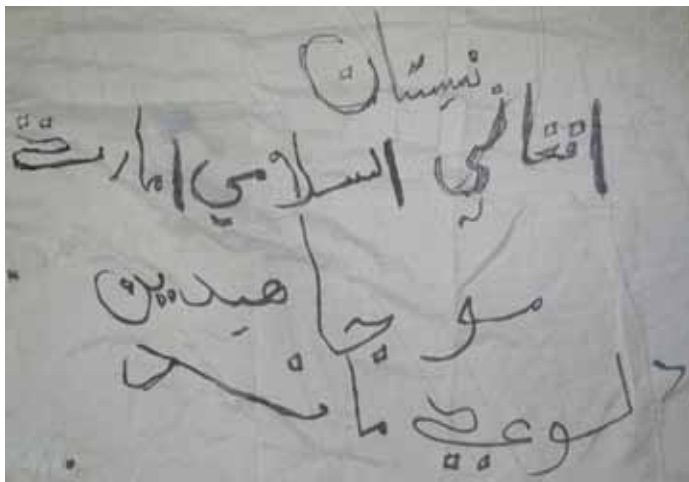
Elbrus (18,400 feet), the highest point in continental Europe and raised £5,500 for the charity "Bravehearts".

The Regimental Museum

The Museum collection is what it contains. For the most part, this is what we are given by members of the Regiment and members of the public. We continue to be very grateful for all items received from serving soldiers. Although these items may seem commonplace to those using them on a day-to-day basis, they help the Museum to preserve the history of The Black Watch for future generations. In recent years we have been very lucky to receive many interesting items from recent conflicts to add to the Museum collection. These include an Iraqi AK47 and a box of rations from 2003. These items are on display in the Museum and are vital in illustrating the most recent history of The Black Watch to our visitors.

In May, Jill van Millingen joined the Museum team as curatorial assistant. She comes with experience from National Museum Scotland and the Scottish Mining Museum and has already made herself indispensable.

Our group of volunteers has continued to grow also, with eight new volunteers starting work at Balhousie in recent months. Roles taken on by this enthusiastic bunch include: working behind the scenes with the collections; assisting Alec Cameron in the garden and greeting visitors. Our volunteers are the life-blood of the Museum, as they are in so many museums across Scotland. In a sector where one may have an eye on



Taliban flag Afghanistan 2009, donated by Captain Ben Collis, former Adjutant The Black Watch Battalion.

the purse-strings, and the other on an over-capacity store, volunteers who are willing to give their time to help are of increasing importance. We are keen to recruit more volunteers over the coming months – more details can be found on our website or from the Museum.

Over the past few months we have been gifted many interesting items, including:

- a book of pressed flowers from Jerusalem, belonging to William Hendry of the 2nd Battalion. He had been wounded at Ypres in 1917.

- a German ceremonial dagger from the Second World War.

We have also received various items relating to the Battalion's recent deployment to Afghanistan. These include:

- various items of desert combat uniform.
- a pressure pad from an improvised explosive device.
- a personal mine extraction kit.
- a High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) Warhead Launcher.
- a Taliban flag.

Over the Winter months the Museum will host a series of lectures on a variety of topics, including the Ashantee Wars, the Indian Mutiny and the battle of Loos. Lectures will be on the second Wednesday of every month.

Looking forward to the New Year, we'll be holding more events as part of Show Scotland 2011. We ran two successful events in 2010 and plan to repeat these.

Captivating Collections is a chance to discover the hidden secrets of the Museum of The Black Watch. Visitors will be taken on an exclusive tour of the Museum, followed by drinks with staff. *Black Watch Tales* is



Storytelling at the Museum, September 2010.

a fun drop-in event for all the family, with stories and songs recounting tales of the renowned regiment.

More details of all our events are available in the "What's On" section of our website or from the Museum.

For those of you who partake in social networking, we're on Facebook and Twitter – another way to keep up-to-date with goings on at the Castle and Museum.

Emma Halford-Forbes

LAUNCH OF 'FRIENDS' ORGANISATION

The Black Watch family has always been much more than just those who have served in the Regiment. There are, of course, very many other people who have relatives, some close, some not so close, who served in The Black Watch at some time. To many of these, the Museum at Balhousie is an important part of their memories of that family member and the service that they gave to the Regiment and to the country.

We would like to enable these people, and indeed others who simply have an interest, to be offered a way to be part of the Black Watch Museum project. To this end, we are starting a new organisation called **The Friends of The Black Watch Castle and Museum**. The Friends will support the work of the museum and its staff to preserve the 271 year legacy of the Black Watch Regiment and its Regimental home at Balhousie Castle. The Friends will be an important part of advancing

the educational programme of the museum, the conservation of the collections and the acquisition of artefacts and archive material, which are essential to maintaining the future of this unique museum. There will be a small annual membership fee to become a Friend for which they get free entry to the museum, invitations to attend lectures and special events, given the opportunity to be volunteers as well as receiving an annual newsletter to keep them informed of what has been happening as well as special exhibitions and what's new in the museum. The friends will be a very important part of ensuring the on-going success of Balhousie and will keep the Museum alive in the minds of a wide number of people from all over the world.

Many of you reading this article are of course at the heart of the Regimental Family and already have free entry to Balhousie and may also have donated to the appeal. However, we very much hope that many of you will also join the Friends and in so doing not only keep in touch with your Regimental Museum but also, with the small annual membership fee you pay, help to ensure the financial future of The Black Watch Museum and Balhousie Castle and therefore, most importantly, the legacy left behind by so many generations of Black Watch men who went before you.

For information on joining **The Friends of The Black Watch Castle and Museum** visit www.theblackwatch.co.uk or call 01738 638152

Sarah Riddell-Webster

The Black Watch Heritage Appeal

Up to the middle of September 2010, the total amount raised is over £1.9m in gifts and pledges. There has been a number of fundraising events in recent months including a coffee morning in Alyth which raised over £1,000 and sponsorship from the Dundee Blues Bonanza's yearly blues festival raised another four figure sum. Further fundraising events will take place in the coming months and we expect that the formation of the new "Friends of the Black Watch Castle and Museum" organisation will generate interest in the Museum and provide a new avenue of support for the Balhousie Project.

During 2010, the main focus of the Appeal has been to apply to over 100 Charitable Trusts requesting support. Several more major potential sources of support have been identified, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and a few other larger Trusts. Much detailed work has been done on our Heritage Lottery Fund application and, thanks in part to this careful preparation, the Fund has indicated that our bid could be increased from £500K up to £750K. This is a very positive bonus to our Appeal and underlines the enthusiastic support we have received for our proposals. It will take 18 to 21 months for our HLF application to work through their appraisal system and so we hope to be able to commence our Castle development work in late 2011 or early 2012.

CASTLE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The latest draft of our proposed plans were approved by our Appeal Patron, Prince Charles, during his visit to the castle this summer and the final version was signed off by our Trustees in July. We have been busy consulting with our neighbours, the local Residents Association

as well as the businesses in close proximity to Balhousie and, for the most part, the reception to our plans has been positive and supportive. Consequently, we have now instructed our Architects to submit a planning application on our behalf.

A model of the finished development is on public display within the castle along with detailed plans; these plans can also be seen on our website www.theblackwatch.co.uk.

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

We are pleased to report that the results of our business activity within the Castle are well ahead of our plan, both in terms of the number of visitors coming to the castle and the sales generated by our shop. A large part of this success is due to the wonderful support we receive from a number of volunteers who served in the Regiment and are members of the Black Watch Association. These volunteers help principally as "Meeters and Greeters"; they dress in their Regimental Blazers, give a real soldier's welcome into our Museum and start our visitors off on the story of the Black Watch. A special mention and thanks go to Jim Baird, Kevin Murphy and Davie Thompson for their work at the castle.

There are lots of exciting new products and special offers in our shop and you can see all these offers online at www.theblackwatch.co.uk. Later this year we will see the exciting launch of a Black Watch beer brewed in Scotland by Harvestoun and more news on this will be available on our website in due course.

A Iannetta, Chief Executive

Correspondence

Dear Editor

REICHSWALD CWG CEMETARY

Your readers may be interested to see a photograph of Major General T G Rennie's headstone in the Reichswald CWG Cemetery.

I have retired but work as the Chairman of the District of Germany for the Royal British Legion. I was accompanied on my visit by our Branch Piper, David Moir. By chance we visited 65 years to the day of General Rennie's death on 24 March 2010.

Stevie Reid



Stevie Reid (left) and David Moir at the Reichswald Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery.

24 Day's Yard
Marston Meysey
Cricklade
Wilts
SN6 6LQ

Dear Editor

A DOCKET

Many readers will recall from the "Black Watch" play the importance of having a piece of paper to hand. This regimental tradition goes back over one hundred years to the early 1900's, as this 1944 letter from Wavell to Sir Arthur Wauchope demonstrates.

"I remember the shooting trip in Bikaner. We had a very curt letter of refusal from the Resident to our request to be allowed to shoot inside the State, but we found the Chinkara and Black Buck so plentiful and the villagers were so delighted that we should come and shoot some of them that we did so. On about the third day some Bikaner Police, mounted on camels, arrived and asked what we were doing, and we eventually waved in front of them the resident's letter of refusal, banking on the probability that none of them could read English. As soon as they saw the State crest and arms at the top, they salaamed profoundly and conducted us to a much better place."

P.S. I wonder if St Peter does a "Letter of Refusal" on headed paper, in a language archangels can't read. Some of us could use one.

Owen Humphrys

Dear Editor,

WO2 ALAN MUTCH

Following the sad news of Warrant Officer Class Two Alan Mutch's death I felt moved, as a friend and one of his former Platoon Commanders, to reflect on my memories of him.

I first met 'Mutchy' in 14 Platoon's office in the Delta Company's lines of Fort George in early 1999. I was a brand new Platoon Commander, he was the Platoon Sergeant. It was immediately apparent that he was a soldier who had been schooled in the finest traditions of The Black Watch and the Army. He was extremely polite and deferential but never afraid to point me in the right direction or 'discuss' issues, always behind a closed door. He was also very good at subtly ensuring that I represented his (and the Platoon's views) with our Company Commander. However, my strongest and enduring memory is of his mild manner and gentle demeanour. I can't remember him shouting and recall anger on very few occasions – despite a few Jocks who regularly tested his patience.

Ever determined and committed, he was adamant that he would lead the Platoon with me. In all of our physical endeavours he worked harder than most, to ensure he was able to. He was also fascinated with the behaviour and antics of young officers. He was amused by the stories and shenanigans and he had a genuine interest in what made young officers tick.

Our friendship was cemented when we were sent to get acquainted with Armoured Infantry prior to our Arms Plot move to Germany in 2000. The courses were long and located on the south coast of England. The courses gave him plenty of opportunities to see young officers in action and we amused him with our ability invariably to forget the lessons of the previous day. We all knew that he revised every night; he was consistently the top student.

Our strong partnership was broken by his promotion in late 2000, when he moved on to the CQMS slot in A Company. Although I followed him from Delta Company to the Grenadiers a year later, we never worked as closely again. The banter always flowed but my enduring memory is formed by our time together in 14 Platoon. I salute this true soldier, father and husband who was a friend and colleague.

Major M A N Williamson

Fonthill Gifford
Salisbury
SP3 6QH

Dear Editor,

THE ELIZABETH CROSS – PRIVATE FREDERICK GEORGE HYDE, THE BLACK WATCH

I was privileged to represent The Black Watch Association on 13th July 2010 at the presentation of The Elizabeth Cross to Mrs Mary Hayward, sister of 22488586 Private Frederick George Hyde BW who was reported missing, presumed dead, after the Battle of the Hook on 19th November 1952. He was 19 years old.

Private Hyde came from Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire. He enlisted in The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment in 1951 but was soon transferred to 1st Battalion The Black Watch. He deployed to the Korean theatre of war, via Hong Kong, in June 1952 and was one of 16 Black Watch men killed in the November battle for the Hook feature, the battalion also losing 76 wounded and 15 captured in very heavy and successful defensive fighting against a massive Chinese infantry and artillery attack. Private Hyde was awarded the Korean War Medal and the United Nations Service Medal with clasp. He is commemorated on the United Nations Wall of Remembrance at Pusan, Korea and on the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

The presentation of the Elizabeth Cross to Mrs Hayward was made

by Dame Mary Fagan DCVO JP, HM Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire. It took place in the historic D-Day Map Room of Southwick House near Portsmouth where General Eisenhower made the final decision to commit Allied Forces to the Normandy landings on 6th June 1944. Other Elizabeth Cross presentations at Southwick commemorated deaths in action from Palestine, Radfan, Northern Ireland and the Falklands, as well as two others from the Korean War.

Donald Wilson



Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire (left) presents The Elizabeth Cross to Mrs Mary Hayward, the sister of the later Private Frederick Hyde who was killed in Korea.

Cullompton
Devon

Dear Editor

65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF DINXPERLO

In May 2010 I was invited by friends in Dinxperlo to attend the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the Highland Division. I was supported by Richard Massey (Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders) and my two sons.

Following a civic reception given by the Mayor, a full two days of events had been arranged, the highlight of which was the unveiling of the plaque.

A Dutch historian friend, has researched the names of all those men of the Highland Division who were killed in the liberation of Dinxperlo (27-31 March 1945) and I have sent that list to the Regimental Archive.



Richard Massey and Dennis Hall (right) stand beside the memorial to the 51st Highland Division in Dinxperlo which was unveiled in May 2010.

There were 57 men of the Division killed of whom 9 were either from the 1st or 5th Battalions of The Black Watch. The plaque written in Dutch says,

“On the day of battle it is good to have friends,
So that we may never forget

In memory of all, who made an effort for the liberation of Dinxperlo”.

Anyone wishing to visit the town and memorial can contact Robert Jan-Rijks by e mail (Robert.semper@orange.nl) and I know he will be pleased to help you.

Dennis Hall, ex 7th Battalion, The Black Watch

jjay@bromptonam.com

Dear Editor

STALAG VIIIIB/344 LAMSDORF

My father, the late Alec Jay was a rifleman in the 1st Battalion Queen Victoria's Rifles and was captured in May 1940. For much of his time as a prisoner he was held in Stalag VIIIIB (later re-named Camp Number 344 Lamsdorf). I am looking for information about some of his fellow prisoners and in particular those in work party E173 at Setzdorf (now Vapenna) and work party E606 at Jagerndorf (now Krnov). Two of the soldiers who were in the same work parties were from The Black Watch; Private W Birrell (Army Number 2754035, POW Number 421) and Private W Pirie (Army Number 2756735 and POW Number 7587).

If any reader is related to either Private Birrell or Pirie or if they know anything about these two gentlemen I would welcome any information.

Readers may be interested to see a group photograph from Setzdorf that includes my father (centre of rear rank) as well as a Black Watch POW called David Massey (front left) who both before and after the war worked on the Newcastle Journal in the print works. It seems he was good at amateur haircuts and so his nickname at Setzdorf was “the demon barber”.

John Jay

Editors note: Mr Jay included various letters concerning an Allied bombing raid that took place on 2 December 1944 and killed 28 members of Work Party E793 and wounded a further 31. Included in the list of those killed was Private Edward Docherty of The Black Watch whose wife lived at 36 Loanhead Avenue, Lochore.



Work party E173 (Setzdorf) with David “The Demon Barber” Massey of The Black Watch (front left) and Alec Jay (centre rear).

mkar@marketdevelopment.com.au

Dear Editor

WILLIAM AUSTIN – 2ND BATTALION THE BLACK WATCH

I am trying to trace my father who served with the 2nd Battalion during the period 1944-48. I believe he served in Pakistan at the time of Independence.

If anyone knew him or knows where he settled after his service I would be grateful if they could let me know at the above e-mail address.

Michael Austin

Dear Editor

THE SPIRIT OF THE REGIMENT

Since the death of my beloved wife Joy on the 15th September 2010, I have been overwhelmed by the support and warmth shown to me by my friends in the Black Watch Association and in The Black Watch, 3 SCOTS. I have received almost two hundred cards and letters, countless telephone calls and messages and several floral tributes to Joy.

Words fail me. If ever proof were needed that the spirit of the Regiment is as strong now as ever it was, then this is it.

I feel it would be an impossible task for me to contact everyone individually who has been so kind. So through the medium of our excellent Red Hackle magazine, my sincere thanks go to all who have called, written and sent messages and flowers. And thank you also to all who attended Joy's funeral on 28th September. There was a grand display of kilts, trews, red hackles and Regimental ties. I know that Joy would be pleased, proud and honoured: I certainly was.

Joe Hubble

Philip_h@madasafish.com

Dear Editor

COME AND JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH CASTLE AND MUSEUM

The Friends of the Black Watch Castle and Museum is due to be launched at the end of October 2010. The hope is that it will become a world wide organisation that will outlive the Appeal and prosper as part of the new Balhousie. The Friends will welcome anybody who has the best interests of the Black Watch at heart, wherever his origin. This letter is however aimed particularly at those who have already made contributions to the Appeal or are members of the Association. They may consider that they have already done their bit. The Friends nevertheless need their support and example from the start.

The Friends will support the work of the museum and its staff, preserving a Black Watch legacy that goes back to 1739 or 1725 if you include the Independent Companies. The Friends help to advance the educational programme of the museum, the conservation of the col-

lection and the acquisition of artefacts and archive material, which are essential to the future of this unique museum.

Membership will offer some special benefits that enhance a sense of ownership and involvement:

- Free admission to the Castle and Museum and a refund of your current entry fee if joining during a visit.
 - Invitations to special Friends events.
 - 5% discount in the Museum Shop.
 - Updates and Newsletters.
 - Pride in wearing a Friends tie (Black Watch tie with golden 'Fs' superimposed on the blue stripe) or a Friends lapel pin.
 - Pleasure in adopting a museum artefact.
 - Pleasure in sponsoring a brick used in the redevelopment of the building.
 - Being offered the opportunity to meet members of the Army.
- There is a series of exciting winter lectures to be held at Balhousie.

All start at 1.30 pm:

13 Oct 10	The Ashanti Wars
10 Nov 10	Loos 1915 'The Unwanted Battle'
15 Dec 10	The 51st Highland Division in North Africa 42-43
12 Jan 11	The 51st Highland Division's Battle for France 44
9 Feb 11	The Indian Mutiny
9 Mar 11	The Black Watch in Korea 1952-53

Annual subscriptions are:

Individual		£24 or £2 per month
Individual plus	One parent & children	£36 or £3 per month
Couple		£42 or £3.50 per month
Family	Two parents & children	£54 or £4.50 per month

Please contact Balhousie Castle for application forms and gift aid declaration; address The Museum of the Black Watch, Balhousie Castle, Hay Street Perth PH1 5HR, phone 01738 638 152 or e-mail jill@theblackwatch.co.uk.

Membership of Friends is saluting the men of the Past, being proud of those in the Present and hoping for the men of the Future that they will be able to serve like our forbearers. The Friends look forward to hearing from you.

Philip Halford-MacLeod

Obituaries

BRIGADIER ALASDAIR WILLIAM BUIST LOUDON OBE

Ceded to the United Kingdom as a result of the Opium Wars in the late 19th Century, Hong Kong was returned to the Chinese by the British in 1997. The man chosen to lead this historic event was Lieutenant Colonel Alasdair Loudon, who was then commanding the 1st Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment).



The battalion was sent to Hong Kong in early 1997 for the final six months before the handover to the Chinese. Their job was to continue to fly the British flag, to organise the drawdown of the Hong Kong garrison and to lead the preparations for the Handover Ceremony; the administrative challenge was huge. Colonel Loudon was instrumental in every aspect of the withdrawal from dealing with the sensitivities of the politics to shutting down the barracks, he was the guiding hand. With a sure, sensitive and humane touch, he set a rigorously professional but cheerful tone for what was to be overwhelmingly recognised as a model of military planning. One of the more bizarre military tasks he was required to lead was the provision of stewards for the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens. With his foresight, judgement and innate sense of fairness, he ensured that the whole battalion both enjoyed the spectacle and were paid for their efforts. On the evening of 30 June 1997, he led a tri-Service parade with distinction. No one there or watching on television will forget the torrential rain as the final British servicemen marched off the parade ground at the Convention Centre. In the eyes of many, this was the final act of empire; Alasdair Loudon and The Black Watch ensured that it was performed to the highest standards.

He was much admired within the Regiment as an officer who took particular care of his soldiers and officers. He was a natural listener who would try to understand and encourage, rather than judge, those under his command.

Alasdair was commissioned in February 1980 and joined the 1st Battalion in Werl, West Germany. Training in those days followed a steady pattern and as a mechanised battalion mounted in AFV 432, he was involved in the major British Army of the Rhine exercises held each autumn as well as the live firing training in Canada. A stint training Junior Soldiers in Aberdeen and then training for and deployment on an OP BANNER tour in West Belfast prepared him for his posts as both Operations Officer and Adjutant before he attended Staff College. He was then appointed as the Chief of Staff 56 London Brigade and later commanded a rifle company at the end of a long two year tour in Northern Ireland, based in Ballykinler, County Down. He took command of the battalion in December 1995.

After command he carried out a Defence Fellowship looking at certain aspects of recruiting in South Wales but he did not get the chance to complete his paper before becoming Colonel Recruiting at a most challenging time (2002). His next posting in 2005 took him to Afghanistan, mentoring the CGS Bismullah Khan in Kabul. Earmarked to be Defence Advisor to the British High Commission in Islamabad, he first attended the National Defence College in Islamabad where he made many friends. He took up his post as Defence Advisor at a time when the continuing operations against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and in the tribal areas of Pakistan were escalating dramatically. His was a position of particular importance in the diplomatic and military effort to secure the co-operation and support of the Pakistani authorities at a time of great political sensitivity. In the short time he had there he made firm friendships which opened doors and developed relationships across the international community and many Pakistani organisations both military and civilian. Much respected and widely liked, he made a significant contribution to the collective struggle to overcome an intractable enemy. Not only was his keen sense of honesty, fairness and justice much admired by his counterparts but all who worked with him found the sometimes tedious, painstaking work required was made more tolerable by Alasdair's ability to make the most of all occasions with good humour. It was a particular mark of the high regard in which he was held that the Pakistani military adviser in London made the particular effort to travel to Edinburgh for Alasdair's funeral.

Born in London in 1956, where his father was working as a doctor, the family moved to South Wales in 1957 to live near both sets of grandparents. Although both Alasdair's parents had been brought up in Cardiff the Loudon family remained firmly Scottish in outlook and he grew up fascinated by stories of his descent from the Stewarts of Garth (near Aberfeldy) and he always valued his connection to Colonel David Stewart, author of the classic 1822 work 'Sketches of the Highlanders of Scotland'.

Two great loves, beside his family, were both developed during his childhood. The first was a love of the outdoors and joy in the natural world and the second was poetry. As a child he was not known as a great reader and he was famous in the family for not having read anything at all, until a love of cricket forced him to turn to Wisden's Almanac around his ninth birthday. He was educated first at Westbourne House school in Penarth and then went to Kingswood School in Bath before going on to Durham University where he read Anthropology. It was here that he met his wife Honi, almost as soon as he arrived, and formed the relationship which sustained him throughout his adult life.

Alasdair was first and foremost a family man and a man who loved the world as he found it. He was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer in February this year and died on 21 May 2010. He is survived by his wife Honi and children Lizzie, Joe, Bella and Thom.

MLR-W and RMR

Honi and Alasdair's wedding was held in a tiny church without electricity, lit by candles in each window alcove of the nave, standing a few feet above the high water mark alongside a wooded inlet close to the sea in deepest Cornwall. There was no need for the uniformed guard of honour of a society wedding; instead, a fine bass-baritone rendition of an operatic aria sung by Honi's uncle at the wedding supper and an emotional poem on love spoken from memory by Honi's sister, recently returned from China. It was a beautiful event entirely in keeping with Honi and Alasdair's view of what was important in life.

I served with Alasdair in Werl and we were in C Company together in Belfast (1982/83) and no one who knew Alasdair as a young officer could forget him with his pipe. The ritual knocking out, filling, packing and lighting was characteristically measured, reassuring and thoughtful, be it in an armchair in the Mess, during an O group on Soltau or returning from patrol to North Howard Street Mill, on the Falls Road. No flipping open a packet of cigarettes and a quick burn for Alasdair.

Despite his happy addiction to his pipe, Alasdair was always fit and active. He had been a county distance runner and retained a large part of his natural abilities. It was always a chastening experience to have worked hard to get fit and then go for a run with Alasdair and be comprehensively beaten, despite it being his first outing for some time.

I was reminded of the breadth of his interests and his natural intellectual curiosity the last time I saw him. I visited him and Honi during his recuperation from the removal of a kidney and we wandered the short distance from their Quarters to the bridge over the River Almond. The discussion centred on the conflict between the hunter's instinct to kill a salmon that had been caught and the need to return it to maintain and strengthen stocks.

By contrast, having returned for lunch, we then struck upon the political hot topic of coalition government, this being just before the May election. Would a coalition be a stitch up created in smoke filled rooms to create a product that no-one had voted for or was it the outcome that most closely represented the views of the largest proportion of the electorate?

Sadly we didn't have time to talk about a fraction of the things that interested him, but even when hamstrung by pain and tiredness he continued to show what I remember of him from our first meeting in Werl to our last; resilience, independence of mind, curiosity and an adventurous streak. No job characterised his disposition and abilities better than his last as DA to Pakistan.

Alasdair was one of the most genuine, thoughtful and decent people one could hope to have counted as a friend and his was a full and well spent life.

Matthew Atkin

Alasdair arrived in D Company, commanded by David Thornycroft when the Battalion was in Werl. He commanded 15 Platoon, working

with Sergeant 'Socks Cotton'. A lasting early impression of him, probably at Soltau training area, is before starting up the 432s. Everyone would be up and about, with steamy breath in the cold morning air. A composed and relaxed Alasdair would knock out his pipe and methodically refill it before striking up. He was just that bit different. This reads as a travelogue following a few of Alasdair's postings; it does not touch on the depth of the man but may provide a vignette of his breadth and warmth.

On one of the last huge Corps level exercises across Germany, 1BW played umpire. After a good season, we had become more adept looking for a farm complex to sleep in rather than yet another wood. Alasdair, as a subaltern, would invariably be able to charm his way into a comfortable indoors bed while the rest of us slept in the barn and despite not being able to speak German, would ensure a plentiful supply of fresh eggs for all the next morning.

In Northern Ireland in 1982/3 he had 'Jersey Joe' Rafferty as his platoon sergeant at North Howard Street Mill. As a multiple commander he worked hard and expected the RUC he accompanied and his Jocks to do so as well, operating fairly and firmly on the streets. Back in the Mill he and Sergeant Rafferty worked as a team to look after them. Equally, whether in the Mess (an odd couple of rooms on the third floor), the lines, or in the aftermath of a Philip Foster O-group, an encouraging and articulate manner, no matter the discussion, pervaded from him; he was interested in you as a person, not whether one was an Officer or Other Rank, a soldier or a civilian.

Later, as Company Commander on exercise at Wainwright in Canada, Alasdair had Ben Edwards, SCOTS DG, as his Second-in-Command. They were digging in the command post. With a rhythmic confidence their exertion was well spent, as the two of them dug and shovelled into and through the night, seldom stopping in their discussion of books or politics, yet the Company was not neglected and the position prepared.

In Berlin in 1987 Alasdair and Honi lived in a short cul de sac in Kladow, a few minutes from Montgomery Barracks. It was a tremendous house of colour and pictures, despite its ordinariness outside, traits that friends have long since come to recognise in Alasdair and Honi's houses across the world. They were amongst the first to discover the delights of the French Officers' Club, Maison du Lac, up in the northern sector of Berlin. Alasdair would take delight in choosing an interesting white wine and wax lyrical over its taste, with the same attention as he would describe a recent book, or the oysters they might be having as an entrée.

For the 1993/4 tour of Hong Kong, Alasdair was Second-in-Command, first to Nigel Lithgow and then to Andrew Ogilvy-Wedderburn. They had travelled out ahead of the main body to take over from the outgoing unit. They became past masters at enthusiastically orientating new arrivals to the delights of the Shek-O shaker, the awful double-decker bus that went at breakneck speed over the dam from Stanley to Shek-O. It was a mix of the exhilarating and the unknown that so provoked an interest in him.

Alasdair's athleticism has been described elsewhere but he was legendary leading early morning runs. These were down to Stanley beach to carry out repetitions before running back up, past the work parties of Stanley Prison prisoners, or around the radar dishes on the peninsula along the endless concrete paths. He told the story of working in central London before joining the Army when he would run the streets to deliver letters rather than take public transport and thereby retain his fitness and pocket the travel allowance to boost his otherwise low wages. His prowess at running continued throughout his life. In Hong Kong he galvanised the Battalion into entering teams for Trailwalker, completing the 60 mile MacLehose trail, across the New Territories and Kowloon Peninsula, within 48 hours. The Battalion's fitness began improving overnight with him at the helm.

Throughout so many aspects of his life as a soldier we saw his characteristics of being compassionate, interested and yet professional; offering sound and considered advice when appropriate, yet there was nothing compromising about him in standards he expected. He was from a very different mould to so many and maintained his confident originality of thought and manner throughout. What a charming man and what a loyal friend for so many to have known in so many different situations. Throughout it all, to the very end, he shared it with and was supported by Honi, with Lizzie, Joe, Bella and Thom to each of whom our thoughts return, as their lives go on and blossom again.

Major T J O Carmichael

MAJOR ROBERT ISAAC BURNS

Robert Burns was an officer in The Black Watch of Canada who was the final Canadian Exchange Officer to serve with the 1st Battalion from 1969-71.

He was born on 25 August 1938 in Brockville and joined the Canadian Army, graduating in 1961 and being granted a commission in The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada.

He served in the NATO forces in Germany, the UN in Cyprus and Sinai and as the Canadian Exchange Officer in Edinburgh. On returning to Canada he served with the 1st Battalion The Royal Canadian Regiment, attended Staff College and then worked in the Personnel Branch of the National Defence Headquarters until his retirement from the Army in 1990. He died on 26 June 2010 of a heart attack.



CAPTAIN DENIS GILES MBE

Captain Denis Wilson Giles died on 9th July 2010 at home in Carnoustie after a period of illness which he fought with great courage and dignity, he was 83 years old.

Denis was born in Swindon, Wiltshire in 1927 and enlisted into the Black Watch at the recruiting office in Bath on the 8th of February 1945 a few months before the end of the Second World War.

He spent the first three years of his service in Scotland and met Betty when he was stationed in Edinburgh; they were married in 1947 and subsequently spent 63 happy years together. Susan their oldest daughter was born in 1948 and Denise was born in 1955.

In 1948 Denis joined 1BW and remained with the battalion until he was commissioned as Adjutant and Quartermaster of the newly formed 3rd (TA) Battalion The Black Watch at Rodd Road, Dundee in August 1966.

Denis impressed all those who had the good fortune to serve with him and much has been written elsewhere by those who served with him in his earlier years in the regiment about his great strength of character, integrity and his uncompromising attitude to the very high standards which he set. An example of this was that whilst serving in Korea he felt that he had to be in the front line and reverted from sergeant to private to achieve this. His talents were well known and he soon regained his rank and by the time the battalion had reached Kenya he was promoted to Colour Sergeant and then became a well respected Company Sergeant Major. He was Company Sergeant Major of D Company when the battalion was posted to Cyprus in 1958 at the end of the EOKA campaign and became the Regimental Sergeant Major before the battalion moved to Warminster as Demonstration Battalion.

At the start of his tour as Regimental Sergeant Major the army was undergoing the transition from a mixture of Regular and National Service soldiers to an all Regular Army. Through Denis' hard work and character he helped meld the battalion into a thoroughly professional unit which was admired and respected by all those who visited the School of Infantry. This was no easy task as the battalion was dispersed to locations such as Knook Camp, Warminster, The School of Infantry, Support Weapons Wing Netherhavon, Mons Officer Cadet School Aldershot and the Demonstration Platoon at the All Arms Weapons Wing at Hythe. Despite the geographical spread of the battalion, Friday RSM's parades were held most weeks at Knook Camp and the logistics of bringing everyone together he took in his stride.

The battalion moved to Minden in early 1964 as part of the British Army of the Rhine and took over from the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) who had unfortunately had a bad press over a number of incidents that had occurred in the town which housed the large garrison of 11 Infantry Brigade and various other minor units. Denis



ensured that through hard work and strict but very fair discipline, the same fate did not befall his beloved Black Watch. Soldering in barracks was the least of a Regimental Sergeant Major's role in the Cold War era in BAOR and Denis had the field role down to a fine art which benefitted the battalion on the numerous field exercises in which we took part. As a young Corporal in the Signals Platoon I had the privilege of seeing him work at first hand and was able to put the knowledge I had gained from him into practice some 15 years later when I became RSM.

His fierce exterior masked the kind and thoughtful man that lay underneath. He was a great supporter of the Corporals' Mess in the battalion, firmly believing that lessons learnt there were a good education for those who were promoted sergeant and he went to great lengths to establish the Corporals' Mess in Minden despite opposition from NAAFI and others who felt it was a step too far. He was always ready to help those who genuinely required it but woe betide anyone who did not live up to his standards.

On leaving the regiment Denis became a farm manager in Angus and then shop keeper in Fife before returning to the regiment as an Administrative Officer with 51st Highland Volunteers where again his administrative and management skills came to the fore and for his hard work and great contribution he was awarded a richly deserved MBE. His appointment as an Administrative Officer with Highland Territorial Army Volunteers Reserve Forces Association was his last before he retired in 1991.

His love of the regiment never left him and he took on the task of Secretary of the Angus Branch of The Black Watch Association and his hard work helped the Branch become a going concern. He held the post of Branch Vice President until he died. He was also a great supporter of the Regular Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Dining Club and he was well liked and respected by all fellow members. He was vociferous in his opposition to the merger of the Black Watch and had he been in better health would have contributed greatly to the campaign to retain the regiment.

Those young Senior and Junior NCOs who served under Denis learned a great deal from him which they were able to put into practice in the years to follow. The regiment has lost a great soldier in his passing and the turnout at his funeral was a demonstration of the respect he enjoyed.

R J W Proctor

I first came into contact with Denis Giles in 1951 when I joined the 1st Battalion's MT platoon at Montgomery Barracks, Berlin. He was the Technical Corporal in charge of the FAMTO – First Aid Motor Transport Outfits (or spare parts stores to you and me). He was a wizard at the job and had a photographic memory. When I returned from the MTO's course at Bordon he was promoted to Sergeant.

It was in the capacity of MT Technical Sergeant that he handed over the immaculate stores in Berlin and took over those in a terrible state in Buxtehude.

I sought him out to be MT Sergeant and it was arranged that ex-Band Sergeant Gray should go on a Bordon Course to take over from Denis.

The move to Korea was ordered and it was agreed that both Denis and I should go on the Advance Party to fly to Korea and that Sergeant Gray should join the Battalion's Main Party on the troop ship, after having finished his course.

As luck would have it, Sergeant Gray developed an appendicitis on board ship and was disembarked in Singapore to go to hospital. Thus in Korea, Denis Giles did both the MT Sergeant and MT Technical Sergeant's jobs until some weeks later Sergeant Gray rejoined.

Denis proved to be well up to both his tasks and was a pillar of strength for we had our problems, not the least of which was the need to find and train 40 drivers (due to the age and service limitations of the National Service Act of those qualified for service in Korea). Their training was achieved by farming out ten learners to 1st Royal Australian Regiment, to the New Zealand gunners of 16th NZ Field Regiment, and to 1 Norfolks and by running our own cadre for ten learners.

Denis became one of the leaders of the Senior NCOs at 'A' Echelon which was commanded by HQ Company Commander Major David Campbell, MC whose Sergeant Major was Broxden. Denis showed no sign of stress or dissatisfaction with his tasks or role.

To everyone's amazement he formed up to me, to his Company Commander, and to the CO – Lieutenant Colonel David Rose, DSO

– asking to be reverted to the rank of private soldier giving no reason for this request, which was granted after many attempts to dissuade him had failed.

He was posted to D Company under Major Claud Moir to whom I opined that I thought Denis wished to serve at the "sharp end" rather than at 'A' Echelon and that perhaps he was ribbed by those in the Mess given a rest from the forward platoons. Claud told me, a week later, that Denis showed considerable leadership and was now second-in-command of a section and had already led patrols. It didn't take long for him to get two stripes or a third.

Our paths then diverged and I saw him again infrequently in his many roles both as a Warrant Officer and after he was commissioned.

Denis Giles was a stalwart member of the Regiment, an honest and very likeable man. He married Betty and had a quarter in Berlin and they raised a happy family who supported him in his last illness.

I shall miss him.

Ian Critchley

I first met Denis Giles when I joined D Company, "The Golden Don", in Crail in 1955 and thereafter in Berlin. He was a hard taskmaster but a first class Company Sergeant Major, held in awe and respected by all and indeed in not a little fear by the subalterns!

Denis had become Regimental Sergeant Major when I was Adjutant in the mid 1960s in Warminster and Minden. He had by this time lost none of his enthusiasm or of his ability to put the fear of God into those who failed to meet his high standards. I also, however, came to know far more of the side of his character which he preferred to keep hidden – his sympathetic understanding of the Jocks and particularly his constructive thinking about how to improve the performance of the less able and how to reform those constantly in trouble. He was, above all, always keen to raise the status of his junior NCOs and was a great supporter of the Corporals Club. He will long be remembered by those who served with him as an outstanding Regimental Sergeant Major both in barracks and in the field.

Duncan Cameron

When I first joined the 1st Battalion in March 1957, over 50 years ago, I was posted to Don Company where I found Major Bruce Fortune MC and CSM Giles running the show. Denis Giles was one of those really smart Warrant Officers who knew exactly how the Battalion should be run and he chased any Jock who seemed to be moving slowly.

Later, in Cyprus, I was in Bravo Company under Captain Ian Buchanan and again with Denis Giles as our CSM but we all knew who was the real power behind the throne at our Outstation up at Mount Troodos. At least I certainly did, for Denis was never happy with my platoon; though honestly they were no worse than the other two sub-units. He was always firm and also very fair and one basked in any praise that he occasionally gave away.

Much later on, in 1966, when I was the Adjutant of the 4/5th Battalion The Black Watch TA in Dundee, Denis arrived to take over as Quartermaster. We both had to appreciate that the battalion was on its last lap, with a strength on paper of 400 but only 150 turned up at Annual Camp. Coming from 5 years as RSM of a very busy Regular Battalion (1BW) it was no easy adjustment, especially as the axe had fallen and the 4/5th was ordered to amalgamate with the 6/7th Battalion by the following year. Denis was commissioned at this time and became the Quartermaster of the new 3rd Battalion The Black Watch TA. Later still the 3rd Battalion was amalgamated into the 51st Highland Volunteers and Denis found himself coping with another reorganization and then, the TA formed three Battalions out of the original 13 Company Battalion. The 1st Battalion 51st Highland Volunteers contained all the Black Watch Companies. After all this, it was wonderful to hear that he had been awarded the MBE for his hard work and great administrative skills.

Denis was always very annoyed that in Minden, Officers' batmen were excused Muster Parades so that their Officers would be properly dressed and their rooms tidied each day. I remember him shouting at my batman "Never you mind Aitken, I'll get you one of these days!"

At his Thanksgiving Service at Frikheim, one well known member of the Fife Branch of the Regimental Association told me that he has shaved twice that morning, because when he had been a Jock, Denis was always chasing him for having a "five o'clock shadow". We were all rather frightened of him, but only because he was such a first class soldier.

Major C B Innes

After the troubles ceased in Xeros, Cyprus and we returned to the mundane peace time barrack life and prior to our final resting place in Dhekelia, was when Denis first started to be noticed; you always heard him long before you saw him. His tour in Warminster as RSM was frustrating to say the least. The Battalion was split with companies and platoons spread all over the place, some living in Wiltshire and others living in Hampshire. The Battalion was more or less dictated to by the School Directing Staff but Denis always made sure that we met up twice a month by having his drill parades in Knook Camp. There was always a need to show off the Battalion to the School of Infantry and the local people which Denis achieved by his high level of discipline.

The next posting was Minden and Denis was still the RSM. Minden to Germany is like Glasgow is to Scotland, a hard industrial city. The Cameronians had just left it under a cloud, as they had caused all sorts of problems and were named the "Poisoned Dwarfs". This was the first time that we heard of WHAM, winning hearts and minds. The Battalion had to pull out all the stops and show the people of Minden that we were a new broom and no more trouble would be caused.

Denis who was a great disciplinarian never stood any nonsense from anyone, held the Battalion together and everybody knew where they stood and he did this job admirably.

He was Black Watch through and through and whatever he did was for the good name of the regiment and he has to be admired for that.

I will never forget Denis. He was a regimental icon and will be sadly missed by the regimental circle and in particular by the Sergeants Dining Club. My thoughts go out to his dear wife Betty and his family.

Major Bob Ritchie

TALBOT N HAINAULT

Talbot Hainault who died in June 2010 was commissioned into the Black Watch, together with two other officers, from 161 (RMC) OCTU Sandhurst in February 1946.

Later in the month he joined the Depot at Queens Barracks (also known as 42 Primary Training Centre (PTC)) and was posted to the Training Company at Kinfauns Castle, commanded by Major Buzz Pollok-McCall and with the Second in Command, Captain Sandy Leslie (whose leg was still in callipers after a very serious wound sustained in the last weeks of the war in North West Europe).

In April or May, Talbot was posted to the 1st Battalion, then commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Berowald Innes, which had just moved from Hesedorf to Duisburg. There followed two years of instability with a battalion grossly over strength while the time expired regulars and conscripts were returning to civilian life and the battalion prepared to receive their first drafts of National Service soldiers. There was much work to do to maintain skills and prevent boredom, a difficult task in the Ruhr part of Germany which had been totally devastated by the war and where there were few amenities for off duty Jocks.

Talbot took a full part in all the activities, keeping busy as Assistant Signal Officer. An enthusiastic skier, he took every opportunity to use his skills to encourage all ranks to take up the sport, which was readily accessible at various leave centres in Germany and Austria.

After leaving the Army he spent a year at the Sorbonne and two years at Oxford. He joined an advertising agency and was much involved with John Betjeman in a Shell sponsored series of travel films in Great Britain. Later he formed his own company and produced a series of training films sponsored by National Westminster Bank. He also produced a most successful 'son et lumier' show at the Tower of London.

Talbot was an enthusiastic and loyal Black Watch man. He seldom missed a Regimental function and kept in touch with many old comrades particularly Major David Campbell and Brigadier Mike Wingate-Gray. In the best traditions of the Regiment he seems to have invented a new order of dress as shown in his photograph. It is fortunate that his then Adjutant Denys Rowan-Hamilton didn't see it!

Major General A L Watson



DANIEL DIXON KNOWLES

Danny Knowles who was born on 7 November 1926 was granted an Emergency Commission into the Regiment in May 1946, serving in the Middle East (Palestine) until 1949.

His basic training took place in Scotland and that was when he developed a love of the Scottish Highlands (despite the weather). Later in life he became a keen fisherman making regular trips to Scotland.

Danny moved to a small farm in the Lake District in 1961 and when in 2006 his wife Betty died after 56 years together, his son Robert brought Danny to Balhousie Castle and they enjoyed visiting the Black Watch Monument in Aberfeldy. They had planned another trip this year but sadly Danny died on 14 April 2010 aged 83.



MAJOR ALAN NORRIS MBE

Alan was born on 25 July 1923 in Hull and died on 17 September 2010 aged 87.

He joined the Army on the 28th of April 1942 and having undergone basic training, served as a Weapon Training Instructor at No 8 Infantry Training Centre (Perth), with the 10th Battalion The Black Watch and other Battle Schools.

In May 1950 he joined the 1st Battalion in Berlin and then served in Crail, Korea and Kenya before moving as a CSM to Queens Barracks in 1955. He rejoined the battalion in Cyprus and served as CSM A Company and then RQMS in both Cyprus and Warminster.

He was selected for promotion and served as Garrison Sergeant Major in British Honduras (1962-63) before being posted as RSM of the 6th/7th Battalion. He was Commissioned on 14 October 1965 and was initially QM of the 6th/7th Battalion before moving to become QM of the 1st Battalion in Minden. He spent 8 years as QM, serving in Kirknewton, Gibraltar, Hong Kong and Colchester.

His final posting from 1974-1978 was as QM at the School of Education.

Alan was awarded his LS&GC in 1960 and the MBE in 1972. He was a quiet but intelligent and articulate man who was hugely loyal to the Regiment. He was supported by his wife Dorreen who he married in 1947.



LIEUTENANT GENERAL PETER WALLS

Born in Rhodesia in 1927, Peter Walls was granted an Emergency Commission in the Regiment and was gazetted as a Second Lieutenant on 16 March 1946 however he resigned his commission when the Army decided to transfer him, choosing in his own words "to return to my beloved Rhodesia rather than serve in any regiment other than The Black Watch".

He joined the Rhodesian Army and served in Malaya (1951-53). He then commanded the 1st Battalion, the Rhodesian Light Infantry. In 1972 he was appointed as GOC the Rhodesian Army shortly before Ian Smith declared UDI. The Declaration of Independence led to an intensification of the guerrilla war from neighbouring countries. By 1977 he was appointed head of Joint Operations Command but the tide was turning against Rhodesia and Ian Smith turned to the British Government in an effort to mediate, in the hope of creating a political solution.

After Robert Mugabe's election victory, Walls became a target for blame from the white population and he was eventually removed by Mugabe who became convinced Walls was secretly organizing a coup.

Peter Walls went into exile in South Africa. He died on 20 July 2010.



GRAHAM WEIR BAIRD DCM

Sergeant Graham Baird was born on the 22nd of May 1922 and died on the 10th of June 2010. Brought up as a boy in Methil, where he attended primary school, he then moved on to Buckhaven High School to complete his secondary education. Although the son of a miner, he decided he would like to try his skill at joinery and this he did, taking up an apprenticeship in the area. The Army was always his first calling and when the opportunity to join up came, Graham grasped it with both hands.



He was quite a tall man and although the offer of taking up arms in the Guards was voiced he declined, preferring his County Regiment The Black Watch. Graham was then sent to Thurso for training and on completing that he joined the 6th Battalion. During war time, soldiers were often transferred from one unit to another and it was during one of these transfers to the West Surrey's, that on the 26th of February 1944 in the Anzio area, he was wounded in an action which resulted in his award of the DCM. The citation from the London Gazette said "Sergeant Baird set a most splendid example. His great endurance, courage and determination could not have been surpassed".

Before his demobilisation, Graham managed to get back to the Battalion and on leaving the service, he decided not to return to his trade but joined the Dunfermline City Police. He attained the rank of Sergeant before retiring in 1975. He went on to be a metal turner and a hospital porter before finally retiring. Graham loved to dance and sing (mostly folk songs) but always wanted to play an instrument but could never master any.

Graham was a regular attendee at the Regimental Reunion in Perth and members of the Fife Branch attended his funeral to show their support which was greatly appreciated by the family and his friends.

R M Scott

ALISTAIR (ALLY) BEEDIE

Ally Beedie died aged 73 on 22 August 2010, after a brave fight against illness. Ally was born and brought up in Blairgowrie and after serving his time as a joiner followed his younger brother Jim into the Black Watch. Both brothers were at the Queens Barracks at the same time, Jim in 126 Squad and Ally in 128.



On completion of his training Ally joined the 1st Battalion in Cyprus and was posted to the MT Platoon. His leadership skills and always immaculate turnout were soon noticed and he quickly gained promotion, to Corporal.

On the battalion's return to Warminster he joined D Company at the School of Infantry and was for a time a section commander in 15 Platoon.

On completion of his six year engagement, Ally left the regiment and worked at his trade as a joiner. He then changed employment and became a long distance lorry driver, as did his brother Jim, when he left the service. After retirement Ally continued to work part time as a driver up until illness forced him to completely retire in April of this year.

Although Ally left the army in 1964, he continued to support the Black Watch Association by being a loyal and active member of the Blairgowrie Branch until its closure. He was also a long serving member of the Blairgowrie Black Watch Club Committee.

Ally spent a great deal of his spare time with his family and was a driving force in the Black Watch Association bowling fraternity and was also an active member of the local bowling club.

A large number of members attended his funeral as a mark of respect to a good Black Watch man. He will be missed by many people who knew him.

Major R J W Proctor

LLEWELLYN BRADLEY

Llew Bradley died on 28 July in Perth Australia but he had undergone his basic training for military service at Cameron Barracks before then being posted to Queens Barracks in Perth. He then served with the 2nd Battalion in India and was in Pakistan at the time of partition.



His great pride was to have been in the platoon team that won the Rhodesian Shield. In 1948 it was competed for as an inter company drill competition. At that stage Llew was a Corporal. He was then posted with a draft to The Highland Light Infantry in Palestine before returning as an NCO Instructor to Fort George. He was discharged in 1949.

Llew recently had a replica of the Rhodesian Shield made (see Red Hackle May 2009) which now hangs in his grandson's home in Australia.

Wendy Stalker

GORDON BRASS

Corporal Gordon Brass was killed in a tragic climbing accident on 28 May 2010.

He was born into The Black Watch family, his father being a Sergeant in the battalion. Like many other sons of the regiment he spent his early years travelling the globe and his first school was Talavera Primary in Werl, West Germany. Kirknewton and Berlin followed but he completed his schooling at Morgan Academy in Dundee. It was here he learnt to enjoy rugby.



He enlisted into the Army in December 1994 and joined the 1st Battalion. He completed 3 tours in Northern Ireland in 1995, 1999 and 2006. He also deployed with the battalion to Kosovo in 2001 and to Iraq in 2003 and 2004. He completed six operational tours in the space of 10 years.

He was promoted to Lance Corporal in 1998 and to Corporal in 2007 and he became an experienced and respected JNCO who had a great love of outdoor pursuits; skiing, biking, hill walking, canoeing and climbing were all activities that he enjoyed. He also had a great willingness to pass on his enthusiasm for these activities to other people. These activities now played a major role in the direction his career was to follow.

In 2002 he was posted to AFCO Glasgow and later in 2008 he joined the Army Preparation Course in Perth as the Admin NCO. He was a natural recruiter who enjoyed the challenge of trying to persuade young men and women to join the Army and it was on one of the many activities in support of an Army Preparation Course that he died.

Gordon was a genuine and enthusiastic man who lived life to the full and his family and many friends will miss him.

RICHARD CARTWRIGHT

Richard, better known as Dickie, died in Newcastle and was cremated on 4th August 2010 at the West Road Crematorium. A substantial Guard of Honour, made up of Black Watch and Tyneside Scottish members, as well as comrades from his pipe band days, gave evidence of the affection and respect in which this man was held. Pipe Major W Anderson provided the musical tribute and the Branch Standard was carried by Mr W Brown.

Dickie joined the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders and did his early training at Fort George. Having been a bugler, he slipped easily into the Pipes and Drums. He soon realised that playing pipes held a number of advantages and undertook a course, which saw him emerge as a piper. From that moment, Dickie had found his place in the Regiment. After completion of his regular service, he joined the Tyneside Scottish to complete his reserve service commitment, which led to his membership of the Newcastle Branch of the Black Watch Association. Over the years, Dickie played with a number of North Eastern pipe bands, making a valuable and much appreciated contribution to the piping community. He will be missed by all who knew him and our sympathy and love goes to his family.

Malcolm Dunn

GRAHAM CUNNINGHAM

After a long illness Graham Cunningham died on the 2nd of April 2010. Graham was born on the 28th of February 1967 and as a boy attended the Methilhill Primary School and then went on to Buckhaven High School. After leaving school Graham had a short spell contemplating his future but decided to join the Army and at the age of sixteen he enlisted into the Junior Soldiers Company at the Bridge of Don Barracks Aberdeen. On completion of his training as a young soldier, Graham was then posted to the 1st Battalion in Werl as part of the British Army of the Rhine. He saw service in Canada, Northern Ireland, Edinburgh and Berlin. It was during his next posting with the battalion as a Resident Battalion in Northern Ireland that Graham demobilised and returned to Methil. It was also during this time that Graham's illness worsened and eventually led to his early death. He will be sadly missed by his family and all who knew him.



R M Scott

PAUL DIAMOND

Paul Diamond died in June 2010 aged 47. He joined K Company 51st Highland Volunteers in 1988 and also served with the Company when the battalion was retitled as the 3rd (Volunteer) Battalion The Black Watch in 1995 and left a year later in 1996. He was employed in the stores for most of his service and was one of the stalwart members of the Company who could always be relied upon to turn out and turn his hand to numerous jobs from cooking the meals to issuing weapons and stores.

He was a great innovator who used his initiative to make himself comfortable and this was ably demonstrated during a week on exercise when the company had to occupy "hide positions". Initially Corporal Diamond could not be found but after an exhaustive search he was located snugly tucked up in the back canopy of the stores 4 ton truck which he converted into a very comfortable hammock.

He was a great character who was well respected by his comrades in the TA and will be sadly missed.



Major R W Proctor

HARRY DOUGLAS

Born and bred in Hawick, Harry was, until his death the oldest known Black Watch veteran. He had celebrated his centenary in October 2007 and sadly died on 7 September 2010.

He enlisted in Perth and served from 12 December 1940 until his medical discharge in 1942 after an operation left him unable to hear.



JOHN SCOTT DUFFY

John Scott Duffy died on 16th September 2009 at the age of 91.

He was born in Dundee on 3rd February 1918. An intelligent lad he did well at school and as a keen runner was a member of the Dundee Hawkhill Harriers. This was a skill that served him well when he ran off to Queen's Barracks, and on that occasion being a little economical with the truth, enlisted at the tender age of 15! His secret didn't last long, though. Being rumbled – and the Pipes and Drums short of volunteers – he was given the option of either join-



ing them or being forced to serve as a Boy Soldier. He subsequently proved to be a skilled drummer and bugler!

Posted to the 2nd Battalion in India, he moved with them to Palestine before the outbreak of war; he deployed with the 2nd Battalion to British Somaliland in July 1940. Shoulder to shoulder with his comrades and against overwhelming odds he took part in the successful rearguard action at Barkasan, before the Battalion's withdrawal to Berbera and its subsequent evacuation to Egypt. Following their arrival in Egypt, he along with others from the Battalion, enjoyed a brief, and evidently successful, sojourn as a bodyguard to General Wavell.

But soon it was back to the Battalion and he deployed as part of HQ Company to Crete. During the subsequent German invasion of the island in May 1941 he fought at Heraklion. Unfortunately, wounded in both legs by mortar fire and having lost a finger, he was one of those left behind when defeat was grabbed from the jaws of victory and the island was evacuated. As a consequence John spent the remainder of the war in Silesia as an inmate of Stalag 8b.

Surviving a brush with the SS in the Balkans on the way to the camp, he found himself, amongst other tasks, forced to work in a coal mine. He never lost hope and was bolstered by his experiences on Crete. That action, against the best troops the Germans possessed, instilled in him the overwhelming belief that the Allies would in time prevail. Unfortunately, the Germans emptied the POW camps ahead of the advancing Red Army and along with many others, he was forced to undertake the nightmare march down through Poland and Czechoslovakia and into Germany. Enduring the grievous cold of one of the longest and coldest winters of the twentieth century, living on no more than an onion or half-rotten turnip per day and wearing little more than rags, he survived where sadly many did not.

After the cessation of hostilities and repatriation to the UK, he was stationed at Cawthorne Camp in South Yorkshire. It was during this time that he met my mother and on his demob in 1946 he settled near Barnsley where, after continuing his education, he enjoyed a successful career as a builder and Clerk of Works and was a founding member of the Pontefract Caledonian Pipe band. Following his retirement, my father enjoyed nothing more than to spend his time tending his various gardens in the company of his second wife Edna.

These few words can only summarise his much fuller life. Always a modest man, he was deeply proud to have been a member of 'The Watch' and we are deeply proud of him for having been. My father had the heart of a lion and will be greatly missed.

Iain Stewart Duffy

JAMES DICKSON FERGUS

James Dickson Fergus, known to his friends as Jim, was an In-Pensioner of the Royal Hospital Chelsea and died in the Infirmary there on 11 May 2010 at the age of 87. He was born in Musselburgh on 22 August 1922, the eldest of two brothers. Early life for them was hard as their father, who had served in the Gloucestershire Regiment during the First World War, died when Jim was only 8 years old. He therefore decided to lighten the burden on his mother by enlisting into the Army at the earliest opportunity and in December 1936, at the age of 14, he joined the Black Watch in Edinburgh as a Boy Soldier. On 18 December 1940, still a Boy, he was posted to the 2nd Battalion at Maryhill Barracks, Glasgow but when they moved to Palestine he was underage and was sent to Dover Castle to await the arrival there of the 1st Battalion. When the 1st Battalion joined the British Expeditionary Force Jim was posted to Perth, where he officially entered Man's Service on 22 February 1940. From Perth Jim was posted to 70th Battalion at Milnathort as a Lance Corporal, and then Corporal, training potential officers. In 1942 he was posted to Arbroath and in 1943 he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant.



From Arbroath he was posted to Sierra Leone to join the 1st Battalion West African Frontier Force and while here he volunteered for service in Burma. He was sent to India in March 1945, where he attended the Small Arms School at Saugor before moving to a transit camp ready to fly to Burma. However, the war ended while he was in transit and so, in March 1946, Jim returned to the UK and the BW Depot at Perth. A posting to Lagos and the 1st Bn Nigerian Regiment followed in

September 1947. In July 1948 he returned to Scotland where two of his subsequent tours were at the Highland Brigade Training Centre, Fort George. One of the posts he held whilst there was that of CSM Drafting Company for Korea.

Jim was posted to the REME at Malvern, Worcestershire and rebadged to that Corps in January 1955. In 1956 he moved to Bordon where he later took over as RQMS on the Long Service List. A further tour as RQMS followed with Middle East Command, Aden, in 1966. He returned to the UK in 1967 and in August of that year, after more than 27 years with the Colours, he retired from the Army. However, he did not stray far from it, as he then became a Civilian Barrack Inventory Accountant with the RAOC at the Accommodation Services Unit, Bulford, where he remained until his final retirement in 1986 when he and his wife Annie moved to Colchester. There he was able to enjoy his pastimes of golf, gardening and relaxing on his boat.

Annie died in 1995 at which time they had been married for 51 years. Their son James and daughter Frances were married with families of their own so, in 1998, Jim sold his bungalow in Colchester and entered the Royal Hospital Chelsea as an In-Pensioner, remaining there as a hard working and highly respected member of the community for almost 12 years, until his death in May 2010. Five members of the London Branch and Pipe Major Eddie McHale were able to attend Jim's funeral at the Royal Hospital Chapel to celebrate Jim's life of service and loyalty to the Crown.

Jim Keating

JOHN GIBSON

John Gibson passed away on the 9th of May 2010 aged 67 after suffering a severe illness for over a year. John who moved with his family to Carnoustie from South Uist joined the regiment in September 1962 at Stirling Castle, which at the time was the combined depot of The Black Watch and Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. On passing out from Lucknow Platoon he joined the 1st Battalion at Knook Camp, Warminster in November and after draft training was posted to B Company.

In August 1963 the battalion took part in a six week exercise in Malta. John who was a quiet and reserved young soldier met Vicky, a lovely young Maltese girl and unlike many holiday romances, they continued to see each other and were married on the 3rd of January 1965.

John qualified as an AFV 432 driver in Minden and soon gained a reputation for being a safe and reliable driver. On moving from Minden to Kirknewton, John moved to the MT platoon as a 4 Ton driver which was his employment until he completed his engagement in 1971. He served with the battalion in Malaysia, Gibraltar and on the short tours in Northern Ireland.

On leaving the service John, Vicky and their family emigrated to Australia where they spent four years before returning to settle for the rest of their married life in Mellieta, Malta which was the nearest town to where the battalion was accommodated in 1963. John had been employed by Royal Doulton when he lived in Australia and in the maintenance team of a hotel in Malta before becoming self employed a year before he died.

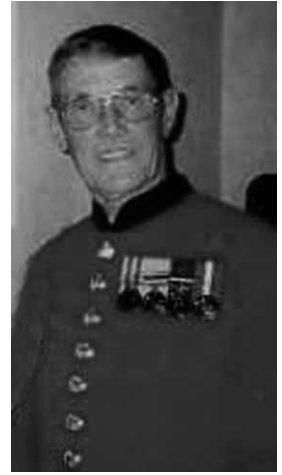
John's interest in the regiment continued throughout his life. He was a member of the Angus Branch of the Association and liked to be kept informed as to what was going on in the regiment. On his visits to Scotland he always visited Balhousie Castle. John was a quiet, gentle person who was a great family man and was much loved by his children and grandchildren.

Major R J W Proctor



SERGEANT PETER D GRAYDON

Pete Graydon died on the 18 April 2010 at the age of 84. He was well known throughout The Black Watch, having served in both the 2nd and 1st Battalions on the Provost Staff and as a PTI – duties that others serving at the time tend to associate him with, particularly if they were unfortunate enough to have received a 'beasting' from him to rectify the error of their ways! Pete was a good regimental soldier. He loved life in the Black Watch, was incredibly smart and, being a tall man with a fine military bearing, could always be picked out on parade. He also had a great sense of humour, and never missed the chance to play a practical joke on his friends if the opportunity arose. One of his favourite jokes was when, as a senior Corporal marching the Company Orderly Corporals of the day into the RSM's (then 'Big Pat') office, he would quickly remove a flash from the hose top of an unwary corporal before throwing open the door and marching them in. Big Pat's eagle eye quickly picked up this heinous dress infringement and the innocent 'offender' would receive one of the RSM's famous – or to the offender, infamous – verbal roastings, thus keeping both the Corporals and Sergeants Messes amused for the remainder of the day!



Pete was one of several soldiers to be detached from the Black Watch and attached to the KOSB to strengthen their battalion in Korea. When the 2nd Battalion was disbanded he joined the 1st Battalion, serving initially in A Company in Berlin and subsequently in his service, B, Support and HQ Companies. He was a Platoon Sergeant in the Anti Tank Platoon in Warminster and had several tours in the post of both Provost Corporal and subsequently Provost Sergeant in postings including, Minden and Kirknewton.

When he left the Army at the end of his service Pete became an agent for an insurance company in Bracknell, Berkshire, and remained as such until reaching retirement age.

After the death of his wife Mary he became an In Pensioner at The Royal Hospital Chelsea for a few years, but apart from the excellent gymnasium facility there that he made good use of, and the opportunity that it gave him to pursue his hobby of photography, he did not enjoy life as an In Pensioner and left to return to Bracknell. Pete was a supportive member of the London Branch and is much missed by his many friends and colleagues there. Our condolences go to his sons Nigel and Mark.

Jim Keating

SERGEANT JOHNNY HUGHES

Johnny who was nicknamed "the General" was a real character who left many people with fond memories. Sadly he died on Sunday 27th June 2010 at home in Glenrothes. He was born in Glasgow in November 1939. After leaving school Johnny enlisted into the Royal Engineers for three years; he then spent a short time in Civvy Street working as a distiller before re-enlisting into The Black Watch on the 8th August 1957. Johnny restarted his career at Stirling Castle and then served in Warminster, Malta, Germany, North Africa, Cyprus, Edinburgh, Malaysia, Gibraltar, Northern Ireland, Catterick and Belize returning to some locations on a number of occasions. During his career he served in A (Grenadier) Company, Charlie (Fire Support) Company and HQ Company. He was a keen Anti Tanker in the 1970s and he trained and instructed on the Wombat and Conbat (120mm anti-tank guns). Whilst with A Company he had the role of Company Clerk and many people who came across him will remember mistaking him as the Company Sergeant Major. In Werl he managed the Medical Centre looking after the soldiers and the families. Following Johnny's 22 years of service in the Black Watch he left the Army in January 1982 and settled in Glenrothes,



Fife. Whilst working for Securicor he carried out jobs in guard service and as a cash in transit officer based in Dundee. In 2002 Johnny had his legs amputated but not at the same time. He never let this affect him and whilst he endured lots of discomfort, he soldiered on. He was a generous and kind man who had a sense of humour and he remained proud of his time as a Black Watch soldier and considered that the training he received allowed him to go on and achieve many other things in his life. He was very proud that his son David joined the Regiment reaching the rank of WO2. The Black Watch and his family have lost a stalwart friend; he will be sadly missed by those who had the privilege of knowing him.

ALFRED WILLIAM HYETT

Alfred William Hyett of the 1st Battalion The Black Watch died peacefully in hospital on 17 May 2010 aged 90.

He originally served in the Royal Artillery but he joined the 1st Battalion The Black Watch on 2 March 1944 and was then sent to France and Holland. It was while he was there that he was wounded by shrapnel. His sergeant and two of his friends were killed in the same incident and he was then sent back to England to recover. He was discharged on 30 June 1946.

Alfred loved Scotland and was very proud to have been in The Black Watch. Both these subjects were dear to his heart and were often his main topic of conversation.

After leaving the Forces he worked as head gardener at Cowley Manor near Cheltenham until he retired in 1985. He was a devoted husband to Frances and a devoted dad to his four children.

He always eagerly awaited his copy of the Red Hackle and so would have felt it a great honour and been immensely proud to have a mention in it.

Alfred will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Mrs Sandra Keen



CSM ANDREW RITCHIE

Andrew Ritchie was born in Fraserburgh on 5 October 1922 and died on the 7th July 2010. He lived with his grandparents and as a boy wanted to follow his grandfather, who owned his own fishing trawler, into the fishing industry. There were several occasions when, as a youngster, he hid under the nets on his grandfather's boat and only came out of hiding when he knew the boat was too far out to turn back and put him ashore. However, it was his grandfather's wish that Andrew did not become a fisherman so, respecting this, he joined the Army instead.

He enlisted into the Black Watch at Dundee on 18 September 1938 and after training, was posted to join his battalion at Dover Castle. He fought with the Black Watch in the Middle East and was with Orde Wingate's Chindits in Burma. On return he married Sylvia, the girl he had met in Dover some six years earlier and with whom he kept in touch throughout the war. After the war Andrew was posted as a WO2 PSI to the TA and one of his most treasured memories was, as a Company Sergeant Major, being presented to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother at The Freedom of Forfar Parade in 1956.

When he left the Army in 1963 Andrew and Sylvia bought a newsagents shop in Margate and ran this successfully until retiring in 1985.



Jim Keating

JAMES (JIMMY) CLARK STEWART

Jimmy was born in Methven Perthshire on 15 December 1918. He joined the Black Watch shortly after war was declared on 16 October 1939 and was sent to France, then into Belgium to the Albert canal. When the German Blitzkrieg commenced in the Spring on 1940 he along with his comrades were forced back to Dunkirk – having to damage their vehicles by smashing the distributor and cylinder heads. Jimmy got to Dunkirk on 25 May 1940, however his section were reformed and sent back to fight a rear guard action to allow the ships to get as many men off the beaches at Dunkirk as possible.



Jimmy got back to the beaches at la Panne around the 1 June and recalled saying to a comrade he met on the beach from another regiment – 'well Tam will we ever see the church steeple of Meffan (Methven) church again' Fortunately they both did. Jimmy was evacuated and then sent to the Isle of Wight to prepare for the invasion. When this did not happen, he then returned to Scotland and recalls his training on the West Coast of Scotland on Lord Lovat's estate near Inverary.

In 1942 the 6th Battalion was despatched to North Africa and was at El Alamein and Tobruk. He was a driver for Major I D M Liddell and on one occasion was presented to Sir Winston Churchill when he visited the troops. Jimmy also played football for the regiment and when not in the front line often played in matches.

Italy was his next theatre and in 1944 he recalls seeing Mount Vesuvius erupting. He also took part in the battle for Monte Cassino and recalled German snipers and tough hand to hand fighting.

Jimmy moved with the 6th Battalion to Greece in December of 1944 to fight the communist partisans. He ended the war in Greece and then recalled a very long train journey back through war torn Europe to England and he was demobbed at Catterick Camp in January 1946.

Jimmy like all Black Watch soldiers was immensely proud of the regiment and the red hackle. He wore his bonnet with the red hackle to many many Remembrance Day services. He was also extremely proud to march with fellow veterans in the El Alamein parade in Perth on 26 October 2002.

He was also aware that his name was in a book in a museum in Paris that commemorates the evacuation of Dunkirk in 1940. He did attempt to find this book in the summer of 2000, however managed to spark a Police hunt for him as he went missing from the tour party he was with in Paris, with all his belongings being found in the tour party's hotel. He was missing for four days, however turned up safe and sound back in Perth on the day the bus tour was due to return. When asked by his family how he managed to return by his own means (through Eurostar and overnight bus to Perth) with no money or passport. His reply was 'Oh that's easy any good Black Watch soldier keeps their money and passport in their sock!'

After a year in a care home with dementia, Jimmy passed away on Sunday 25 July 2010 at the age of 91. Jimmy is greatly missed by his family.

Pamela McLauchlan

WO2 ERIC TAYLOR

Eric was born in Dumfries on 30 January 1925. His military career started with service in the Home Guard from the age of sixteen, to age seventeen and a half. He then enlisted on a Duration of Emergency Engagement and was posted to 58 PT Wing in Perth. He then moved to 70th Battalion (Young Soldiers) A&SH. He served in the North West Europe campaign with The Black Watch and the Royal Scots.

He enlisted on 6 July 1946 on a Regular Army engagement whilst serving with the Royal Scots and was posted to 1st Battalion The Black Watch at his request. From then until his retiral in November 1967 his service was with the 1st Battalion except for two periods when he was a PSI with



St Andrews UOTC (1958-61) and 4/5th Black Watch (TA) (1965-67). Whilst with the 1st Battalion he saw service in BAOR, Korea, Kenya and Cyprus.

It was during the 1950-51 tour of Berlin that he first met Maria and they were married on 22 August 1956 during the 1956-57 tour.

On leaving the Regiment he went to the Barber Institute in Birmingham initially in a security role but he found the buildings and picture galleries in such a poor state that he quickly became a curator and set about putting things right. He also assisted in organising more than a dozen Barber Institute Operas in the Institute Concert Hall and on one occasion played a part.

In retirement he and his wife took up golf, were keen walkers and maintained their interest in the theatre and music.

Eric died on 21 March 2010 one week after the death of his wife.

A R McKinnell

ERIC THACKER

Eric Thacker was born in Chesterfield on 28th February 1922. He joined the 7th Battalion, The Black Watch in 1939 and served with the battalion in North Africa, Sicily and Normandy. Eric told me that the 7th had a hard time in North Africa especially at El Alamein where he lost friends and his Commanding Officer.

Eric was captured for the first time by German forces on the approach to Tripoli but escaped in Tripoli whilst being transferred to the care of Italian troops.

He was captured again in Sicily, guarding the perimeter of an airfield. When their reliefs failed to arrive, Eric and the guard went to look for them and were captured. They escaped under cover of darkness and were told on their return to Battalion lines that they had been forgotten!

The 7th Battalion returned to Great Britain in late 1943 to prepare for the Normandy landings. Eric landed with the battalion in Normandy on D+3 and moved to Anguemy, near Caen. He was captured for the third time whilst giving covering fire to Engineers who were blowing up a building containing German snipers. German troops burst in on him as he was changing magazines on his Bren Gun. He remained in captivity until liberated by the Americans ten months later.

Eric was flown to an American hospital in France where he was treated very well and made an excellent recovery. He left the Army in 1946.

Eric became a State Registered Nurse, met his future wife Hildegard, also a nurse, on a work permit from Germany and worked in Birmingham. They married in 1952 and were together until Hildegard died in 2008.

Eric entered the Prison Service in 1963 and emigrated to Rhodesia in 1965 where he served until 1979. On their return to England Eric remained in the Prison Service for some years then returned to nursing until retirement.

He was a member of the Stoke-on-Trent Branch of The Black Watch Association. He died in Chesterfield on 18th June 2010, aged 88.

Ne Obliviscaris.

W B Thompson

CSM JOHN (BILL) SYDNEY WILLIAMS

Bill Williams died on 13th July 2010 at the age of 89. He would have been 90 on 23rd November. Christened John, he was known by several names: Gunner John, JS, Johnnie, Bill and Wullie. The first, Gunner, was because his family home was close to Highbury Stadium. His father died when Bill was four years old and at the age of six, young Bill was lured to Highbury by the roar of the Arsenal crowd. As children had to be accompanied to a game by an adult he would wait by the gates on match days for someone to take him in with them. No CRB checks in those days! He was known in the Black Watch as Bill and in the London Scottish as Wullie. As a lad Bill was a keen Boy Scout, eventually achieving his King's Scout award with the 14th North London Troop. When war broke out he was too young to enlist, so joined the Local Defence Volunteers – subsequently the Home Guard – until 1940, when he enlisted in the Black Watch. As a boy he had always been interested in the pipes,

buying his first chanter for 1/6d, and once in the army he set about learning to play. He remained a piper throughout his war service, firstly with the 10th Battalion in the north of Scotland, carrying out assault training in Caithness, and then from 1942 to 1945 with the 1st Battalion, serving with them in North Africa, Sicily and North West Europe. After demobilization in 1947 he returned to his civilian job as an auditor in the Civil Service, eventually rising to the post of Chief Auditor. As soon as the TA was reformed he joined the 1st Battalion London Scottish. By 1948 he was a L/Cpl Piper and two years later the Pipe Sergeant. However, wanting a change and a new challenge, Bill reverted to the rank of Private and transferred to the Mortar Platoon of Support Company. By 1953 he was Mortar Sergeant and had the honour of being one of the escorts to the London Scottish Regimental Colour at the Coronation Parade in 1953. He subsequently transferred to HQ Company as CQMS and in 1955 was promoted to CSM. In 1959, the year of the Regiment's Centenary, he again escorted the Colour, this time for the Queen's Guard at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh. In 1962 his job took him north for a couple of years, so he transferred to the 6th Northumberland Fusiliers, rejoining the London Scottish on his return to London and finally hanging up his boots when the TA re-organised in 1967. Bill met his wife Margaret when he joined a highland dancing class in London. He became an accomplished dancer and instructed at the London Scottish Regimental Reel Club. For several years thereafter his highland dancing skills were put to the test at the annual Children's Party when he occupied the front legs of 'Spider', the Military Pantomime Horse!

Bill maintained a keen interest in the pipes, writing many pipe tunes and attending competitions and festivals. He will be remembered for his detailed conversations with fellow pipers, at the bar, on the merits of particular tunes. Once the words hee drum or hodrum were heard the non-pipers knew it was time to withdraw and leave them to it! In the Sergeants' Mess, Bill was the sole user of the snuff horn, which he always offered to others, although few ever accepted. Because of his auditing background Bill was often asked to be the Treasurer or Auditor for local sports clubs and organizations close to his home in Beckenham, Kent. He continued to support "the Gunners" and the London Scottish Rugby Club. In 1981 he was elected to join The Ancients* and became their Honorary Piper in 1983. He enjoyed repairing long case clocks, one of which he presented to the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess of the London Scottish, where it remains as a fitting memorial to his years of dedicated service.

Bill's funeral took place at Beckenham Crematorium on 27th July. Some ninety friends and family attended, including Joe Roberts from the London Branch of the BW Association and 23 London Scots. Pipe Major John Spoor RVM piped and at the end of the ceremony he played Heilan' Laddie, the Regimental March of both the London Scottish and the Black Watch. Margaret stopped at the chapel door and despite the Funeral Director trying to usher her forward, she stood still until the end of Heilan' Laddie. Margaret said afterwards "He would never move while the Regimental March was being played"!

**John Spoor reliably informs me that: "The Ancients" is a fraternity within the London Scottish. Membership is limited to 28 and is by invitation only. Nominees have to be voted in by the members and the appointment can only be by a unanimous vote. All "Ancients" must have been a member of the London Scottish Sergeants Mess and, when Wullie was voted in, members required at least 20 years service. In John's words "Wullie will be seen off by plenty of friends and by this most exclusive burial group".*

Jim Keating



DEATH NOTICES

The following deaths have also been recorded:

SANDY JOHNSTONE

Sergeant Sandy Johnstone who served in 1BW from 1964 to 1986 died suddenly at home on 29 August 2010. A full obituary will be published in the next edition of the magazine.



ANTONY (TONY) YOUNG died in Salisbury on 8 September 2010. He served in the 2nd Battalion in Germany and British Guyana before transferring to the Army Pay Corps. He left the army in 1964 and then joined the Territorial Army serving with both The Black Watch and Royal Corps of Transport. He was for a long time a member of The Black Watch Club in Perth and the organizer of the 2nd Battalion reunions.

HENRY REEVES of Humberston, Grimsby died on 16 September 2010.

KENNETH CECIL CHADWICK

Kenneth Cecil Chadwick was born in York on 7 November 1926 and served in the Regiment during the 2nd World War (at the Battle of Monte Cassino) and later in Korea. He also served with the Gibraltar Defence Regiment.

On leaving the Army in 1957 he joined Oxford City Police, which later became part of Thames Valley Police and he served with them for 25 years until he retired in 1982.

He died in Oxford on 16 June 2010.



He was enormously proud of his service in The Black Watch and the Regiment sent a wreath to his family as well as the condolences of the Regimental Association.

JOHN CARSLAW

John Carslaw died on the 17th of June 201 after a long fight against cancer. Born in Glasgow on the 2nd of October 1932 he joined the Regiment aged 19 after some previous service in the Merchant Navy. He served with the 1st Battalion in Korea and Kenya and whilst he did not talk about either conflict to his family he told them of the funny side of soldering, being chased up a tree by a rhino and eating zebra meat long before "exotic" meat became fashionable.

He met his wife Pat in Colchester where she was training to be a nurse and they married in 1955. They then lived in Gloucester. In retirement he was able to attend Regimental reunions at Balhousie Castle which he always enjoyed.

John is survived by his wife Pat and five children to whom we extend the sympathy of the Regiment.



GEORGE PATERSON

George Paterson was born 26/9/1918, Joined the 1st Bn in 1938, Army No 2756078, Captured at St Valery 12th June 1940 and marched the 1,000 miles to POW camp 3A, Prisoner No 1320 where he remained for the duration of WW11. George also had two brothers in the Black Watch, Sgt Charles Paterson killed at Monte Casino 14th May 1944 and Pte James Paterson also thought to have been captured at St Valery.

WILLIAM BORTHWICK died on 17 March 2010 aged 65 years.

VISIT OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE DUKE OF ROTHESAY TO BALHOUSIE CASTLE

As part of the celebrations of the 800th Anniversary of Perth, the Duke of Rothesay visited Perth on 1 June 2010. One of the visits scheduled for that day was to Balhousie Castle and he managed to spend an hour at the castle meeting many elements of the regimental family and well over 50 people were presented to His Royal Highness and many others were able to chat with him.

On the arrival of the Duke of Rothesay, General Irwin in his capacity as the Chairman of the Trustees introduced the Representative Colonel (Brig ML Riddell – Webster), a number of the Trustees (Majors Noble and McMicking and Captain Montgomery), the Chief Executive (Mr Iannetta) and the Commanding Officer of 51 Highland/7 SCOTS, Lieutenant Colonel Viscount Chelsea (one of the two TA battalions of the new regiment). Then in his role as Patron of The Black Watch Heritage Appeal he was briefed about the development plans for the museum and castle. He then met 13 of the members of the Black Watch Association Welfare Committee who do such excellent work in providing benevolence to Black Watch soldiers, veterans and their families. That was followed by the presentation of the Elizabeth Cross to Mrs Yvonne Dallas, the niece of Pte James Graham who had been killed in action in Kenya on 1 January 1955.



The Duke of Rothesay hears from a budding Gordon Ramsay the merits of “boil in the bag” rations.

His Royal Highness then met Lieutenant Rob Colquhoun, Corporal Richard Clark MC, Corporal Craig Sharp MC and Pte Sam Morgan who had all served in Afghanistan. He presented Pte Morgan with his campaign medal before he met Captain Susan Duthie and Pte Paul McGuinness both members of the TA who had served with The Black Watch/3SCOTS during their recent operational tour.

On his way to the gardens to meet the Cadet Outreach teams he met the MOD staff and staff employed by the Trustees. The Outreach Project is a youth diversion scheme aimed at crime vulnerable 11- 12 year olds in their last year at primary school. Supported by the ACF, the project which is run by Tayside Police and



The Royal party arriving.



The Duke of Rothesay meets Lieutenant Colonel Viscount Chelsea.

Perth and Kinross Council, aims to provide team building and citizenship skills. Colonel Martin Passmore Commandant of the Black Watch ACF Battalion introduced police, council staff, head teachers and cadets who are involved in the project.

There was just time to chat to the pipers from The Black Watch/3 SCOTS and to meet some children from Kinnoull Primary School and his hour at Balhousie Castle was over.



Mr Bob Mitchell (Angus Branch) speaks to the Duke of Rothesay after His Royal Highness had presented The Elizabeth Cross to Mrs Yvonne Dallas, niece of Pte James Graham who was killed in action in Kenya on 1 January 1955. Mr Alexander Dallas (right) looks on.



Boys and girls from Kinnoull Primary School meet the Royal visitor.

PRIVATE GEORGE ROSE OF THE 73RD (HIGHLAND) REGIMENT OF FOOT

Readers may be interested to see a photograph of an exhibition being held at the National Army Museum. The information used in the exhibition was provided by the Museum of The Black Watch and a full article about George Rose appeared in the May 2001 Red Hackle Magazine.

George Rose was one of the highest ranking black soldiers of his day. Originally from Jamaica, he joined the British Army in 1809. He fought and was wounded at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.

After joining the 42nd (Royal Highland) Regiment of Foot in 1817, he reached the rank of sergeant. By 1837 various injuries had made him unfit for service and he was discharged after serving for 29 years and 293 days. Described as 'a good, efficient, and exemplary soldier, trustworthy and sober', he was awarded a pension. Rose became a Methodist minister in Scotland. Later he returned to Jamaica, where he died in 1873.

He is shown here in the uniform of his first regiment, the 73rd (Highland) Regiment of Foot, in 1815.



National Army Museum display, showing Private Rose.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST VALERY-EN-CAUX

The tragic battle of St. Valery in June 1940 remains an event of significance in the history of the Highland Division. With the survivors now in their nineties you would not expect many of them to be present at the 70th Anniversary of the battle and so it was gratifying to find that eight veterans, all of them very fit, had managed to make the journey. They had all been transported from door to door by their families. In addition, there were over 200 friends and supporters who had come to St. Valery, most for the first time, to be part of the ceremonies. These were mostly sons and daughters of 1940 veterans who had been killed during the battle or who had passed away in more recent times. Included in this number were the grandson of General Fortune, the Divisional Commander in 1940 and Andrew Bradford the son of Brigadier Bill Bradford who was Adjutant of 1st Black Watch during the battle. A platoon of cadets from Inverness, the Pipes and Drums of Aberdeen University OTC and a detachment of ATC from Norwich had travelled to St. Valery to take part in the ceremonies.

The veteran numbers were made up by four from Scotland, namely Bill Crighton and Andrew Cheyne both Royal Signals (Aberdeen), John Borland, a Cameron Highlander and Geoff Bryden RAOC, plus two Northumberland Fusilier veterans and two Norfolk Regiment veterans. There was also a large group from the Norfolk Regimental Association who were undertaking a battlefield tour around St. Valery in addition to over 20 Lothian & Border Horse families travelling independently. Andrew Bradford led a small group of students making a study of the battle at St. Vigor, where the tactics and the valour shown by the 1st Black Watch are regarded as classic.

Our veterans arrived two days before the ceremonies began and together with their families united in friendship with one another. Each veteran took their family to the places that held their precious memories. Andrew Cheyne, who was wounded manning his signals equipment at an outpost and who took shelter under the cliffs awaiting evacuation, was wounded a second time by shellfire from Rommel's tanks on the west cliffs. Andrew, with the help of his carer, went back to the place where he had lain crippled for days with all hope of surviving gone. Miraculously he was rescued (by the British and German stretcher bearers) after the ceasefire. It was a moment of strange emotion that had haunted his thoughts for 70 years. Bill Crighton took his family to the chateau at Cailleville which served as General Fortune's last headquarters and where Bill was still operating his wireless set when the bugle call to ceasefire was sounded. The rifles of 4th Camerons defending part of the west wall of the final perimeter defences around the town were no match for Rommel's panzers and were mercilessly over run. John Borland has visited St. Valery regularly and knows the ground on which many of his comrades resisted to the last and on which he was taken prisoner. Geoff Bryden took his family to see where a group of

his comrades had descended the 300 foot cliffs using rifle slings linked together but without landmarks, he found it difficult to pinpoint the exact position where this had taken place.

Our veterans and their families all came together for a meal in the evening when they shared the experiences of the day. This gave everyone a better idea of what happened in 1940.

On Friday 11th June the ceremonial programme started with a morning assembly at Maison Henri VI museum. This allowed all the friends and supporters to meet one another and view the St. Valery collection of memorabilia, photographs and films which illustrate the 1940 battle and the 1944 liberation of the town.

In the afternoon, a convoy of cars set forth to Angiens where a service with the villagers was conducted by Padre Ian Stewart to commemorate the Gordon Highlanders who were killed in defending the village and now lie at rest in the local cemetery. After a Vin d'Honneur the cavalcade moved on to Houdetot for a similar ceremony. Houdetôt was where 1st Black Watch, reinforced by some brave French cavalry, fought a gallant action against overwhelming odds – surrounded by units of 2nd and 5th Panzer Divisions, the Battalion refused to yield. The Maire and a reception party awaited our arrival. He led us to the church cemetery where we gathered round a stone dedicated to the Battalion and Padre Ian conducted a Service of Remembrance. We found the graves of eleven Black Watch soldiers including one of the Telfer-Smollet family. (Alastair kia 12 June 1940)

At 1800 hours we gathered at the majestic Highland Division monument, standing proud on the east cliffs overlooking the town, to pay tribute to the flower of Highland youth who had sacrificed their lives in battle. Padre Ian with words carefully chosen to recall the battle, conducted an impressive ceremony which included a lament and Binyon's lines. Many wreaths were laid by the families, then following the benediction, the Pipes and Drums played traditional airs. Those who were attending for the first time found the ceremony moving in the extreme. The rough cast 20 ton granite pinnacle, emblazoned with a lone HD symbol, seemed all the more appropriate as a memorial to the tragic event that had scarred the lives of many of the families present.

An additional item to the programme at this point proved to be not only immensely popular, but an essential ingredient of the commemorations. Angus Hay had kindly offered to come to St. Valery to give his excellent St. Valery lecture. Angus's father had been taken prisoner at St. Valery and Angus has researched the subject in great detail. His presentation tells the story of St. Valery, starting on the Somme on 4th June, following the day by day engagements and withdrawals back to St. Valery where the surrender by General Fortune took place on 12th June. Families could now visualise the experiences of the men during those eight days of bitter fighting, continuously outnumbered and



Veterans from the 1940 battle return to St Valéry for the 70th Anniversary.

overpowered, suffering hardships of every kind and yet responding to every challenge and every call to duty. All this gave a real meaning to the ceremonies being held.

At 9 o'clock on Saturday 12th June a military parade marched to the War Graves cemetery situated on a gentle slope in a secluded part of the town. Veterans led the parade to the Remembrance Cross where places for each group were marked. Wreaths were laid by invited dignitaries, including the Provost of Inverness, Brigadier Alfrey of 51 Brigade and Bruce Crawford MSP. Speeches were followed by the Reverend Ian Stewart's blessing and music was played by an excellent French Military band and our Pipes and Drums. There was plenty of time for the families to walk round the neat rows of some 200 graves and seek out the grave stones of loved ones or fallen comrades.

In the meantime, our veterans gathered at the memorial erected at the cemetery gates in 2005 to General Sir Derek Lang, leader of our Veterans Association and together with his great friend Maggie Savoye we laid tributes. We then retired to the Memorial Mass which was held in the nearby Parish church which boasts a Highland Division stained glass window which had been unveiled by Sir Derek in 1990.

An official lunch followed, held in a marquee erected mid-way between St. Valéry and Veules-les-Roses. The Maires of both towns welcomed their guests, among whom were our VIPs and our veterans.

The ceremony in Veules-les-Roses took place on the cliff tops east of the town where the guns from the wreck of the Cerons are mounted to form an impressive monument. The Cerons ferried troops to Royal Navy ships lying offshore until it was sunk by gunfire. Over 2000 troops were evacuated from this small fishing village.

The villagers lined the perimeter around the monument in strength. The cadets, the ATC, the bands and the Ancient Combatants with their flags, were arranged to form a colourful tableau. The VIPs laid their wreaths, then the Maire spoke at length, describing the tragic events of 1940 and the suffering that was endured before the Highlanders returned to bring them Freedom. The VIPs were then taken to meet and talk to the veterans while the bands played for the entertainment of the crowds.

The last ceremony of the day was held at Manneville-es-Plains on the east perimeter where the 5th Gordons had fought valiantly after the Germans had over-run the defences along the coast. There were several Gordons buried in the local cemetery and we joined the Maire and the villagers in a service of remembrance. We were then invited to the village hall for a Vin d'Honneur.

At 9pm the veterans, families and friends gathered at the Community Hall for a meal and social evening. Our eight veterans were seated at the top table with Maggie Savoye as one of our number. With everyone milling around the buffet tables, a party spirit quickly developed and with the help of song sheets, groups were vying to sing. The veterans' contribution was received with calls for an encore. Each veteran obliged with a wartime story that had everyone in tears of laughter, even if only to show that a sense of humour was essential for a POW to survive. In this light hearted vein our veterans made a presentation to Raphael Distant of a bronze Pipe Major maquette for all the work he had done. The sing-song punctuated by dancing went on till the early hours before everyone retired exhausted.

On Sunday 13th we gathered at Ermenouville at 9am. Ermenouville in 1940 was defended by the Lothian & Border Horse, fighting side by side with the French Cavalry. The memorial commemorating the action is a gigantic red stone in open country with a strange motif and inscription carved on a rough face. The local Maire spoke with great passion and the sound of our Pipes and Drums which filled the open space connected perfectly with the sad sentiments that had been expressed.

At 11.30 there was a second ceremony in the military cemetery to give greater recognition to the part played by the French. The French Army was well represented and there was a good turnout of the townsfolk. The presence of our veterans was recognised and appreciated.

The ceremonies were brought to a close by a wreath laying at the stèle (a stèle is a small monument or memorial plaque/stone) Labouche at mid-day. This memorial stone, close by the Mairie, was erected to a local resistance fighter who was executed by the Germans. This was very much a local event, but our presence was welcomed.

One or two small groups now set off to find places of personal interest while the main body returned to the Community Hall for a superb lunch which lasted well into the afternoon. Our veterans and families arranged to have a farewell evening meal together at a recommended restaurant. Next morning some of our number were heading home-wards. For those remaining here was the opportunity to reflect upon the events that had been packed into the weekend.

We discussed the programme in detail and it was only then that we discovered it was Raphael Distant who had organised almost everything. The Maire was responsible for the cemetery ceremony and the marquee lunch on the Saturday, but little more. Raphael was most concerned that the tragic events of 1940 were not being recognised as they should be and for the past two years, guided by Maggie Savoye,

worked tirelessly to arrange a programme that held with tradition. This meant not only difficult negotiations with a number of bodies in and around St. Valery but also canvassing support from Highland Division sources. In June 2009 he came to our HD Tapestry unveiling reunion to get the support of our Association and make contact with other sources. As a result there were more supporters at St. Valery this year than ever before. The merit of his efforts was that he brought to St. Valery a new generation of supporters, which it is to be hoped will carry the family bond of tradition, formed by Derek Lang and Maggie Savoye 60 years ago, long into the future.

It was unfortunate that the veterans were not given the prominence they deserved. It is probably one of the last times that any 1940 veteran would be present at the ceremonies. They were the real VIPs and yet this was not fully recognised by the French authorities.

St. Valery 2010 was a friendly, joyous occasion yet for our veterans there was an underlying sense of sadness. Now in their nineties it was

most unlikely that they would return for the next big anniversary. St. Valery was the big thing in their lives, a feeling that grew stronger with the years – two of the eight veterans were visiting for the first time. As young men they had fought with a courage that marks St. Valery as a triumph in defeat. They suffered an abuse and starvation that caused comrades around them in the prison camp to die and they survived two death marches. Their suffering it seems brought out the best qualities within and set them as a breed apart. St. Valery without them will never be the same.

As our veterans left St. Valery for possibly the last time, every mark on the landscape brought back precious memories of that final stand – the thunder of the guns, the pain and exhaustion of battle and the loss of close comrades. They left contented, knowing that they had completed their call to duty leaving behind their youth which had made St. Valery a shining beacon in the history of our Highland Division.

Tom Renouf

ARMS AND THE MAN

As you drive north into Crieff on the A822, you cross the River Earn and drive up Burrell Street. Some 600 yards beyond the bridge and on the left, the Coat of Arms that once proudly belonged to the 6/7th Battalion The Black Watch is displayed on the side of a building which belongs to Dodds the Builders, now owned by Mr David Taylor.

The Coat of Arms used to hang above the entrance to the old Drill Hall in Crieff and after its demise as a Drill Hall, that building was used to store timber for Dodds the Builders. The building was sold in the 1980s and at that stage, the Coat of Arms was moved to its present location.

But why should Dodds the Builders show such an interest in the Coat of Arms? The reason is in some ways very simple but it highlights a story of a most distinguished Black Watch soldier of the Second World War.

Peter Taylor, a joiner to trade and later the owner of Dodds the Builders, rose from the rank of Private in the 6th Battalion to be commissioned in December 1940 and to have, as so many of that generation, an extraordinary war; he entered Germany in command of the 1st Battalion, the first unit to invade German soil. He was Mentioned in Despatches and was awarded a DSO and MC and after the war commanded the 6/7th Battalion in 1954.

He enlisted in the TA before the war and served with the 6th Battalion with the British Expeditionary Force in France in 1940, escaping with many of the battalion from Dunkirk. He was commissioned and then served in the 1st Battalion, being wounded (by a German "S" mine) in December 1942 near Mersa Brega. He was back in the front line by April 1943, commanding A Company of the 1st Battalion, by the time the 1st, 5th and 7th Battalions were engaged at Wadi Akarit.

On the night of the 7th/8th of August 1944 he commanded the lead infantry company in a night attack on St Aignan de Grasmesnil. For his actions that night he was awarded an MC and his citation stated that "he showed outstanding skill, energy and determination throughout the whole of this difficult operation and, after leaving the armoured vehicles he collected his company and personally led them, in the face of severe enemy small arms fire, into the village. During this stage a considerable number of enemy were captured and mortars and anti tank guns were overrun. Early the next morning a strong enemy counter attack



The Coat of Arms of the 6/7th Battalion The Black Watch.

developed against the village, particularly in the part held by Major Taylor's company which was holding the exposed flank and which in order to provide protection for their supporting tanks in the thick orchards round the village, was occupying a rather isolated position in front. Under Major Taylor's calm leadership, the counter attack was successfully beaten off and his example and cheerful demeanour throughout were an inspiration to all ranks."

By the time of the Battle

of the Reichswald, Peter Taylor was an experienced and greatly respected Company Commander who was given command of the 1st Battalion for the early part of the battle as his CO (John Hopwood) was on leave. He was awarded a DSO for his actions in that battle.

His citation read "On 8 February 1945, 1 Black Watch which Major Taylor was temporarily commanding at that time, took part in the opening assault of the operation VERITABLE. The battalion's task was to make the initial break into the enemy's defence position WEST of the REICHSWALD and, after the anti-tank obstacle had been gapped and crossed, to advance a further 1,500 yards and capture a dominating feature in the REICHSWALD itself. The plan for the opening stages of the operation was based on the assumption that tanks and AVREs would be able to move cross country and, almost as soon as the attack started, it was found that the ground was too sodden to allow this which necessitated a considerable re-adjustment of the battalion plan. Major Taylor carried this out extremely skilfully and under his courageous and determined leadership the battalion captured and held all its objectives, capturing and killing a very considerable number of enemy. The crossing of the anti-tank ditch presented considerable difficulties both for infantry and later for tanks and Major Taylor handled the battle at this critical stage with great coolness and determination of purpose. The manner in which he dealt with the various difficulties as they arose and his complete disregard for his own safety, which was an inspiring example to the whole battalion, were very largely responsible for the highly successful accomplishment of all the battalion's tasks."

He then left to be the Chief Instructor at the Divisional Battle School and after the war he commanded the 6/7th Battalion.

He died on 22 February 1989 aged 77.

Lt Col R M Riddell



Major Peter Taylor, Mid-Lodge, Abercainry, who was awarded the M.C. in October, receiving his medal from Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery during a ceremony in Belgium. The Field Marshal afterwards autographed the picture.

Major Peter Taylor receiving his MC from Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery. Note the Field Marshal's signature on the photograph.

CAPTAIN THE HON H N DALRYMPLE TD DL – 63 YEARS ON – SOME RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS

His war time story with the 2nd Battalion The Black Watch 1939-1946

Editor's Note: Readers will recall that in the May 2010 Edition of the Red Hackle Magazine, Hew Dalrymple who celebrated his 100th birthday on 27 April 2010, had recounted some of his wartime memoirs which covered the period from the outbreak of war up to early 1942. This second extract covers the 2nd Battalion's arrival in India, the Chindit expeditions and his subsequent wounding in 1944. Readers should also refer to Chapter 5 of "The Black Watch and the King's Enemies" which covers this period in greater detail and will provide the backdrop to the memoirs.

Bombay 1942

I was detailed to go ashore in the advance party. A dhow was being loaded alongside and I with a few Jocks got on board. We sat for hours in the sun while the luggage was lowered from the deck in luggage slings. I decided to get back on board to try and get some food for myself and the Jocks. So I clung onto the sling and was hauled up and had no idea how high it was and was rather frightened. When loaded, we cast off but as there was no wind, we simply drifted up and down the harbour with the tide. As it got dark I got 2 signallers in our party to flash a destroyer, which was tied up. They answered and provided us with a picket boat which towed us in. An uncomfortable night followed, lying on a warehouse floor.

The next move was to somewhere near Poona (*Editor's note: Ahmednagar in the Deccan*) and once again I found myself with an advance party travelling over the Western Ghat. I was in the driver's cabin of this electrically propelled train and travelling down the Eastern side of the mountains, I found it to be astonishingly steep, with an escape road at the bottom should there be a train out of control!

Summer 1942

At Ahmednagar the monsoon was due. Quantities of bricks arrived and were laid on the floors inside the tents, with a lip to keep out the water. When the rain came the most horrible result was that the latrines which had to be at least 7 feet deep, turned into baths with millions of maggots swimming on top. The next move was to Dhanbad to guard the railway. (*Editor's note: The Black Watch and the King's Enemies records the battalion move to Ranchi and their involvement in Internal Security operations during a period of unrest. By October 1942 the battalion was in the area of Contai when a severe cyclone struck that part of India. The author refers to this later in this article.*)

Kashmir

The next exciting event was when John Benson and I, whilst on leave,

had booked seats on the Express from Calcutta to Delhi. When it arrived at the station, the crowds were very thick and before we could find our reservations, the train set off. John from his considerable height shouted loudly to the Station Master, "Stop that train" and stop it did about 300 yards or so away. We found our compartment – there was already one occupant, so we tossed for the other bed. We arrived near to Islamabad and then went by car about 100 miles to Srinagar, where we arranged to go on a hunting trip. By then it was early October and the trout fishing which is normally good was out of season. So we went to try and shoot Chakor, similar to Grouse. This was difficult walking along a steep slope. We achieved one or two and eventually ate them, beautifully roasted in a large biscuit tin, half buried in ashes. This was accompanied by home made potato crisps. The next day we climbed to a hut about 11,000 feet up. We woke before dawn and as I looked out, the sun came up and shone on the most beautiful peak. I believe that this was K2, the second highest peak after Mount Everest.

I was taken out by a Shikari (stalker) to stalk Bara Singh (rather larger than Red Deer). We located one and stalked along narrow ridges with a nasty drop and eventually came within range. I fired with a borrowed rifle and severely wounded it. As a mountaineer, the Shikari took the rifle and ran in pursuit of the wounded beast, where I could hardly stand. He found and despatched it a few hundreds away. It was a good head, 12 points with a 42" spread.

Khargpur

By October 1942 the Battalion had moved to Khargpur, 120 miles west of Calcutta.

As we approached Khargpur, telegraph posts, trucks and vehicles were on their sides. There had been a cyclone with terrific rains – something like 27 inches of rain had fallen in a very short time. The whole country had been inundated. About 30,000 people were estimated to have been drowned. A number of our troops were moving in a huge American Studi Baker truck standing on the floor boards which were about 7 feet above the ground. A group of the soldiers got out and went to what was higher ground but were never seen again. Those remaining in the truck, waited with the water rising to their chests, until the water subsided. (*Editor's note: according to The Black Watch and the King's Enemies the loss of a group of soldiers occurred during a different incident.*)



Capt Hew Dalrymple with some of his transport, an unknown Black Watch soldier and local drivers. India 1943.



Animal transport played a crucial role during the 5 months of Chindit operations. Here men and mules are trained in crossing water obstacles.

A fund for the relief of the surviving inhabitants was organised by the Mayor of Calcutta. In due course the money arrived for distribution by thoroughly corrupt individuals, pocketing half for themselves, whilst gaining a thumb print from illiterates as a receipt.

From there I was despatched to a short staff course at Quetta. The less said about this the better – my Divisional Commander was called Montgomery, not a very agreeable gentleman, with a better known brother in whose glory he was basking. Thankfully I did not get a staff job.

Maharajah of Jaipur

I met the Maharajah of Jaipur who invited me and an officer called Dick Hobson to stay with him for 10 days leave. We stayed in the Guest House, not the Palace Rhabma but fed all the time with the Maharajah and his third wife Ayesha. Each day an ADC arrived at breakfast time and the day's entertainment was laid on.

Tiger Shoot

One day a tiger shoot was arranged – we were all posted on the flat roof top and the hillside opposite was driven. The major Sahib (Dick Hobson, a Cavalry Officer) was to take the shot. In due course a tiger flashed across a fairly small open space – the Major, a bad shot, loosed off and so did one or two of the ADC's. The tiger was said to be wounded, so we all set forth into the jungle on elephants. It was eventually located lying down and I with the smaller .303 rifle, so as not to damage the skin, was told to go and finish it off. As we approached, my elephant decided to go the other way and set off at a good pace with me on the floor of the canopy, hoping not to be brushed off by the branches. However the Mahut controlled the elephant and we advanced again to despatch the tiger with no further excitement.

On another morning we were invited to go shooting and Jai leant me one of his Purdy guns. It was not a success – I fired 2 shots only and killed a right and left of blue quail.

Fishing Trip

Another day I went to fish on a large tank (dam). Provided with the best Hardy rod, gut casts and small salmon flies, I was put in a boat with an Indian who spoke no English but who knew where to take me. Moving along about 20 yards from the shore, he directed me to cast in a certain direction and as my fly hit the water, I hit an object which looked like a log but it snapped the fly and set off at high speed taking out most of my line and the backing and then going down deep. I recovered the line when I got nearer and tried to haul it up with no success, minus the fly. That night, we dined on the dam. Again I chucked the fly into the water and this time caught a fish of about 3 pounds. They look rather like pike and are called Mellein.

My next adventure was to try and shoot a tiger at about dusk, from a platform 30 feet up. A wretched calf was tied up below as bait. Soon after dark the tiger appeared and sniffed the calf but proceeded to lie down beside it. I was directed by the head game warden to shoot it when he had his rifle fitted with a light directed on my sights. Quite unmissable, but to my annoyance he discharged the rifle as well. It was a tigress, 9 and half foot long from the tip of its nose to the tip of the tail.

We were then taken in the Royal Train to visit the Maharajah of Bikaner. To greet us on our arrival, the drive to the palace was lined by troops. Dick and I were in a car some way in front of the procession. As we arrived, we were greeted by a band with a Royal Salute. Half way through the salute, they realised we were the wrong people.

After returning to Jaipur, we visited the Grand Palace, a simply staggering building, huge in every direction, costing about 4 or more million pounds to build. We were shown the Jewel Chamber containing hundreds

of precious stones of colossal size and weight. Jai arranged for the Court Jeweller to bring a selection of jewels for our inspection, but we had to explain that on army pay, anything we bought would have to be relatively humble. I was able to select a small square cut emerald with two small bits to go with it, costing a few hundred rupees. After the war, Collingwoods set this in a platinum ring valued at several thousand pounds.

Chindits – 1943

In August 1943 we were down near Bangalore. We then moved back up the coast nearer to Calcutta where we were part of a divisional reserve guarding the coast, because of a possible invasion by the Japs who by then had reached Arakan in Burma.

We were then told to prepare ourselves for training as Chindits, to be dropped behind the lines where Wingate had led the 1st Chindit Force. *(Editor's note: this announcement was made by the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel George Green on 7 September 1943. The battalion was then split into two columns, 73 and 42. The former was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Green and the latter by Major David Rose. Intensive training took place in the Central Provinces until the two Columns were inserted into Burma between the 23rd and 25th of March 1944.)*

Wingate had unusual training ideas. We were told to wear boots without socks to harden our feet. We had to wear extremely heavy packs to carry our equipment, mainly of food, one blanket, about 70 pounds total in weight. We carried 4-5 days American K Rations, which contained a minimum of 2000 calories per day. Every 5-6 days we had to send for a supply drop in addition to the K rations. This normally consisted of something bulky, probably oatmeal to make disgusting porridge.

To mark the area for the supply drop meant laying out a marker, which consisted of an area of 8 fires in an L shape, with 2 at the short end. To light the fires when it was wet, we used cordite, which burns when not compressed.

We wore Australian Bush Hats around which we twisted toggle ropes, about two and half feet long, which when attached together made quite a long chain, which could be used for crossing streams and rivers.

We had mules and bullocks with packs and when we went up hills I held onto my mule's tail. Before we went, the mules had to be de-brayed – this means their vocal cords were cut, as otherwise every morning they would open their mouths and bray towards the heavens. We trained for insertion by glider but when we actually crossed into Burma we flew in Dakotas.

BEHIND ENEMY LINES – BURMA 1944

The Second Chindit Expedition

The day came to go behind the lines in Burma. We went in Dakotas following some troops who had prepared a rough strip by flattening out the paddy bunds. This strip was codenamed Aberdeen. My turn came and I found myself in the co-pilot's seat of a Dakota. The pilot was having a so called rest period. I spotted an aircraft and the pilot said 'Where, where?' We were nervous of flying such a vulnerable aircraft. Thank goodness it was an American bomber. He told me that the previous night, Wingate had been killed whilst returning to India by aircraft. It had crashed during a terrible thunderstorm and as darkness fell.

We made a bumpy landing at Aberdeen with a mountain at one end of the runway. The pilot took off as the weather set in but I heard later, that he had miraculously spotted another landing strip which had been lit up and he was able to land.

While still unloading equipment, two Japanese aircraft had arrived overhead and dropped bombs. There were probably 2 people wounded. *(Editor's note: The Black Watch and The King's Enemies records 9 men killed of whom 2 belonged to 42 Column.)*

Later on, one of the men developed an appendicitis which perforated before any arrangements could be made to get rid of him. The MO who in civil life was a gynaecologist, then had to improvise the necessary equipment to operate.

We were asked to provide bits and pieces as substitutes – my contribution was a bit of sponge – used as a swab and the handles of my mess tin bent, so as to hold the wound apart.

I believe he survived this unhygienic operation.

White City 1944

(Editor's note: A short period of rather inconclusive operations was followed by a reasonably successful joint ambush by both Columns on 5 April. 42 Column then carried out its first attack with coordinated air support on 10 April. This was against a Japanese supply dump. During this attack, Major Rose was wounded in the shoulder in almost exactly the same hole as had been made in Somaliland nearly four years earlier. Major Rose continued on duty until he was evacuated on 24 May. The beginning of May bought the Battalion's first considerable engagement in Burma.)

Our next destination was White City. Wingate had had an idea that “fortresses” could be established and he had planned to establish three. One was to be commanded by himself, another by Mike Calvert and the third by another Column Commander. White City was defended by Brigadier Mad Mike Calvert with his Column. This was only feasible until the enemy got bombers or artillery to stop supplies from the air. On our way we met some Japs but had to withdraw rather rapidly. We had a very hot day and were very thirsty. We were forced to dig in a dry river bed and found some dirty water, about a cupful each. Next we had to cross the Chindwin River in the dark which was quite wide and barely knee deep. We then followed an almost invisible narrow gauge railway which I think led to Myitkynia. David Rose had to be evacuated as his wound was not healing and he had had prickly heat. A chap called Condon (Major G V Condon, 2nd Burma Rifles) claimed to be senior, and so took command of our Column. He was in charge of a detachment of Burma Scouts. Their job was to find out for us where the Japs were located, and when arriving in a village they had to interview the headman and to extract the best information. Often the headman would be supplied with a small quantity of Opium as a reward.

Up to that time my job had been to find required replacement items of all sorts and code them in signals.

Company Commander

Then I became the Company Commander to lead fighting patrols. The first one took us down into the plain. Approaching a village we heard mechanical noises. I was foolish enough to go forward with 2 men but luckily when I got fairly near I adopted the tactics required for stalking geese. However quite soon I found myself facing a sentry, only 50 yards or less away. We managed to crawl away expecting a bullet in the back of the neck but for some extraordinary reason he seemed not have seen us.

However, returning to our station on the hill, we were intercepted by some Japanese. So I withdrew with a little dignity to the nearest cover but I chose the wrong place to cross a gap – a short burst from a LMG and one bullet shot me through the wrist. I found myself alone but a minute later Hugh McCulloch, my batman runner, turned up. I was spouting blood all over the place but a First Aid dressing is inaccessible with only one hand. He was able to apply the dressing. I believe 2 other men were wounded. (*Editor's note: this incident took place on 4 June 1944.*)

Arriving back at the Column HQ, George Green, the CO, was horrified at my bloody clothing and assumed the injury much more serious. After further treatment from the MO, I was put on a pony to go a little further back to spend the night. The next afternoon I was transported with 2 others in a bullock cart – most uncomfortable, to the bank of a lake where I was met by 2 sappers with a raft and outboard engine. By then it was getting dark and we crossed about 4 miles to a “basher” hospital. Then with a number of others we took off in a Sunderland Flying Boat but to get to India it had to go through mountains about 12,000 feet high. The Sunderland's top altitude was supposedly 9,000 feet. (*Editor's note: The Black Watch and the King's Enemies records the use of the Sunderland Flying Boats called Gert and Daisy which flew from Indawgyi Lake.*) We landed on the Brahmaputra River then in full flood from the melting snows of the Himalayas. This was very tricky as drift wood could easily damage the aircraft. This was still 1,000 miles from the sea and such distances had never before been attempted inland. So it was never repeated.

Hospitalisation

On arrival I went to a hospital at Dibrugarh in Assam. My hand by that time was like a balloon and rather septic. It was put in a plaster cast and allowed to drip. Penicillin although just invented, was not available – I was fed on sulfonamide pills which made me feel very ill.

The man in the next door bed to me seemed alright but died the next morning from a form of typhus but little was known how to cure it.

An Indian, a London trained surgeon, operated on my hand to extract metal fragments. I often wonder if he did more damage to the nerves than the bullet.

Put into plaster, the wound was left open to drain.

I then moved one day's journey down this huge river – the Brahmaputra which was still in full flood, the banks invisible. We travelled at great speed to maintain steerage way.

At the next hospital to repair my plaster, I got a pre-anaesthetic and then walked some distance to the surgery in the boiling sun. An anaesthetist administering Pentothal said ‘I've done hundreds of these, and only once the patient wouldn't go to sleep as I had forgotten to add the Pentothal to the distilled water.’ After that, by various stages I arrived at Dehra Dun, north of Delhi.

Next Move and Return Home to Greenock

Towards the end of August, I moved to a hospital near Bombay. While



A mule resists being loaded onto an aircraft before being deployed into Burma.

waiting on the doorstep for a bed, I was stricken by my first attack of malaria. Luckily enough I only had malaria once more after getting home.

I was then shipped home and arrived at Greenock, in the middle of September to hear of the news of the Battle of Arnhem. After various hospitals, at one of which I had another bout of malaria, I went to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary to be examined by Sir James Learmouth, the leading expert on nervous systems. He advised that I should get a skin graft in the palm of my hand.

I went to Bangor Hospital (in peace time – a mental hospital) where there were numerous RAF personnel suffering from burns. There I met McIndoe, the leading expert on skin grafts, from Oxford. He looked at my hand and said ‘Bad luck’.

I had a full thickness cut partly off my stomach, the resultant hole being replaced by a larger patch of thin skin off my thigh.

My hand was then sewn onto the flap on my stomach and it remained like that for about 3 weeks. My elbow was in plaster but the hope was that the flap should have been growing all round. The flap was then cut off and sewn around the edges to fill the hole. My thigh had to grow back a layer of new thin skin itself.

I then went back to see Sir James Learmouth to decide if the nerves could be extended and joined up. The answer was a resounding “No”!

I am sure that modern micro-surgery would have done better.

Some weeks later I went to Livingstone Hospital where they cut off my first finger which was useless for any purpose; it was sticking out and immobile. There was no opposition between my thumb and remaining finger tips. What is left is now described as a claw hand with radial deflection.

De-mob – 1946

I was awarded a disability pension of 42% a limb. This amounted to £100.00 per annum then but that has been left behind by inflation and now amounts to about £4,000.

During the autumn of 1946 I rented a bungalow from my Aunt in the village of Ford near Oxenford. I bicycled one handed everyday to and fro, helping with sheep and other animal feeding duties. During this period I was still attending the Western General Hospital for treatment to my hand.

Later in 1947 I was able to buy a house at Ballantrae (Ayrshire) and took on the The Kings Arms Hotel and a small farm that went with it. The Kings Arms was financially unsuccessful due to the barman's dishonesty. Ballantrae has been my home ever since.

(*Editor's note: After Hew Dalrymple was wounded and evacuated in early June, 73 and 42 Columns remained in Burma for a further two months, finally being withdrawn in mid-August. In mid-July a report sent to Special Forces HQ had stated that the figure for the two columns of the Regiment who were fit to fight for a further month was 2 officers and 48 other ranks. Each column had started life with a strength of nearly 400 men.*)

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

COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

As we write our Red Hackle notes the Battalion sits as the Spearhead Land Element at 24 hours Notice to Move to respond anywhere in the world where it is in the UK's interests to intervene on missions such as humanitarian disaster relief operations or non-combatant evacuation operations. Being ready to assume the role by 15 September has meant that we have been first through what is now called 'Hybrid Foundation Training' which in plain English is getting back to the basics of all-arms warfighting but doing it in the 'Contemporary Operating Environment', i.e. 'amongst the people'. This is training we would have undertaken anyway as we start the cycle again to get ready to go back to Afghanistan in September 2011. Our timelines have been compressed and this has tested the fortitude of the Battalion – our preparation for SLE added the additional demands of training in light role Public Order control and took its toll on individual courses mostly aimed at the Junior and Senior NCOs. The demand on their time has been immense and the fortitude with which they have borne that demand has been impressive. In many ways much of what we have done to get ready for SLE will stand us in good stead for the next phase of our training, Mission Specific Training or MST for Afghanistan and should help ease the burden slightly in the coming months.

The last six months kicked off with a series of internal support weapon cadres to train the newly reinforced C(Fire Support) Company; a JNCO Cadre and the conversion of the Battalion to the next level of the Bowman radio system, 'BCIP 5.4' which has taken the leap into true data connectivity within and between BGHQ and the Companies. The now greatly reduced Rifle Companies got back to basics and went through the new Army Operational Shooting Policy tests and deployed variously to Garelochhead, Cape Wrath, Ben Wyvis and Warcop to practise section level live firing and platoon level dry manoeuvre to get ready for training in Kenya. Bravo Company and Delta (Light)

Company also spent two weeks undertaking Public Order training around the Fort, giving the tourists something rather unexpected to enliven their visit to the Fort.

There have of course been a number of changes of personality in Battalion HQ – not only a new CO but Captain Will Johnson has taken over as Adjutant, Captain Al Sweet as Operations Officer and Captain Olly Lever as Intelligence Officer. WO1 (RSM) Duffus assumed his appointment shortly after the change of CO and his predecessor, now Captain McDougall, has become the RCMO. The new team had its first run out together on Battlegroup Combined Arms Staff Trainer (CAST) in Catterick in May and under the increasingly firm direction of the Battlegroup 2IC came together to prove pretty adept at planning and running the show.

Finally we drew breath in early July for an all too short two weeks leave but not before once again enjoying the applause and support of the people of Perth as we marched through the city for the Perth 800 celebrations. On return from leave and almost straight away we deployed the Battlegroup to Kenya for Ex ASKARI THUNDER 1, the remodelled and up rated 'Grand Prix' that many will remember. The main difference now is that aside from the first 8-9 days, the Land Warfare Centre Training Team in Kenya plans, organises and delivers the remainder of training, allowing the BGHQ to focus on training itself and supporting the training of the companies rather than having to run the whole show itself. Another leap forward in training technology, which has really enhanced the value gained from the exercise, is the use of Deployed Tactical Engagement System (DTES) which is worn throughout, whether dry or live firing. It tracks every soldier and vehicle on the training area, allowing comprehensive After Action Reviews or 'hot debriefs' to be conducted out in the field from section level up: great for learning the lessons from your mistakes (and successes). To make up the 3 SCOTS BG we were rejoined by our



Perth 800 Armed Forces Day Parade. The Colours of The Black Watch Battalion are paraded through Perth.



His Royal Highness Prince Edward takes the salute as soldiers of the Black Watch Battalion march past the saluting dais.

HERRICK 10 force elements of 38 Bty, 40 Regt RA and 25 Field Sqn, 38 Engr Regt. The Exercise proved to be a hugely demanding but extremely worthwhile exercise. Kenya is the perfect environment for Hybrid Foundation Training – rugged, demanding, and very much ‘among the people’, the native Samburu tribes folk employed in large numbers to just play ‘themselves’ or act as enemy forces. We also took under command from the outset C Company of 1 Kenya Rifles whose three platoons split one per Rifle Company for the first phases before coming back together as a company for the CO’s exercise and Brigade FTX. While a far more professionally advanced and mature force than the Afghan National Army, working alongside the Kenyans taught us patience and understanding, and how to get the best out of indigenous forces, lessons these days which are absolutely vital to learn.

In his role as Head of Capability Ground Manoeuvre, Brigadier Mike Riddell-Webster was able to visit Kenya to witness DTES in action, the timing was of course perfect, as we were able to host him as our Representative Colonel! He visited during the first phase of the exercise while we were on the Laikipia training area, private land to the north-west of Nanyuki teaming with wildlife, the more so following the heavy rains that had given such lush undergrowth. He was able to see A and B Companies in action and meet with the BG officers over dinner in Forward Operating Base (FOB) SWARA. Sadly time precluded the

chance to visit Charlie and Delta Companies who were at this stage up in Archers Post. His visit was very much appreciated by the Jocks, and I am sure the Brigadier left reassured that the Jocks have changed little over the years and remain as irreplaceable as ever!

The BG returned from Kenya after an all too brief period of ‘decompression’ to turn itself round in short order to assume the SLE, taking over the mantle after deploying BG HQ and the Lead Company Group down to South Cerney in Gloucestershire for Ex FIRST FLIGHT. While maintaining our readiness since then, we have in truth used the last few weeks to catch breath and focus more on the social side of life and allow those not on immediate readiness to take some leave.

We recently hosted the Fort George Cocktail Party and Beating Retreat which coincided with the visit of Major General James Everard CBE, GOC 3 (UK) Div. It was a great evening which culminated with the massed bands of the Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland and Battalion Pipes and Drums, who performed as dusk fell in unseasonably balmy weather: unusual for Fort George in the summer let alone late September! We also managed to run a Families and Fiji Day celebration on the grass at Cameron Barracks on the first weekend of October and again it was a lovely sunny day! Quite remarkable but it made an already superbly organised and run day by C(FSp) Company all the better. The Fijian families put on a wonderful display of their culture with traditional dances and singing and a meal prepared in *lovu* (underground) ovens which was quite delicious. There was a 5-a-side football competition, won by A Company and of course being Fiji Day it would not have been complete without an inter-coy Rugby 7s which in the end was won by C (FSp) Company – the CO even trotting out onto the field having been told somewhat deviously ‘it’s only touch’ when in reality it was anything but!

The programme for the next six months is already filling up but will of course be dominated by maintaining readiness to deploy as SLE. Alongside this we will prepare for Mission Specific Training by training drivers and qualifying NCOs to become the Battalion’s trainers for specialist weapons, counter-IED, Search Awareness and a myriad of other Afghan specific skills. Throughout this period we are trying to give everyone the chance to take leave or when here in the Fort undertake sport, adventure training or outdoor pursuits, taking advantage of our unique and in many ways privileged location in the Highlands. Next year will be even busier, and we hope to have had a chance over the winter to catch breath and recuperate before the rigours of both the pre-tour training and the tour itself – we shall see!



Perth Armed Forces Day 2010.

SLE PREPARATION

By Captain A Sweet, Operations Officer

The Black Watch, 3 SCOTS assumed the Spearhead Land Element (SLE) commitment on 15 September 2010 for a period of 6 months. The SLE task requires us to maintain a high readiness capability to provide support to Civil Authorities, Humanitarian Assistance to Disaster Relief and the Evacuation of British Citizens Overseas to name a few. In order to be fully prepared for this task and on top of the huge amount of courses individuals had to complete, there were a number of training requirements we had to fulfil.

At the beginning of June, Bravo and Delta Companies conducted Public Order (PO) training on the Fort George Training Area. This was a great opportunity for the Jocks to get back to basics and conduct valuable low level training which included petrol bomb inoculation; much to the horror of the author of the Risk Assessment! Despite the excellent training, most of the Jocks preferred playing CIVPOP against the exercising troops, some getting into role more than others.

The next stage of the training was to demonstrate the ability to operate and manoeuvre as a Battlegroup and for this we all deployed to Kenya on Exercise ASKARI THUNDER 1. An excellent exercise that started at Platoon, progressing onto Company then Battlegroup level operations with some of the best and most demanding live and blank firing attacks that most of us have ever done. Any thoughts of returning home with a suntan were soon dashed when it appeared that the 'tail end' of the rainy season was going to extend for the full 5 weeks we were there; this added extra pressure to the training, just trying to move from A to B and resupplying the troops on the ground. The Battlegroup gave an excellent performance, with extra serials having to be added to the exercise to make it more testing; a testament to the resilience and tenacity of the Jock.

After a few days at home post Kenya, the final training piece for assuming the SLE role was Exercise FIRST FLIGHT at South Cerney. This saw the Lead Company Group (LCG) and attached elements all travelling to South Cerney and having their documentation and kit checked as if we were deploying. Battalion Headquarters staff travelled to PJHQ for a series of briefings where they met up with a familiar face in the form of Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Cartwright. The Motor Transport Officer did a fantastic job ensuring that all vehicles made the 500 mile journey to South Cerney and were then suitable for air portability. The Quartermaster's department ensured that if we did deploy we would have access to all the relevant kit and equipment that we would need. This demonstrated that if we did get a phone call, then the Battalion is ready to deploy anywhere in the world within 24 hours.

OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Major A F L Steele
Committee:
Mess Secretary: Captain C G R Harrison

There have been a number of new arrivals in the Mess since May and we extend a warm welcome to Second Lieutenant Paul Seligman, Captain Scott Mackenzie, Major Roddy Williams, Padre Seoras MacKenzie, Lieutenant Colonel Del Singer (Regimental Medical Officer) and Mrs Marion Barclay (Medical Centre Practice Manager). Our con-

gratulations go out to Harry and Katie Gladstone who were married on 17 April, Sam and Jo Slota Newson who were married on 5th June, Rob and Shuna Colquhoun who were married on the 3rd July and most recently Olly and Charlotte Lever who were married on 25th September. All four weddings (and no funerals!) were wonderful occasions for all involved.

The Fort still holds significant allure despite its isolated location, even for those not forced here through posting or cajoled by marriage! The Mess held their Summer Ball on 12th June; a memorable night was enjoyed by all. The Pipes and Drums opened proceedings with an excellent Beating Retreat and in the activities that followed supper, Lieutenant Heighton-Jackson led the entertainment with a display of modern dancing. Whilst he was kind enough to do this without charge, it cost him a pair of treads and a layer of skin on his knees! Captains Collis and Kerr were notable too with their own version of the military two step.

Sadly the Mess' social life took a slight dip over the summer months with the Battalion's deployment to Kenya; that is of course with the exception of Tom O'Sullivan. In a calculated move to weaken his competition's Company HQ, Officer Commanding Delta (Light) Company decided to invite the unsuspecting O'Sullivan to his Wiltshire estate, where he lured him onto a metal stake. I am happy to report that despite being unable to deploy, Tom continued the fine traditions of Mess entertaining, taking up residence as the Laird of Fort George. For the rest of us, Kenya was not without social gatherings as the Battlegroup Cocktail Party provided, for most at least, a respite from the damp African savannah.



The Adjt thinks about inspecting Capt Phillips MC before Capt Gladstone's wedding.



Crimean Long Revielle.



Guard of Honour at Capt Harry Gladstone's wedding.

With barely enough time to draw breath from Kenya and taking over Spearhead Land Element, the Mess hosted a Cocktail Party and Beating Retreat for the local community and friends of the Battalion. With help from the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess the purpose of the evening was to thank the Inverness community, "great and the good", for their continued support to the Battalion. Fresh from their success at the Edinburgh Tattoo and performances in Italy, the Pipes and Drums formed up with The Royal Regiment of Scotland Band to produce what was widely acknowledged as being the best Beating Retreat seen in recent times.

I will close with a few goodbyes. Firstly we thank Pipe Major Paton who, whilst not a Mess Member, has spent many hours entertaining us with his excellent piping. Finally to Captain Harry Pearce who leaves the Battalion after three years, we will miss his dry sense of humour and unswerving commitment; we wish both Hannah and him the very best in the future.

THE WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Regimental Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer (Class One) M G S Duffus
President of the Members Committee:	Warrant Officer (Class Two) F McConnell
President of the Entertainments Committee:	Colour Sergeant R Beaton
Mess Manager:	Sergeant D Muirhead

Since the last article submitted to the Red Hackle there have been many changes in the Mess. The most notable change has been the handover

of the RSMs. This has seen Warrant Officer Class One (Regimental Sergeant Major) Lawrie 'Dougie' McDougall hand over to Warrant Officer Class Two (Regiment Quartermaster Sergeant Maintenance) Mike Duffus. The last RSM has not retired, he has however turned to the dark side and joined the ranks of the Commissioned Officers and is often seen sipping pink gins and wearing mustard cords. His new job is as the Regimental Career Management Officer for the Battalion. All the Mess Members would like to wish him and his family every success for the future. The first request for change from the new RSM was to have a new cushion on the RSMs chair. He felt that being over 6 foot there was no requirement to keep the booster cushion used by 3 previous RSMs.

Mess life has been steady in regards to functions. We have dined out Lieutenant Colonel Cartwright, welcomed in the new Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Fenton and said goodbye to Captain McDougall. PMC for the Summer Ball was Warrant Officer Class Two (Company Sergeant Major) Eddie Duff MBE with his PEC being Colour Sergeant Mark Blyth. The Hawaiian themed ball was a great success involving all Mess Members dressing up with the most outrageous shirt and shorts combination ever witnessed in Inverness. Needless to say, all the big retail stores had sold out of Hawaiian shirts and sunglasses. The sunglasses were primarily used to prevent blindness from the array of bright colours on display. Recently there was a 22-year dining out of eight Mess Members; they were Captain Paul Dargavel, Warrant Officer Class One (Regimental Sergeant Major) Alexander Campbell, Warrant Officer Class Two Colin Gibson, Warrant Officer Class Two Andy Anderson, Colour Sergeant Colin Ferguson, Colour Sergeant 'Wolfie' Alan, Sergeant 'Sammy' Salmond and Sergeant Lee Thomassen. The evening was a great success with all receiving a short

synopsis of their career and various presentations. This was a chance for the new PMC to get a taste of things to come and as the outgoing PMC, I must say I could not have done a better job myself.

Battalion life shows no sign of slowing down since the operational tour. As a Mess, we have had Mess Members involved in all the main events. As a Battalion, we took part in the Perth 800 Armed Forces Day Parade where we formed two Guards for the march through the city. The right markers for the parade were Warrant Officer Class Two (Company Sergeant Major) Paddy Marshall (No1 Guard) and Warrant Officer Class Two (Company Sergeant Major) Butch Parker (No2 Guard). The Mess was also well represented in the Battalion Football Team when they won the Infantry Football Challenge Cup. The majority of the summer has been occupied by the deployment to Kenya. This was a good opportunity for the new CSMs and Company SNCOs to put the Jocks through their paces. A thoroughly enjoyable exercise, albeit with predominantly unfavourable weather. Having finished the exercise the Warrant Officers were invited to the Battle Group Cocktail Party at the Country Club next door to the Nanyuki Show Ground. There was a plethora of dignitaries present including landowners, the Brigade Commander and the Commanding Officer. I have forgotten to mention that the party took place around a quaint little swimming pool. The tranquillity of the evening was soon shattered when two Warrant Officers voluntary threw themselves into the pool. I will not mention any names, but there was mention that they should consider it as part of the PMC's Handover/Takeover.

As we look to the future, we look forward to the festive season and the Christmas Ball being run by Warrant Officer Class Two (Company Sergeant Major) Stevie McSeveney and ultimately the Burns Supper 2011 being run by Warrant Officer Class Two (Training Wing Warrant Officer) Eck Wilson. As I draw this article to a close, all that remains is to mention the transfers in and out of the Mess. They are:

Farewells:

Warrant Officer Class Two (RQMS) Ian Houston
Warrant Officer Class Two (CSM) Andy Lambert
Warrant Officer Class Two (RCWO) Jas Gow
Warrant Officer Class Two (RAWO) Binnie Gray
Staff Sergeant Wilson (PTI)
Colour Sergeant O'Brien
Sergeant Davie Taylor
Sergeant Minge McManus
Sergeant Howlett (SSA)
Sergeant Martin (LAD)

Welcomes:

Warrant Officer Class Two (RSWO) Jim Fisher
Warrant Officer Class Two (RAWO) McDonald
Warrant Officer Class Two (RCWO) Boyle
Warrant Officer Class Two Colin Gibson
(Area Health and Safety Officer)
Sergeant Buck Rodgers (PTI)
Sergeant Ferrier (Promotion)
Sergeant Clark MC (Promotion)
Sergeant Atkinson (Promotion)
Sergeant Lesley (Promotion)
Sergeant Dempsey
Sergeant Duncan
Sergeant Kettles
Sergeant Currie (Promotion)
Sergeant Ferguson (PRI Manager)
Sergeant Paterson (SSA)

CORPORALS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee: Corporal Coupar

With Mess Members coming and going to and from postings all over the UK you'll probably accept that it is very difficult to keep track of everyone so here are a small list but to name a few:

To ITC(C) as Section Commanders: Corporals Pow, Millar, McLaughlin QGM and Bruce.

To ITC(C) as RPC: Corporal Morrison.

To RMA Sandhurst as a Signals Instructor: Corporal (now acting Sergeant) Dowdles.

We also sadly say farewell to Corporals Couper and Feeney who have transferred to 2nd Battalion The Mercians in order to be closer to their families back in Northern Ireland. In return we welcome back Corporals Crawford and Wedgwood both from ITC(C).

We decided to combine the Summer Ball and Adjutant's dining out on the night of 11th June 2010. Captain Collis was dined out prior to departing the Battalion for Staff College at Shrivenham on promotion to Major. This function was organised by Corporals Dowdles, Baxter and Pratt along with a few other JNCOs of the Mess and was held in a marquee in front of the Officers' Mess. This was our first opportunity as a Mess to meet and greet Lieutenant Colonel Fenton and his wife Max. The evening was a great success with the drink flowing until the very early hours, Elvis singing and Lieutenant Colonel Fenton strutting his stuff on the dance floor.

The Corporals' Mess, as ever, have borne the brunt of the course bill across the Battalion ranging from Basic Recce Cadres, MFC Alphas and Bravos, JNCO Cadres and men being sent on SCBC and PSBC. All of which are in preparation for our move to Kenya on Exercise Askari Thunder and our commitment as the Spearhead Land Element.

I'm sure you'll agree it is always good to see Corporals' Mess Members moving on in their careers so I would like to take this opportunity to mention and congratulate the following:

Private to Lance Corporal: Lance Corporals Hynd, Russell and Goldsworthy.

Lance Corporal to Corporal: Corporal Scally, Lance Corporal Johnston (promoted to Corporal on posting).

Corporal to Sergeant: Sergeants 'Gunny' Roy, Currie, Clark MC, Ferrier, Leslie and Corporal Meredith (Sergeant on posting).

I would also like to congratulate the following Mess Members on the birth of their children; Corporal Ross and Siobhan, Lance Corporal Ellis and Cheryl, Corporal Wells and Claire, Corporal Lawaci and Claire and finally Lance Corporal King and Allana. All babies and mothers are happy and healthy.

The Corporals' Mess can now look forward to their Christmas Ball at the beginning of December where they can let their hair down and relax prior to some Christmas leave integrated with SLE.

ALPHA (GRENADE) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major R A D Williams
Second in Command:	Captain T O'Sullivan
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer (Class Two) K Stacey
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant L Ward
Officer Commanding 1 Platoon:	Lieutenant R J Stewart
1 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant R Clark MC
Officer Commanding 2 Platoon:	Lieutenant E Eltringham
2 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant A C Ferrier

It is no easy task to write a set of notes that cover a busy six month period; it is far more difficult to write them when you only arrived two months ago and then had the horrendous experience of 'losing' your company after only four weeks in command! Unfortunately, I am in command of eight soldiers and my platoons are reinforcing Bravo and Delta (Light) Companies for the 'Spearhead Land Element' task; as such Alpha (Grenadier) Company Headquarters are now the 'Sport and Adventure Training Co-ord Cell' and will remain as such until the dispositions for the Battalion's next tour of Afghanistan are known.

So that is the present and the future dealt with but what of the recent past? The last six months have been a whirlwind of activity which has seen significant change in personnel and some exceptionally hard and challenging soldiering in Kenya. The Company bid farewell to Major Matt Munro, who now graces the halls of Main Building in London, WO2 (CSM) Paul Colville, who has traded his pace stick for a set of bagpipes and is now stepping out as Pipe Major, Colour Sergeant Eck Wilson, now WO2 Wilson and running the Training Wing and finally we welcomed back Lieutenant Euan Eltringham after his tour in Afghanistan with B Company, 1 SCOTS. Major Roddy Williams joins The Black Watch Battalion having previously served with The Highlanders and Sergeant Major Stacey trades the Training Wing and Rear Party for the Company Sergeant Major job; following in his father's footsteps.

The obvious highlight of the last 6 months has been Exercise ASKARI THUNDER in Kenya; for many of the company, it was a first visit to Kenya and the superb training areas it offers. For some it was a 4th or 5th visit and the usual sense of 'déjà vu' creeping in the moment we left the aircraft at Nairobi! The Black Watch, 3 SCOTS Battle Group were the first to deploy on the remodelled 'ASKARI THUNDER' exercise which has been structured to deliver progressive training up to Company group level in a 'hybrid' environment.



The Permanent Range Team for the Kenyan Company.

As many of you reading this will have experienced yourselves, being the guinea pigs is never easy but, as you would expect, the Jocks took it all in their stride and kept smiling, despite some very challenging times. All three Rifle Companies were reinforced by Platoons from the Kenyan Armed Forces and special mention must go our 'Kenyan Liaison Team' of Corporal 'Bob' Bavadra and Private Nisbet; between them they did a superb job of mentoring the Kenyan Platoon and ensuring that they were at the right place, at the right time and, more or less, going in the right direction!

For many the highlight of the exercise would have to be the 'CALFEX' – the Combined Arms Live Firing Exercise – which saw the Company Group carrying out a live advance to contact and then a live deliberate attack over two days, with full support from 105mm light guns, the Battalion 81mm Mortars and Charlie (Fire Support) Company's machine guns. The CALFEX range itself was set in breathtaking scenery, with an imposing high feature running along one side of the range (which we thankfully didn't have to climb!) and a dried up wadi on the other. Contained within the narrow channel between them was a trench system and bunker complex the likes of which most of us had never seen before; the effort that had gone into the range construction was phenomenal and it certainly made the OC wish he was a Platoon Commander (or even a Jock) again! The range included compounds which, in order to allow live firing to take place, had been dug into the ground or surrounded by huge earth berms. Inside these compounds the platoons practiced the complex art of 'Advanced Close Quarter Battle', engaging enemy targets at short range, posting grenades and attempting to distinguish between enemy targets and non-combatants. To add to the realism the range team had brought along chickens and goats, the majority of which survived all three Company attacks...including the lengthy artillery and mortar barrage pre H-Hour! Many thanks must go to Captains John Kerr and Chris Baddeley for running such an impressive and complex set of ranges.

Sadly for Alpha Company the CALFEX was the last Company attack we conducted whilst in Kenya; due to the manning situation and the significant number of casualties we had taken throughout the early phases of the exercise the Commanding Officer was forced to fold one of the Rifle Companies and as Alpha Company had reduced to one Platoon and had no Company Second-in-Command we were the obvious choice. As such the Rifle Platoons reinforced Bravo and Delta (Light) Companies and Company Headquarters (less the OC) 'mentored' the Kenyan Army Company. Thankfully the Company reformed for Adventure Training and after the 12 hour bus journey from hell



Capt Kerr making a hot dog.



Cpl Bavadra, WO2 Stacey and Capt Kerr the core support for the Kenyan Company.



LCpl McFadden debriefing his section.

(far more dangerous than any adventure training could ever be), we enjoyed four very pleasant days of 'rest and recuperation' down on the Indian Ocean just south of Mombasa; I call it 'rest and recuperation' because there was very little 'adventurous' about the training. Luckily the hotel was excellent (most of the Jocks were convinced that we were in the wrong place), the food superb and the sun was shining...there could have been worse places to finish the exercise in!

BRAVO COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major A F L Steele
Second in Command:	Captain H W Gladstone
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer (Class Two) P Marshall
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant R W Beaton
Officer Commanding 2 Platoon (Attached for SLE):	Lieutenant E Eltringham
Platoon Sergeant 2 Platoon (Attached for SLE):	Sergeant A C Ferrier
Officer Commanding 5 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant P Seligman
5 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant R McCreedy
Officer Commanding 6 Platoon:	Lieutenant A D Jackson
6 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant D Buist
Pipe Major:	Warrant Officer (Class Two) P D Colville
Drum Major:	Sergeant D Murray

While the rest of Bravo Company were being eaten alive by midges on Ben Wyvis or dodging potatoes during disturbingly realistic public order training, the Pipe Band were hard at work preparing for the busy summer period. The main focus during this reporting period, however, has been Ex ASKARI THUNDER. The initial phase of the exercise focussed upon company-level training and was divided between OI Doinyo Lemboro (ODL) and Archers Post. From the sodden wastes of ODL, Bravo Company emerged into the searing heat of Archers Post, positively itching to sink their teeth into some challenging training following a week of rain drenched desolation. This phase would see the Company augmented by an attachment of one Kenyan Platoon, who were to become an integrated element of the Company for periods of Ex ASKARI THUNDER. It became apparent very quickly that there are a number of key areas where we differ as armies but for the most part the Kenyans were found to be a hardy and industrious bunch who learned quickly and worked hard throughout.

The company training phase made excellent use of the rugged terrain surrounding the OI Kanjao mountain range, which proved to be an OC's dream in terms of testing the Jocks. Training was centred upon a number of discreet operations, combining company road moves, long range night-time insertion marches, dawn attacks against prepared enemy positions and testing advances across difficult ground. Five days of intense training were followed by a period of assessment, overseen by the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK). A highlight of this phase was a deliberate operation against a strongly fortified enemy camp, strategically placed at the head of a steep valley. Although the frontal assault was extremely inviting, OC Bravo deployed a master stroke of deception by attacking the position from the rear and almost 5

hours later than the enemy had expected us. Needless to say, the route to the line of departure looked significantly less cliff-like (remember the contour lines are 20m apart in Kenya) on the map but was proven through sheer persistence and strength of will. Absolutely nobody was surprised to hear from the BATUK instructors that no other unit had attempted this approach before us! Of particular note during the assessed company exercise were the benefits of using DTES equipment; a GPS tracking system and weapon mounted laser which provides the chain of command with a comprehensive battle picture. Throughout the after action reviews which followed each day of training, it was reassuring to note the progress made in fundamental skills.

For many, the highlight of our time in Kenya was the Combined Arms Live Firing Exercise (CALFEX), which saw us attacking extensive trench networks and Helmand style compounds under the support of artillery and mortar fire. BATUK have worked extremely hard to make this part of the exercise as realistic and demanding as possible and the reward for all their hard work was a number of exhilarating operations that rigorously tested our company Standard Operating Procedures and our ability to deploy a range of assets. The CALFEX was followed by an assessed Battlegroup exercise which was conducted over a week in the highlands of Limpopo. This phase introduced a civilian population who brought an entirely different raft of challenges and tested our ability to wage war amongst the people. The Company worked extremely hard throughout and were rewarded with leading the assault during the final attack of the exercise. The Company emerged relatively unscathed, less the hapless Private Bruce who convinced an insect to lay its eggs in his face and Lance Corporal Durie who was savagely attacked by a rogue buffalo whilst leading a clearance patrol. I am very pleased to report that both have since made a full recovery. Overall, Exercise ASKARI THUNDER was a resounding success for Bravo Company, teaching us many new lessons and much that we have forgotten since returning from Op HERRICK 10.

Despite not deploying on Ex ASKARI THUNDER, the Pipe Band have enjoyed a very busy period. The summer season began with a performance at the Perth races in June where the younger musicians were blooded in their home county. July proved to be just as successful, with the Pipes and Drums performing in the Perth Armed Forces Day Parade, marching at the front of the parade and later that evening performing a Beating Retreat at the Perth Civic Centre. This engagement provided ample opportunity to catch up with a number of old friends of the band. After farewells were said they moved to Dundee to take part in the Dundee Armed Forces Day, performing in the Caird Hall to around 800 people. The audience were fantastic, whooping along enthusiastically to the 'Black Bear' and breaking out in rapturous applause at the close of the performance.

The Band took a period of split leave in July prior to the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, this allowed them to play at the SSAFA concert in St Andrews, in the Younger Hall. On this occasion, the Band met a friend of the Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Halford-MacLeod, who mesmerised some of the younger Jocks with his tales. The Younger Hall provided a superb venue for a performance alongside the military band of the Territorial Army. Balhousie Castle was to be our last individual performance prior to the form up of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. The Black Watch Cocktail Party was another chance to catch up with serving members past and present. The compliments from the audience were very positive and were testament to the dedication of the younger pipers and drummers.

The 60th anniversary of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo saw the Pipes and Drums under the watchful eye of Captain Stevie Small (Director of Army Bagpipe Music). The band were the only Royal Regiment of Scotland Pipes and Drums to take part in the massed Pipes and Drums. The first week was a whirlwind of gruelling rehearsals from dawn until well past dusk and by the end of the first week a show had taken shape. The remainder of the Tattoo was a routine of daily fitness training, band practice and nightly performances. Towards the end the band were privileged to perform for the Erskine Hospital for injured ex-servicemen, where once again they were well received. As the Tattoo drew to a close we focused on our next engagement for the Royal Colonel, The Duke of Rothesay.

As the Band arrived at Dumfries house to perform for The Royal Colonel it was clear to see the Jocks were champing at the bit to show off in front of Royalty. The performance was to the standard expected and was enjoyed by all, the Royal Colonel even spared the time to give every member of the band a dram. A week later saw a Mini Band under the Pipe Major jet off to Milan for the weekend to play at the



Members of 6 Platoon pause for breath during a grueling insertion march.



Pte Purce and a Rifleman from the Kenyan Army.



Pte Nasilasila gives Kenya his stamp of approval.



Pipe Major Colville and Drum Major Murray at Edinburgh Castle.

International Day for the NATO Headquarters. The day was very pleasant and free drink and food was readily available. All the Jocks were very hospitable to the spectators especially the local female ones. The next day they were treated to a full day of sightseeing.

After an extremely busy summer period for all elements of Bravo Company we are now looking forward to a concerted period of training throughout the Spearhead Land Element commitment and the odd period of leave.

CHARLIE (FIRE SUPPORT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major F A L Luckyn-Malone
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer (Class Two) McSeveney
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Blyth
Officer Commanding Reconnaissance Platoon:	Captain R Colquhoun
Second in Command Reconnaissance Platoon:	Colour Sergeant Smith
Officer Commanding Machine Gun Platoon:	Lieutenant M Stanning
Second in Command Machine Gun Platoon:	Colour Sergeant Barrie
Officer Commanding Javelin Platoon:	Captain Pearce
Second in Command Javelin Platoon:	Warrant Officer (Class Two) McConnell



Mini Band Italian International Day.

The last 6 months have seen C (Fire Support) Company exercising in varied locations ranging from Kenya to Gloucestershire. There have been several new arrivals including a new OC, Major Luckyn-Malone, Warrant Officer II (CSM) McSeveney and since Kenya, the return of the Mortar Platoon making "the Savages" complete once again. We bid 'bon voyage' to Major Hempenstall, Warrant Officer II (CSM) Lambert, Corporal Couper and Corporal Feeny and wish them well in their new postings. A sad farewell also goes to Captain Pearce who has finished his time with the Colours and has moved on to Birmingham University.

The major activity has been the Battlegroup deployment on Exercise ASKARI THUNDER to Kenya for 7 weeks. Charlie (Fire Support) Company played a key role in this and formed the Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) to FIND

and FIX the enemy. The Company enjoyed a large degree of independence as we were situated 150km north of the rest of the Battlegroup in MOB SIMBA, Archers Post. It certainly felt like a modern day Beau Geste, complete with lion, zebra, giraffe and Samburu warriors as our neighbours. Particular mention must be made of Colour Sergeant Blyth for single handedly running this enormous camp and for ensuring an ever flowing supply of the delicious, locally made Stoney's ginger beer! We were fortunate enough to receive a reconnaissance section and sniper pair from C Company, 1 Kenya Rifles. These soldiers from the Kenya Armed Forces (KAF) were invaluable in their bush skills and local knowledge. Charlie (Fire Support) Company was tasked to form the ISTAR Group, consisting of a Reconnaissance Group and 2 Fire Support Groups (FSGs). The training area was 80km of arid, mountainous scrubland with numerous wadis – ideal for ISTAR training.

The Reconnaissance Group consisted of the Reconnaissance Platoon, Sniper Platoon, KAF, Engineer Reconnaissance, Medics and Signallers. On operations it would also include a Light Electronic Warfare Team (LEWT). The FSGs were based on 8 man sections, each including 2 GPMG (SF) teams and 2 JAVELIN teams. The value of the ISTAR Group was seen on the OC's ISTAR Exercise: a 48 hour Observation Post (OP) screen covering 10km of ground with both surveillance and fire. An indicator of the arduous terrain was when the Commanding Officer's Tactical Headquarters Group took one hour to patrol just 500m, after returning from visiting the Exercise, due to the near-impenetrable thorn bushes.

Next came the Commanding Officer's Exercise, ASKARI MARAUDER, which saw the Reconnaissance Group deploying a text book OP screen using the 4000ft mountains to good effect. This culminated with a live sniper shoot onto multiple targets, all of which were well over 1000m in distance. It must be said that the OC/CSM challenge of best shot was a draw, and remains to be resolved!

The Exercise also saw the establishment of the Joint Effects Integration Cell (JEIC) in Battlegroup Headquarters. Headed by OC Guns, Major Rich Orvis RA, the ISTAR Group command element formed a key part of the JEIC, complimented by Engineers, Intelligence Cell and the Fire Planning Cell. The JEIC produced fused products supporting the planning and execution of BGHQ operations.

With the Exercise complete the ISTAR Group moved south to Lolldaiga training area for the Brigade Commander's Exercise, ASKARI SPARTAN. The Reconnaissance Group deployed 24 hours ahead of the Battlegroup, with the 2 FSGs supporting Bravo and Delta Company groups. The relentless training of the Reconnaissance Platoon paid off as they carried out a wide array of tasks, from OP screens, close target reconnaissance, marking RV points, FUPs and lines of departure to counter-reconnaissance against a dynamic enemy from 2 MERCIANs. Despite some challenges with communications, the Reconnaissance Group still enabled the Battlegroup to meet every H-Hour on time and in good order. During the Exercise a strike operation was conducted, which allowed the ISTAR Group Command element to plan using support helicopters, ground based and airborne ISTAR assets. The final phase of the Exercise consisted of a 20km insertion tab, amidst heavy rain, followed by a battlegroup attack. Highlights of this included Cpl Couper tabbing 48km in 48 hours, OC Reconnaissance Platoon, Captain Rob Colquhoun, and Sergeant Robertson's RV point being "...in a perfect location...although there was a family of lions in it!" The Exercise was followed up by some well earned Rest and Recreation up by Lake Naivasha and then home.

The 7 weeks of training in Kenya gave the Company a unique opportunity to trial, plan and execute operations as an ISTAR group. This concept has worked well and allows for a robust reconnaissance force supported by FSGs, with the Command element in BGHQ. It has certainly provided a firm foundation on which to build and ISTAR continuation training will occur as we focus from Hybrid Foundation to Mission Specific training.

THE MORTAR PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Captain A J Phillips MC
 Second in Command: Warrant Officer (Class Two) C W Scott
 Platoon Sergeant: Sergeant A G Reilly

The Mortar Platoon has had a successful few months with plenty of activity to keep an otherwise over enthusiastic platoon busy and on the straight and narrow. One of the highlights has been an excellent field firing and mortar live firing package in Otterburn giving the platoon a run out prior to Kenya. This was particularly useful for aspiring MFCs



LCpl Vasunikasi, LCpl Shields and Cpl Ramsey establishing an OP.



Ptes Tamata, Ross, Hardy and Easson conduct battle prep.



Pte Robertson, LCpl Hutton and Pte Salter striking a pose prior to going down range.



Ptes Walton, Robertson and Simmons awaiting target information.

to call in their first fire missions. The package culminated in a mortar line in defence shoot whereby the mortars executed fire missions and the mortar line came under contact in the form of advancing figure 11s. Having fought off the enemy the mortars extracted from contact to establish a new mortar line to continue fighting the battle.

Kenya has proven to be the main training event of the year with excellent live firing opportunities. Having conducted the basic field firing package the platoon were unleashed on Archers Post with 1100 HE rounds. What followed was a five day package starting with basic shoots and culminating in the MFCs working within Fire Support Teams (FSTs), something akin to the old Forward Observation Officer parties. It was an excellent opportunity for combined arms integration and proved challenging for the mortar line.

Having finished mortar specific training the platoon was set to support the Combined Arms Life Firing Exercise (CALFEX) in the form of an into impact area shoot; providing MFCs to the company going through the range with a mortar section in support. The range was excellent and the mortars were able to fire onto the enemy positions in response to requests from the company and platoon commanders. This allowed the Jocks to see first hand the effects of mortar fire and the synchronisation of fires at the lowest level.

With the live firing complete, the Mortars work was not done. The platoon was split down into two rifle sections and sent to support Bravo and Delta (Light) Companies where they demonstrated that many of the myths surrounding the soldiering ability of mortar men were not true.

The Mortars have had a very successful year, building from strength to strength and this has been down to the hard work of all those in the platoon. Finally a special mention for Corporal Mortley who was top student on his Mortar standard course and who has been awarded the Sergeant 'Gus' Millar memorial trophy for his efforts.

The Sergeant 'Gus' Millar memorial trophy is a statue of a mortar man purchased with funding from Heather Millar, Gus' sister, to remember her brother who was sadly killed on Op HERRICK 10. It is awarded for exceptional performance to any deserving member of the platoon.

DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major N G Jordan-Barber
Second-in-command:	Lieutenant A J Halliday
13 Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant T J P Kennedy
13 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Carlisle Sergeant Torrance (wef 1 Oct 10)
Sniper Platoon Commander:	Sergeant Robertson
Sniper Platoon Sergeant:	Corporal Johnstone
15 Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant A D Heighon-Jackson
15 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Copeland

Following the dramatic pace which was set for the Company in the early part of the year and the period following our return from Afghanistan we were hoping for some peace and quiet. Not likely. The end of each activity has not marked an end but the beginning of the next activity. No rest for the wicked, particularly at Fort George. The major activity of the year has been Ex ASKARI THUNDER 1 in Kenya, more of which later. We have been pulled in many directions: Combined Arms Staff Training in Yorkshire, Brigade Study Days in Lisburn and Regular Army Assistance to training in West Wales.

The five day Final Test Exercise in Kenya will be remembered primarily for its decidedly un-tropical weather! After a 36 hour rehabilitation in Turaco Farm (affectionately nicknamed Turaco Swamp by the Jocks on account of the quagmire it was rapidly becoming), the Battlegroup set forth on what was to be its final operation. No plan survives contact with the front gate and this became apparent when, despite the best efforts of the MTO to marshal the many 4 tonners and Land Rovers on their merry way to the Loldaiga Hills, it took the Battlegroup 3 hours to deploy from camp! The entire BATUK green-fleet pirouetting on the main road out of Turaco Farm was more reminiscent of Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake than of a military manoeuvre, but through grit and determination, and a large dose of patience and humour, we prevailed eventually.

The first 24 hours saw D Company securing two river crossings, one of which had been helpfully destroyed by our friends from the Sortu People's Army. This allowed B Company to cross and advance up the eastern axis and C Company 1 Kenyan Rifles to advance and secure the main centre of population. With the Senior Highland Platoon attached under the guiding hand of Lieutenant Stewart and Sergeant Clark, Captain Moses was well equipped to do the job! Some text book Key Leader Engagement coupled with some superb televised interviews from the RMO and Sergeant Clark sealed the hearts and minds deal. D Company had an interesting day, with everything from tripwire IEDs to FIWAF (Fighting in woods and forests) attacks and tricky negotiations with African Union delegates at a refugee camp. The three-block war was truly in play!

A Battlegroup deliberate attack on an enemy stronghold deeper into the Loldaiga hills then became the focus. D Company spurned the easy option and tabbed up a 70% incline through the night to reach their assembly area, while the Recce Platoon put in a heroic effort to furnish the companies with information. After a difficult start, with huge numbers of casualties, the Kenyan company seized the main objective, allowing a Battlegroup reconstitution and some less magnificent media ops by Captain Kerr. "Go away! I don't even know who you are!" was a perfectly legitimate reply to non-accredited media approaching mid-contact but naturally they did not see it that way! A period of holding then led to some routine, and a healthy dose of minor public disorder. This was accompanied by OC A Company being given command of the glitzy, Hereford-esque Task Force MARTINI for a aviation cordon and strike operation on a high value target 30km to the north. With some frenzied planning, long discussions with the fine pilots of our Puma Squadron, the Task Force was in the air, flying in darkness over the African bush. Unfortunately, poor communications got the better of them and to add insult to injury, the cordon was compromised at dawn, making life particularly difficult and dangerous for the main strike force. The Deployable Tactical Engagement System (DTES) did its best to further complicate the scenario with casualties but the Jocks put in a valiant effort regardless!

The final attack was physically and mentally challenging for everyone and after a 16km insertion to a hilltop assembly area more akin to something in the Brecon Beacons than an equatorial savannah, the subsequent performance of the companies was a credit to their resilience. The scenario was a myriad of irregular and guerrilla forces, with Indirect Fire Support capability and surprisingly accurate air defence meaning that the Battlegroup was in contact for over 4 hours before sweeping up the last remnants of resistance. With Jela (the fictional country) liberated, it was time to take on the Kenyan roads once more and extract the battle weary troops to Turaco. An easy task says you? Not so! The torrential downpour which greeted ENDEX washed roads and an engineer bridge away almost instantly and with vehicles bogging in on every route, the 24-hour long extraction op felt like the real command task! The Brigade Commander was somewhat surprised when, while taking part in a night insertion unbeknown to the Jocks, passed the message back that the company would have to dog-leg on account of some elephants blocking the route, and was greeted with the uniquely colourful and imaginative profanities that only a Dundonian can muster! He later decided that the event was a highlight of the exercise! Well deserved R&R for all.

The Light Company family has grown during the course of the last six months: if nothing more than a rather large influx of recruits, all through Catterick, some junior entry and some adult entry. We pride ourselves on being diverse, so far so good with recruits from South Africa and the Caribbean but our Eastern Boundaries have been pushed far past Dundee... to India (via Auld Reekie). A number of the company wives are also expecting babies, so I expect there to be

announcements to make in May's edition. But until then we must make our farewells to Lance Corporal Milne who leaves the Army for other public service and we wish him well with whatever the future holds; secondly to Sergeant Carlisle, who has been 13 Platoon Sergeant from only the beginning of the year but he has been selected to attempt the Colour Sergeant Instructors Cadre at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst; thirdly to Corporal Atkinson on promotion to Sergeant who moves across the square to B Company, we will miss his mastery of photoshop.

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding: Major J MacAskill
 Company Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer (Class Two) E Duff MBE
 Company Quartermaster Sergeant: Colour Sergeant J Allan

March 2010 saw Headquarter Company and predominantly the Signals Platoon, commanded by Captain Charlie Harrison, well and truly engrossed with Bowman, ComBAT, Infrastructure and Platform (BCIP) 5.4, the new uplift for our Bowman radios. It saw us all revising the skills that we learnt when Bowman was first introduced some years ago albeit a more comprehensive package now including data and email. How things have changed since Clansman!

The next major event on the calendar was a battle planning exercise at the Combined Arms Staff Trainer (CAST) in Catterick. This saw the Battlegroup get back together. There were a lot of new faces and for the first time since Op HERRICK 10 we were put through our paces having to apply our newly learnt Bowman skills. Luckily it went well and the Battlegroup received a good report.

The main event for Headquarter Company and the Battalion during the summer months was Exercise ASKARI THUNDER. This is a new Hybrid Foundation Training Exercise conducted in Kenya. Exercise ASKARI THUNDER is a fast moving and arduous Battlegroup run-out that tests all parts of the Battlegroup including the Combat Service Support (CSS) elements. As ever, Headquarter Company was the



CO's Tac HQ before departing on the final attack insertion march.



'The Enemy' Capt Baddeley conducting a Recce for the CO's Exercise in Archers Post.

vanguard for this exercise with the Signals Platoon, Quartermaster's Department, Motorised Transport Platoon, Catering Platoon and Medics supplying and sustaining all aspects of the Battlegroup prior to and during the exercise.

The first part of the exercise was conducted from a series of Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) constructed by the Battlegroup's Royal Engineers, with the majority of construction materials being purchased locally by means of our Local Resources Section. This tested the Quartermaster, Major Bruce, and the Local Resources Section to the limit. The Local Resources Section had to justify, in some cases plead for, every shilling; constantly reminding the Quartermaster that it was not his money! Old habits die hard.

The Exercise was hampered by poor weather conditions, apart from the Archers Post phase which was hot and dry as usual. At times heavy rain made the movement of vehicles nearly impossible. The MT Platoon, commanded by Captain Harry Hood, had their work cut out for the whole of the Exercise. They had to move the Battlegroup around the training area in atrocious conditions in a limited number of trucks from a very old fleet of vehicles. Their cross-country driving and vehicle recovery skill are now exceptional! It was then up to the Royal Engineers and Quartermaster's Department to build the Forward Operating Bases to allow the training to commence. The Forward Operating Bases were managed by Sergeant Salmond in the far north, FOB MAISOR, with twenty locally employed civilians (LECs) and Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (Technical), Warrant Officer (Class Two) Colin McCormack, at the main Forward Operating Base (FOB SWARI) with a further twenty LECs. This is where the Signals Platoon set up Battlegroup Main Headquarters for the first of many times. The companies rotated through the Forward Operating Bases conducting low level training. Due to the inclement weather it was decided to conduct a staged withdrawal from the area to Archers Post where a permanent Forward Operating Base, FOB SIMBA, was already constructed. This was managed by Colour Sergeant Blyth, Charlie (Fire Support) Company's Company Quartermaster Sergeant, along with the newly promoted Sergeant Currie from the Quartermaster's Department. Their tasks included the constant battle of keeping the camp supplied with water; tankers doing 3 daily runs supplying the camp with about 27,000 litres of water every day. Special mention must go to Private Williams who, for the second exercise in Kenya in a row managed to break his fuel tanker pump engine. Thanks to a locally purchased hose pipe he was able to siphon 4000 litres of diesel into jerricans saving the Battlegroup from grinding to a halt. He also broke his own personal record of only swallowing one litre of fuel this time during the process! Corporals Dick and Cruickshanks were the Platoon resident 'sick notes'. The former injured his back just prior to the Battlegroup deployment on the Brigade Final Exercise and it took Cruicky who replaced him all of half an hour to slip in the mud and injure his arm. Private Naisaramaki displayed an uncanny knack of being able to navigate any route without any problems and his sense of direction by day and night was impressive. Clearly this skill is restricted to Eastern Africa.

On the completion of this phase, which culminated with a CO's exercise, the Battlegroup moved back to Nanyuki prior to launching on the Brigade FTX. This was an arduous 6 day exercise which saw the Battlegroup cover a lot of ground, most of it extremely high. The exercise culminated with a Battlegroup dawn attack that was preceded by a 15 Km night approach.

On completion of the final exercise the heavens opened and the retreat from Moscow began. Rivers appeared from nowhere and tracks were unrecognisable. It took the Battlegroup 72 hours to recover fully from the ground with vehicles broken down and bogged in all over the training area. The Battlegroup Electrical and Mechanical Engineer (EME), Captain Steve Walker along with his recovery team had their work cut out throughout the exercise but this phase really tested them. Once complete in Tarako Farm the hard work began for the handover to the next Battlegroup with the companies on a tight time line to return all vehicles and stores, pack air freight and sort themselves out prior to departing on adventure training. Mission accomplished; it's amazing what the prospect of some time on the beach in Mombasa can do to motivate some people!

On our return to Bonnie Scotland we had a week to repack our kit and get prepared for Spearhead Land Element (SLE) and are patiently waiting to be deployed anywhere in the world. Until the next time, as they say in Swahili, Kwaheri (good bye).

COMMUNICATION INFORMATION SYSTEMS PLATOON

Regimental Signals Officer:	Captain Harrison
Regimental Signals	
Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer (Class Two) Fisher
Company Quartermaster	
Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Tollan
Bowman Systems Manager:	Colour Sergeant Pratt
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Braid
Training Sergeant:	Sergeant Winton

It seems like only yesterday that I was typing the last instalment of the Red Hackle notes for the CIS Platoon; they say time flies when you are busy so I figure that may explain it. The Platoon has had an extremely busy year with a number of key events taking place. Firstly the successful uplift of our BOWMAN fleet to the latest hardware and software editions. This was a stressful time for all involved in ensuring the whole Battalion was trained and ready to use the kit. It was not long after the uplift before we were chucked into the beginning of the Campaign Form training cycle beginning with a mini-CAST (Combined Arms Staff Trainer) and the main CAST held down in Catterick Garrison a couple of weeks later. Both were excellent training tools and confirmed the Battalion's successful uplift to BCiP 5.4.

On return from CAST the build up training in preparation for Ex ASKARI THUNDER began in earnest. The platoon deployed as part of the advance party in order to set up the Battlegroup's communications fleet prior to the Mainbody's arrival. This in itself was no easy task, the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) fleet had recently been uplifted to BCiP 5.4 in anticipation of our arrival but had not yet had a chance to be tried or tested. This resulted in a few teething issues and before we drove out of the gates almost the entirety of their spares store had been emptied. Once out into the field the real challenge began. I had been warned of the constant fight required for comms in Kenya, but I did not expect it to be such a full on battle, at times verging on total war! The two weeks in Archers Post to the North was to be the hardest challenge the platoon was to face, with almost every factor seeming to be against us, from the arid terrain to the locals pinching kit, combined with the frustrations of such a harsh environment. Luckily the final phase of the exercise was held down in Lolldaigo which proved to be a far more forgiving area for comms even if not for movement by vehicle. Every afternoon the skies would open and turn the various mud tracks into quagmires which dovetailed almost perfectly with the movement, by night, of Battlegroup Main Headquarters, leading to some truly superb bog-ins. Now that the dust has settled and we can look back on the exercise in the cold light of day it is clear that the value of the exercise was immense and the improvement to the individual and the platoon as a whole was incredible. From off-road driving to in depth electronic BOWMAN planning everything has been exercised and tested and we are either now truly competent or know exactly what needs to be done to get there.

Since the last edition there have also been a few changes to the Platoon; WO2 Duff MBE has left us to be Company Sergeant Major for Headquarter Company and we also say goodbye to Cpl Dowdles who has gone on to be a Signals Instructor at RMA Sandhurst. Both have given excellent service to the platoon and we wish them the best of luck (not that they will need it) in their new jobs. Two new arrivals have come in the shape of WO2 Fisher from the Royal Scots Borderers who has taken over as RSWO and has settled into post with aplomb and Corporal Crawford who has come to us from ITC Catterick after being part of the RP Staff there. Congratulations must also go out to Colour Sergeant Pratt on the birth of his son Ethan and to Corporal Ross on the birth of his son Logan.

Over the last several months the Platoon has worked at an ever increasing tempo and the stresses on family and friendship that come with it have been all too obvious. We now go on to fulfil the commitment of the Spearhead Land Element with the confidence to meet any challenge that may come our way.

BATTALION KIRK

By Padre S Mackenzie

There has been a change of Padre with the Reverend David Anderson posted to Germany and 1st United Kingdom Division Signal Squadron and the Reverend Seoras Mackenzie arriving from the Army Training Regiment at Basingbourn. The new Padre has previously served with the Royal Scots, Royal Highland Fusiliers and the King's Own Scottish Borderers. "There comes a point in the Army when you can't go any-

where without bumping into someone from the past."

There were two Kirk Musters in Kenya and on return to Fort George we are now into the routine of one per month in the historic Chapel. There is currently no regular Sunday service at the Fort, as the married quarters are in Inverness and surrounded by a variety of lively churches and the majority of single soldiers disappear home at the weekend; readiness to move allowing. The Parish Church in Ardersier provides a welcome to residents of the Fort who wish to attend worship on a Sunday morning.

In our Western culture, the challenge of how to exploit the conditions for genuine spiritual growth is significant. Many people are dismissive of traditional "organised" religion. Kirk Musters provide a danger and an opportunity; the danger is that people will be put off by being subjected to that which some see as irrelevant; the opportunity is to inspire and encourage people to develop a true understanding of the Gospel allowing the moulding of a biblical faith and pattern of life. Our prayer must be that the latter will prevail.

UNIT WELFARE OFFICE

Unit Welfare Officer:	Captain S Mackenzie
Assistant Unit Welfare Officers:	Colour Sergeant S Taylor Colour Sergeant S Masson Sergeant C Hamilton

There have been some significant changes within the Unit Welfare Office since these notes were last penned. Captain Lorne Campbell has left to initially take up a post in Canada and will have returned to a recruiting job in Dundee by the time these notes go to print. Colour Sergeant Sid Masson joined the team in March having been employed in the Mortar Platoon; the new and varied challenges have him longing to return to his more conventional job! In August Captain Scott Mackenzie arrived from the Army Foundation College, Harrogate.

The pace of life remains as busy as ever with the Community Centre being utilised more or less every weekend for a party of some description. Week nights have become busier with the introduction of Zumba and Ninjitsu classes, on separate nights I may add! Amanda Blythe continues to do a sterling job running the Coffee Pot on a daily basis providing a focal point for the wives.

Functions of note recently have been the Handbags and Glad Rags evening when the welfare staff brought in local vendors specialising in makeup, jewellery and dresses no doubt to the disdain of the men! Max Fenton and the Wives' Club organised and ran a family BBQ and treasure hunt and the Ardarroch House Garden Party.

Ongoing projects being undertaken by the Welfare Office continue with the extending and updating of the garden and the redecoration of the Community Centre. A small gymnasium has been set up in what was the squash court which has been utilised on a regular basis. On a sad note we would like to say farewell to Colour Sergeant Scott Taylor who now starts his resettlement programme having come to his end of service. Scott has proven to be a very competent operator and will be missed by all.

BATTALION ARTICLES

Partnering the Kenyan Army

By Captain J C Kerr

It was with mild trepidation that I walked into the Battalion Second in Command's office in late July to find out what I was to be doing in Kenya on Exercise Askari Thunder. Being an "Officer Without Portfolio" I knew I was vulnerable. I had been told things like, "what ever you do, don't get put in charge of the live firing," and "pray you don't get the Kenyan Company Liaison Officer job – a friend of mine did it once and he said he nearly pulled all his hair out!"

So it was with even more trepidation that I walked *out* of the Second in Command's office having just been told that those two jobs I was told to avoid had just landed firmly on my plate.

With the Combined Arms Live Firing Exercise successfully behind me, half the Exercise complete and maybe being a stone lighter, I was introduced to Moses Koech the Kenyan Company Second in Command. He was acting Company Commander as the real Company Commander was on an education course. Captain Moses, as he was to become (as I became "Captain Jonny"), was a very friendly and polite man who seemed confident, and after the first back brief to the Commanding Officer, was competent too. Those stories of people pulling their hair out must have been exaggerated – I thought. If the rest of the Kenyan Company are anything like their Captain Moses then the next two and a bit weeks were going to be fairly straight for-



Capt Moses (Kenyan Army) and WO2 Stacey keeping up morale.

ward for my liaison team and me. My liaison team consisted of Warrant Officer Class Two Stacey, Colour Sergeant Ward, Corporal Bavadra, Corporal Pratt, Lance Corporal Munjoma and Pte Brown – all from Alpha (Grenadier) Company. I also inherited Charlie (Fire Support) Company's Signals Detachment consisting of Corporal McLeod, Private MacDonald and Signaller Taylor.

My false sense of security was in for a shock at the first Battlegroup Rock Drill. When Major Tait – the Chief of Staff – asked the various sub units to introduce their subordinate commanders I noticed that Captain Moses had none. I leant towards Moses and, while maintaining an air of confidence and a smile directed at the Commanding Officer who was busy putting faces to names and call-signs, quietly asked “Moses, where are your platoon commanders?”. “Don't worry,” Moses said, “they are sleeping,” he beamed a huge smile, patted me on the back and added, “Hakuna matata. T.I.A.” Hakuna matata, (Swahili for no trouble) was to become our ethos. Similar to the Spanish “Mañana.” T.I.A though? So I, again, leant towards Moses and asked “T.I.A?”. “This is Africa!” he replied.

Hakuna matata worked both ways though. For every time the Kenyans stopped, usually in the Forming Up Point, took off their helmets and lay on their backs and enjoyed the sounds of Africa at first light when only meters from the enemy, we, the British Army, had any number of sins. If I wasn't busy getting my Land Rover stuck and blaming it on Corporal McLeod then the signalers would be busy not answering the radio (usually to critical information from Zero Alpha) or Corporal McLeod would be causing all the Bowman Radios to simultaneously drop their fills or maybe burying his wagon in mud up to the top of the wheel arches! Thankfully we had Sergeant Major Stacey always on hand – well, when he wasn't chopping onions or making hot dogs – to bring us down to earth. Assisted by Corporal Bavadra, Sergeant Major Stacey kept us on an even keel.

In hindsight I'm extremely glad that I ended up with the Kenyan Company Liaison Officer job. Okay, I may have pulled out some hair but no more than I would have done working with a company of Jocks. And okay, the “Hakuna matata – T.I.A.” approach was a bit of a shock to all of us in the team but actually the Kenyans were very effective. For all their faults they had many positive attributes – they never missed an H hour, and lets face it that's half the battle, and their section level drills in the attack were very slick and well practiced. In short we learnt a great deal about ourselves as well as the Kenyans.

LAND'S END TO JOHN O'GROATS CHARITY CYCLE RIDE 19-28 APRIL 2010

Officer Commanding: Major M E Munro
 Team Members: Captain Baddeley, Warrant Officer (Class Two) Parker, Sergeants Gray, Tollan and Rodgers, Corporal MacGillvary (Golden Lions) and Lance Corporal Whishart
 Support Team Members: Sergeant McBride, Lance Corporal Brown and Private McNally

During the later stages of Operation HERRICK 10 members of the Battalion decided to select a challenge to attempt in order to raise money for charity. Following a series of meetings it was decided that a team would attempt to cycle from Land's End to John O'Groats in support of the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association (BLESMA). So began the many months of planning to enable the cycle ride to take place.

The team was formed following Christmas leave with numerous grand ideas of frequent training sessions. The reality was that only the most

committed members of the team managed to brave the cold to religiously get on their bike and put the miles through the legs. Major Munro fell victim to an old injury that would not only prevent him from attempting the challenge but also sleeping for a number of weeks.

With everything set to go the team departed Fort George on what Private 'Bullit' McNally would describe as the first challenge; that of the two day drive, in the 55 mph limited minibus, to the start point at Land's End. We arrived at Land's End on a glorious April's morning where we took some quick photographs before setting out on our 1000 mile journey towards snowy Scotland.

The first day started brilliantly and we were chewing up the miles at a rapid rate, especially considering the terrain which the A30 follows. It is amazing how wrong one's perception of Cornwall can be especially when comparing it to the Highlands. The hills in Cornwall were definitely amongst the most extreme we would cover throughout the duration of the trip.

It was during the descent of one of these hills on the first day where Sergeant Gray was presented with an oncoming flat bed truck which had not seen him. For Sergeant Gray it was a tough choice between crashing into the vehicle or bailing over the side of the hump back bridge and into the River Lynher. Being a man who rates his strength, Sergeant Gray decided to take on the truck. Unfortunately it was the truck's lucky day as it took two quite significant lumps out of Sergeant Gray. That being said, he did manage to stay on his bike. The Cornish ambulance service responded and were on the scene within minutes to take our injured man to the hospital in Plymouth. The silver lining to the 'Gray' cloud was a donation to BLESMA from one of the paramedics.

This highlighted how vulnerable we were on our bikes and further emphasised how careful we would have to be in anticipating the lack of other road users' cycle awareness.

The following day as we pushed on to Taunton, Sergeant Gray went under the knife to ensure that his wounds were clean. Later that day he joined the team in his new capacity within the support crew.

The leg from Taunton to Hereford on day 3 was characterised by the memorable elements of a ride along the Avon Gorge, across the Severn Bridge and through the winding Wye Valley from Chepstow to Monmouth. For this day we were joined by Major Angus Watson, who is currently serving as the Chief of Staff for one of the Equipment Procurement Teams at Abbey Wood in Bristol. The sun continued to shine and the right hand (East facing) parts of our body became ever more pink verging on red to purple.

The following day of the ride was pleasant and we finished in Chester, staying with 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh. As the route continued to head north we were greeted with the less than delightful urban sprawl of the North West, where towns seem to merge into one another to create a car exhaust encased cyclists' nightmare. We finished in Kendal, having broken through the urban sprawl, excited at what lay ahead of us on the following day.

Throughout, Company Sergeant Major Parker proved unbeatable on the climbs, even the new Army Physical Training Corps Instructor, Sergeant Rodgers was in awe at the old man's efforts. Having started in Kendal we were well ahead of schedule and took the decision to have a short day, finishing on the Scottish border.

Having experienced 6 days of glorious sunshine we were welcomed to Scotland with rain; the Team completed a hard day finishing in Queensferry with their eyes now set on the Kingdom of Fife to the North, across the River Forth. Now in the homeland of Fife and Perth the team pushed on clocking up the miles, the final few into a relentless head wind, before finishing at the House of Bruar and then returning to Balhousie Castle to complete a photo shoot with residents of the BLESMA home in Crieff.

The A9 is demoralising at the best of times, however once Corporal MacGillvary, who had joined us from the Golden Lions Parachute Display Team, had spoken to a contact of his at Moray Firth Radio the day lightened up as almost every driver showed their appreciation with a friendly toot as they passed us.

Possibly the most difficult phase of the trip was getting out of our own beds in Inverness to face the final leg to John O'Groats. The saying 'save the best until last' certainly ran true as the scenery was spectacular but Berridale Braes were definitely the most difficult climbs of the whole trip. That said, the final 30 miles from there to John O'Groats were a chance to relax and take in the wonderful sea air.

Ten days after we had started, we arrived at John O'Groats, a massive achievement for everybody and a healthy £14500 raised for BLESMA. We would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone en route who helped us, all of those who sponsored us and indeed our support crew without whom we would have taken twice the duration to complete the challenge.



The Start Point.



Training in Scotland was not for the faint hearted.



Day 1 of 10 on the A30 in Cornwall.



End of day 6 we arrive at the Scottish Border.

EXERCISE NORTHERN TARTAN TREK SOUTH AFRICA (18 APRIL-2 MAY 2010)

Officer Commanding: Lieutenant R Stewart
Instructors: Major King (Manchester UOTC)
Sgt Sidford (16 Cadet Training Team)
Participants: Privates Ballantyne, Boa, Carson, Gurley, Nino, Spring, Thomas and White

Ex Northern Tartan Trek was planned to be a two week, trekking expedition to the Drakensburg mountains in South Africa. Kit checks were complete and we were all ready to go when we got the telephone call from the travel agent, informing us that our flight was cancelled. We had become Volcanic Ash Victims (VAVs).

Fortunately the team of 1 officer and 9 Jocks with the addition of two external instructors were able to fly out a few days later. Unfortunately 2 members of the group were still VAVs and stuck abroad from leave. After a long flight via Dubai we finally made it safely to South Africa.

Due to the lost days the decision was made to head straight to Giants Castle Camp. The plan was to conduct some acclimatisation treks before heading for the summit of Giants Castle Peak (3314m). The treks were fantastic allowing us to see a huge array of wildlife from baboons to ellans. The ellans soon became the focus of attention, when told by a ranger that the Zulus believed that if you killed an ellan you would be able to have any women in the tribe. Unfortunately due to inclement weather the decision was taken not to attempt the summit.

The instructors took a long time to get to terms with the Jocks slang. On one particular occasion whilst it was a wet and cold day, Private Carson and White whilst in conversation with one of the instructors commented how it was 'redders' today. The instructor was seen just smiling and nodding.

Following the trekking phase we headed to Ladysmith. One of the aims of this part of the expedition was to expose the young soldiers to some of the history and culture of South Africa. Time was spent at Spion Kop Game Reserve as well as learning about the siege of Ladysmith and Battle of Spion Kop. Lieutenant Stewart tried his best to bring some modern day context into the battlefield tours, with a varying amount of success. A day was spent at an Adventure Centre quad biking, zip lining, paintballing and doing archery.

One of the aims of the expedition had been to climb Giants Castle Peak. Although unable to reach the summit, we were still able to expose everyone to a different culture having completed some robust training in a physically demanding environment. Everyone who went, away had a great time, even if their tans weren't quite as good as they hoped!



Ptes Raoba Nino and Spring cooking breakfast with Giants Castle in the background.

BATTALION FOOTBALL TEAM

Football Officer: Captain D Hood

On a cold January afternoon the Battalion Football Team took on 1st Battalion Welsh Guards in the second round of the Infantry Cup. After 65 minutes of play the Guards had stormed into a 4-1 lead and looked to be cruising into the last four of the tournament. Warrant Officer Class Two (Now Captain) Gemmill Dargavel had to call on all his footballing experience to encourage his team to keep pressing forward. This "never say die" attitude was rewarded. Before long, Lance Corporal Rab Coll



The Battalion football team training.



The victorious Black Watch football team. Winners of the Infantry Challenge Cup.

scored two goals and Private Damien Gonsales adding to his earlier effort in the first half, drew the scores level. With less than 10 minutes remaining Private Gonsales unleashed a terrific shot which flew into the net and secured a famous 5-4 victory, securing him his hat trick.

The semi-final was played away in Warminster against the highly fancied 3 YORKS at our old home in Battlesbury Barracks. In wet and windy conditions 3 YORKS settled quickly and scored first. Yet again the resolve of the players was tested and as the game progressed the Battalion started to establish control and Corporal 'Podge' Gillon smashed home a deserved equaliser. As the YORKS heads dropped Corporal Gillon drilled home his second goal of the game to take the Battalion into the final.

On Wednesday 24th March 2010 the Battalion faced up to 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers at the Tidworth Oval. The Fusiliers oozed confidence before the game and being posted in Tidworth meant that they had the backing of 200 fans from their Battalion. By contrast the Battalion was supported by the Commanding Officer, who was able to secure a release from his Commanding Officers' Designate Course at Warminster, Warrant Officers (Class Two) Dougie Graham and Davey Hughes and coach drivers Corporal Thomas and Private Williams.

From the start the Battalion took the game to the Fusiliers and midway through the first half took a deserved lead through Private Damien Gonsales. Just before half time the Fusiliers were awarded a free kick on the edge of the box which was well saved by Lance Corporal Matt Strathearn. It was not a spectacular save but it was important at that stage of the game. The Fusiliers started the second half on the offensive and Regimental Sergeant Major Mike Duffus had to call on all his experience to hold the defence firm. On the hour mark the Fusiliers equalised and this lifted their strangely subdued support. To the chant of "England's Fusiliers" they pushed forward and their main striker snaked past the defence to find himself one on one with Lance Corporal Strathearn. With a sinking feeling in The Black Watch camp he looked up and lofted a terrific shot over the advancing keeper. For what seemed an age the ball held in the air and smacked back off the crossbar. The Fusiliers knew that their chance had gone and their heads visibly dropped.

The Battalion upped the tempo and Corporal Pete Kane and Lance Corporal Coll tormented the Fusiliers defence over and over again. When the Fusiliers did try to push forward Lance Corporal Jim Hutton produced a Man of the Match performance to shut them out. With 15 minutes remaining Colour Sergeant 'Pepe' Pearson surged into the box and was crudely upended. A clear penalty. Private Gonsales showed his composure and calmly sent the keeper the wrong way to score the winning goal.

For the first time since 1976 the Battalion are Infantry Challenge Cup Winners and rest assured will be going all out to retain the trophy again this season.

BATTALION RUGBY

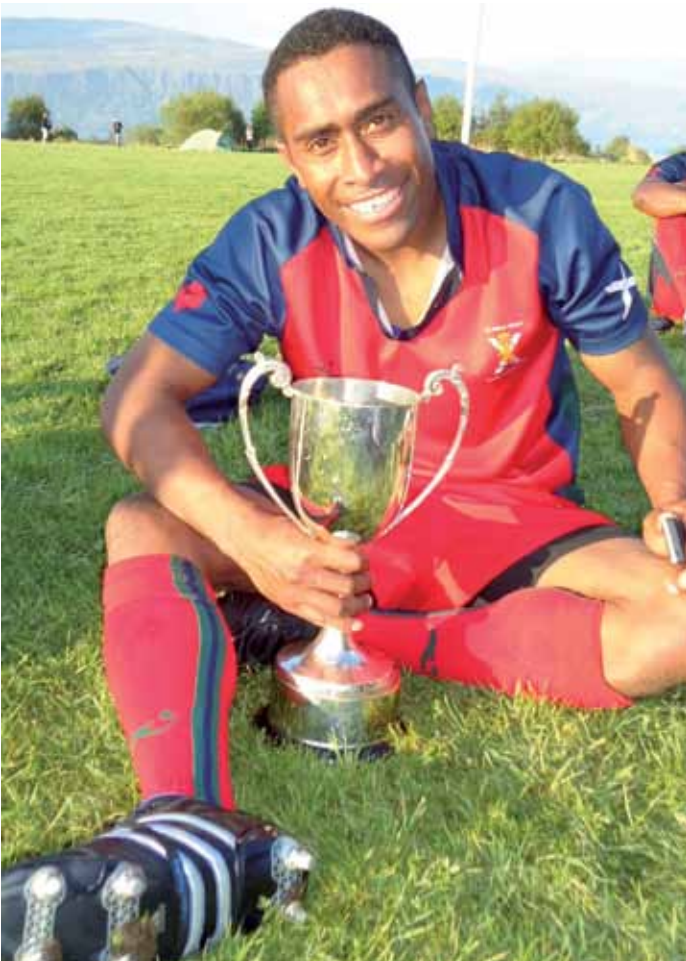
Rugby Officer: Captain A J Phillips MC
Rugby Second in Command: Lieutenant M P Stanning

This year's Rugby activity got off to a fantastic start with the team flying to the Philippines to take part in the Manila 10s international rugby tournament. 32 teams entered the tournament, a four division seeded system ensured that all teams played close and competitive games on day one and their consequent rankings earning places in the shield, bowl, plate and cup on day two. The Black Watch team finished top of its group progressing to the cup knockout stage. The team were able to win the quarter final match against Seoul Survivors but were knocked out in the semi-finals by the Wave Wearers. The tournament was eventually won by CS Larrikins a guest team made up of former internationals and club players.

The standard of rugby in Manila is improving year on year and it is a great opportunity for those who enjoy the game to play in the competitive and semi-professional environment that is on offer in the Philippines. The tour would not go ahead without the huge amount of support we receive from a great number of sources



Mull Sevens Winners 2010 (note the reappearance from Capt (Retired) Alex Reading).



Man of the Match Mull Sevens Pte Sinileleiwasa.

however particular thanks should be made to CAPE our principal sponsors.

On return from Manila the team took part in a number of local tournaments securing victories in the Mull and Lochaber 7s tournaments. As always the charm of the Fijian contingent won over the local crowds with their spectacular running and handling proving entertaining to all.

At the time of writing, the team has embarked on its bid to win the Army Community Cup competition and have won the first match against 3 RIFLES 33-27.

TRI-SERVICE FORCES OPEN WAVE CHAMPIONSHIPS 2010

By Lieutenant Hieghton-Jackson

On the 22nd of March 2010 25 windsurfers from across the three Services began to arrive at Rhosneigr, a small town on Anglesey in North Wales renowned for some of the most consistent wind and waves in the UK. A perfect location to hold the Championships!

Monday proved to be the windiest day of the week with sailors out on the water early to warm up for the competition in a solid force 5 wind and some medium sized waves. "Warm" up may well put a bit of a rosy tint to the conditions as we were greeted with temperatures of approximately 6-8 degrees out of the water and certainly below 10 degrees in the water! Only the committed, some may say foolish, venture out in these conditions.

It was clear from early on that the standard of windsurfing has risen steeply over the past year with a number of sailors consistently landing forward rotations and a good number of back rotations being attempted – some with more success than others! All who had made the early journey made the most of the conditions as the forecast had taken a turn for the worse with the wind forecast to drop down all week.

The final comprised of 10 minutes of searching for good ramps and waves as the wind and waves died down a little. I had a pretty disappointing final, finding it tricky to find good waves, only managing a couple of small jumps and a couple of reasonable rides. I left the water and walked over to the judges waiting for the inevitable result of Royal Navy followed by RAF and then Army. I was pretty shocked when Jon Metcalfe announced that the RAF was 3rd, with the Royal Navy in 2nd and me on top of the podium.

Now all that remained was to get the novice fleet out into the waves to show how much they have learned over the past year. It was immediately clear that the standard is rising rapidly with a number of the men overcoming fear to go against all senses and throw themselves into their first forward loop attempts! Believe me when I say that this is no mean feat! There is something so wrong about throwing yourself forwards off a wave when travelling at 25 miles per hour!

There is something incredibly satisfying about beating the Royal Navy in a water based sport, especially when they were sailing so well. Now all that remains is to thank Jon Metcalf and Lucas from Funsport for braving the cold and judging, Funsport for helping to run another great competition at Rhosneigr and Animal who sponsored the event and provided the prizes. Lieutenant Hieghton-Jackson now plans to enter the UK Windsurfing Association and British Windsurfing Association competitions throughout the UK and Ireland and will compete for The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland and the Army.



Tri-service wave champion Lt Hieghton-Jackson doing a 'Backie'.

FIELD SPORTS

By Lieutenant M P Stanning

The last few months have seen a lull on the field sports front. With a trip to Kenya there might have been the odd hidden ambition of a crack at some big game, with one of the live rounds carried for emergencies perhaps? Unfortunately there are no trophies to report!

The main activity has been the rough shooting and clays shot in the local area around the Fort. On a number of evenings there have been adventurous forays into the undergrowth seeking the illusive Ardersier bunnies with mixed results.

The long days during the summer months allowed for some fantastic evenings on the beach shooting clays. This activity was brought to an abrupt halt when the Officers Mess clay trap was removed from the Battalion by an Officer posted away claiming ownership. A disputed point! With six members of the Battalion due to attend the Shotgun skills and safety course in October it is hoped that the Battalion Clay

Pigeon Club will be re-established and allow anyone interested, a weekly opportunity to practice.

With the uncommonly harsh winter last year the Battalion stalking was seriously affected with the organised exercise for the Jocks cancelled. The hind season is looking promising; due to the SLE commitments there will be at least a Company strength in the Fort at any one time through the winter months. It is the aspiration to try and get as many Jocks that are interested involved in stalking, if only to experience a good day on the hill.

Most recently, with the Pink Foot Geese making an appearance on the foreshore around the Fort there have been a couple of early morning trips through the training area. On one occasion it would appear that half of Ardersier had had the same idea. Real estate on the foreshore was at a premium, thus the intrepid souls from the Fort found themselves well off to the flank and offering all sorts of advice to those with more centrally located gorse bushes!

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

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel E C Chelsea
Training Major:	Major T J O Carmichael
Adjutant:	Captain M J Munnich
Quartermaster:	Major D W McCallum MBE
Regimental Operational Support Officer:	Captain A McEwen
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer (First Class) D Yarrick

At the start of May 2010 the Battalion received the Freedom of Perth. A Company has written on this more extensively in its notes but it is of note that there are photographic records of the October 1963 reunion of 51st Highland Division on the North Inch, in the conference room of Headquarters 51st (Scottish) Brigade in Stirling. Our freedom parade on 8th May culminated on the North Inch with the presentation of campaign medals to the 33 All Ranks who had served alongside their counterparts in The Black Watch Battalion on Operation HERRICK 10.

May also saw us complete the pre-mobilisation training of a further 35 All Ranks from across the Battalion, who are to deploy on Operation HERRICK 13 in the early autumn. They are attached to battalions in 16 Brigade, mainly the Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2 SCOTS, and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 5 SCOTS. They have been part of a focussed cohort of 250 TA Individual Reservists from across 2nd Division, with their training coordinated at Divisional level. Our next part in this, our operational rhythm now, began in October as we undergo particular training across the Battalion to supply at least 30 riflemen and SNCO/officers for additional posts, for an operational rotation in 2011.

In June the next major effort took form as we moved to Cameron Barracks, Inverness, to run seven weeks of TA recruit training for all 51 Brigade TA units, Exercise SUMMER CHALLENGE 2010. Planning for this had run concurrent to much of the mobilisation work and now came to fruition with over 200 recruits starting in five platoons. There were two infantry recruit platoons, one for 7 SCOTS and the other for 6 SCOTS. The commitment from across the Battalion to run the training was very good, not least because it was our annual camp. Whether it was junior ranks working on the guards and duties or others providing instruction and administrative coordination, they had the opportunity to undertake a couple of days Adventurous Training at Rothiemurchus Lodge and also complete several of their Military Annual Training Tests, or MATTs. We are having a big drive to improve fitness and stamina across the board and many took advantage of the chance to do this as a daily group.

Perth & Kinross Council had been organising the 'Perth 800', based on the 800th anniversary of it having first been granted its charter. It feted Armed Forces Day in great style on 2 July with over 1000 on parade as a major event in the celebrations. The RSM had been instrumental in garnering support and participation for the day. The Earl of Wessex took the salute and afterwards presented the Elizabeth Cross to widows and families next to the 51st Highland Division memorial, on the North Inch.

As the TA battalion of northern Scotland, 51st Highland has sought to create its own identity and cohesion since becoming 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland in 2006. This has been a positive, gradual process and one which has increased the sense of belonging whether one is from Ullapool, Stonehaven, Dunoon or Kirkcaldy. The Battalion, very significantly, received its own hackle at the beginning of August, marking the event in a parade on 7 August at the end of Ex SUMMER CHALLENGE, in Cameron Barracks. It has been a symbolic step in the progression of the Battalion and one also conceived to bring together all of our links to our antecedent roots. The colour purple was chosen from having been part of the Highland Brigade flash, from the colour of heather in bloom, and from it being a royal colour. The man or woman volunteering for service in 51st Highland, 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland is in no way any different from his forebear volunteering to serve in 6th Perthshire Battalion of The Black Watch; their motivation and pride are the same and their inheritance the richer.

With the advent of autumn, holidays being completed, we are now rolling into the next phase of training. We intend to make greater use of training opportunities on private land through to the Spring, to provide battalion training relatively near to each of the Companies in turn. The intention is to overcome the limitations of availability, increase stamina because we will be carrying everything in, and to have fun while improving or learning fundamental skills and techniques; 51st Highland is alive and kicking.

HQ COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major K M Tait
QM(V):	Captain B S Baxter
RSO:	Captain I T Bunce
PSAO:	Major J S Langdale
PSI/MTWO:	Colour Sergeant D Swash

Headquarter Company has had a quiet period over the summer, supporting the Battalion, whether on the Brigade Skill at Arms Meeting at Barry Buddon or latterly the demands of Exercise SUMMER CHALLENGE, up at Cameron Barracks, a popular venue for support staff. Even though it meant a fairly thankless task of providing repetitive support to the soldiers under training, the support staff's routine was varied by some challenging participation on the Adventurous Training down near Aviemore, fitness on a daily basis, and conducting MATTs. Corporal Bradford led a good team in the last two weeks of the course but would not admit it was not his preferred choice of annual camp.

Some of the department heads spent the entire 7 weeks on the camp from before the start of the course and only left at the bitter end. The Quartermaster (V), Captain 'Spats' Baxter, completed the exercise, even managing to get the odd wedding done to boot, before being mobilised and deploying on HERRICK 13! Lance Corporal Jarvie completed most of the five weeks driving the bus to move soldiers to and from the ranges each day.

We had 4 soldiers under training and they had a good time with the range of training. It was a surprise however that their collective shooting was less impressive than that of other Corps present. The final two weeks for them was arduous military training on their Combat Infantryman's Course on Ben Wyvis Estate under the direction of Regular staff from Catterick. However, visits by TA staff with "choccy" bars did help to maintain morale in the face of onslaughts by the midge population!

The Company is now settling back into regular Tuesday night training and the Signals Platoon are being put through their paces by Captain Bunce and WO2 McIntosh in preparation for the next Battalion weekend.

HIGHLAND BAND AND PIPES AND DRUMS

Director of Music:	Captain Graeme Abernethy
NRPS Colour Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant S Malcolm
Pipe Major:	Sergeant D Walker

Some things do change, eventually. Captain Graeme Abernethy has decided to head to the proverbial pastures new, in Cairo, where we wish him well, for a forecast stint of a 2 year contract. Even he did not think it possible to continue his service to the Highland Band at that distance and he has finally hung up his baton after 18 years in the post. Directors of Music are not a commonly occurring beast but we hope that we have been able to secure the leadership of an erstwhile colleague to take his place until a permanent replacement can be appointed. Confirmation will follow in the next Red Hackle. We are very pleased to inform one and all that NRPS Colour Sergeant Stewart Malcolm has finally overcome the majority of his ailments after a long struggle for health and returned to part time work. It is very good to see him around Queen's Barracks once again and look forward to him resuming full work with vigour.

Remaining on the musical front, the Pipes and Drums of the Battalion, led by Pipe Major Walker, have recently signed up an ex-

Regular in the form of Sergeant Cammy Goodall. This is a move across from the military band, and very welcome for us. The Pipes and Drums this year had their annual camp at the Basel Tattoo where they acquitted themselves very well, being limited only by lack of funding for Man Training Days.

A COMPANY

OC:	Major R Barker
2IC:	Captain M W Dunnigan
PSAO:	Captain R Reid MBE
CSM:	Warrant Officer Class 2 Parker
OC Mortars Platoon:	Captain A W Keen
OC Pioneer Platoon:	Captain H Cannon
OC Rifle Platoon:	Lieutenant J Valentine

The 8th of May 2010 was the culmination of a great deal of planning and preparation for the Battalion; 51st Highland, 7th Battalion The



Ex Summer Challenge Private Carmichael wins the Best Shot Award.



Ex Summer Challenge Private Mellish wins the Best Recruit Award.



Officers and Soldiers of 51st Highland, 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland are presented with new hackles by Commander 51 (Scottish) Brigade.

Royal Regiment of Scotland was conferred the Freedom of Perth. Battalion headquarters had been long in negotiation with the Provost about the honour. It was granted to us in recognition of the loyal and distinguished service of the regiment and its predecessors to Queen and Country and in recognition of our 'long historical association with the City of Perth and its hinterland'. The day started, as these things tend to, very early with drill practice and dress rehearsals under the direction of the RSM, WO1 Yarrick, on the parade square in Barry Buddon Camp. When we had eventually been licked into shape we boarded the buses and travelled through to Perth where the parade formed up on the North Inch, meeting up again with the Highland Band and the Pipes and Drums.

Perth is a special place to march through on a wonderfully sunny day; the support received was simply outstanding with crowds several deep lining the route and waiting outside the City Hall where the Freedom was awarded. The Provost, Dr John Hulbert, addressed the city and the Battalion. Our Representative Colonel, Brigadier Charles Grant, replied to Bernadette Malone, the Chief Executive, acknowledging receipt of the Freedom being conferred. It was actually a tight squeeze to get the whole parade in to King Edward Street with so many spectators and supporters. The presentation made, the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Chelsea, ordered bayonets to be fixed, and the Colours to be released after which the parade then marched through the town back to the North Inch, heads held high.

On completion of the march, the Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, Brigadier Melville Jamieson, presented campaign medals to our 33 All Ranks who had served with The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland on Operation HERRICK 10 in 2008/9. The day then continued with a quick change into sports kit for our Highland Games in the afternoon, which was held on the Inch with teams from other Battalions; the Police and Fire Brigade had also been invited. Another quick change saw everyone in suits for a Beating Retreat outside the Perth Concert Hall. This was another well attended and received event, the Highland Band and Pipes and Drums, as ever, putting on a superb performance. Finally, to cap the day off, All Ranks enjoyed a ceilidh in Queens Barracks where more than a few well earned beers were consumed. It was a fitting end to a long, tiring, but thoroughly rewarding day.

The Company has also been doing its bit for charity; on 14 May two teams set off to Tibbie Shiel's Inn on St Marys Loch in the Borders to join nearly 600 competitors on the "Hearts and Heroes" challenge. An early rise on Saturday 15th and both teams set off on the 29 mile route through some spectacular countryside on the Southern Upland Way. The weather was kind to us and everyone completed the arduous course well within the 12 hour time limit, ending up at the Melrose Rugby ground where a party was laid on by the organisers. The two teams managed to raise well over £1000 for the Charity.

We were also heavily represented on the Armed Forces Day parade in Dundee on 3 July prior to deploying to Cameron Barracks, Inverness on annual Camp in support of Ex SUMMER CHALLENGE.

Recruiting is going very well, with six soldiers completing their training during Summer Challenge up at Inverness. Congratulations go to all who completed the arduous and challenging 7 week programme but a specific mention should go to Private Mellish who won 'Best Recruit' and also to Private Carmichael who excelled at Skill at Arms, winning 'Best Shot'. He had also won 'Best Young Shot' at the Brigade SAAM, so it looks like we have the core member of a good shooting team for the future. 12 more recruits are going through the Regional Training Centre system in Edinburgh and 6 ex Regulars, from officer down to junior NCO level have recently joined the Company. A specific warm welcome is extended to Captain Hugo Cannon who has taken command of the Assault Pioneer Platoon in Stirling.

In this regard written direction has recently been received from HQ Infantry that we will be retaining the Mortar Platoon, due to the level of manpower support we have sent to the Regulars on operations. However, the Javelin Anti tank Platoon in Kirkcaldy and our Assault Pioneer Platoon, in Stirling, will both transform to rifle platoons for the foreseeable future. The latter is a 'suspension' and is felt to be an odd decision in the light of operations demanding more assault pioneer trained soldiers than before. However, change is nothing new to the TA and with planning and our will to be there, A Company will continue to support operations.

There are other movements afoot; we would like to wish Colour Sergeant Dave McMullan and his family all the best as he comes to the end of his service and moves on to civilian life. At the same time



51st Highland 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland march through the city after being granted the Freedom of Perth.

we extend a warm welcome to Colour Sergeant Boxer Easton coming into the hot seat as SPSI. Sergeant Mullady, the previous TA CQMS has decided to call it a day and we would like to thank him for all his efforts during his many years of TA service and wish him and his family well for the future.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish a safe tour to Major Dick Barker, Sergeants Lee Penrice, Bob Reid, and David Thomson, and to Privates Dale Adams and Russell MacLean who are all currently mobilised to deploy at the end of September on Operation HERRICK 13 with a variety of units. Have a safe tour lads and we look forward to seeing you back again next year.



The Commanding Officer Lt Col E C Chelsea leads the battalion on 8 May 2010.



Brigadier Jameson the Lord Lieutenant presents Afghanistan campaign medals to TA officers and soldiers after the Freedom parade.



The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada

The Regiment's last six months of operations have passed in a blur. Many important events took place in the midst of our standard summer training cycle. The laying up of our 1974 Queen's Colour and our 1962 Regimental Colour at the Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul was a significant and sobering ceremony. Well attended by all members of the Regimental family, the ceremony coincided with our annual Church Parade. It was heart-warming to see our veterans and current soldiers exchange stories. This event was an important milestone in our history and now a new generation of soldiers, inspired by their predecessors will carry the tradition of professionalism and duty that has made the Black Watch one of the most famous Regiments in the Canadian Army. Many on that day reflected, and perhaps shed a tear, on the times they were entrusted to carry the Colours on parade. Over the summer it was with great sadness that we lost two of our brothers-in-arms. Sgt Antony Adamczewski and CWO Claude Hamel passed away, both after a determined and courageous fight against cancer.

Despite the loss the unit will remember this training cycle as one of the most successful in recent years. Mainly due to the unyielding

efforts of the recruiting team, the NCOs and officers of the Regiment, we qualified more than 30 new soldiers, 11 new leaders (8 x MCpl, 3 x Sgt) and 2 new officers. This success would not have been possible without the planning and foresight of the former Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Tom Mackay, who set the stage for this tremendous success. We have five soldiers in their final stage of preparation for



Laying up Colours.



Range Exercise.



New Tams.

their deployment in Afghanistan. We wish them and their families a successful but uneventful tour of duty. Their contribution is essential to the accomplishment of our mission.

The Unit went to Farnham for its annual range exercise early in the Fall. The first day was the infantry qualification with personal weapons. In addition to the already demanding task for the short time allocated, all unit members participated in the annual Army combat physical fitness standard. The qualification consisted of a 13 km march with 42 kg of equipment, followed by a timed simulation of a trench dig and a drag of a wounded soldier for 25 metres. We are proud to say that all participants succeeded in achieving the expected standards. One of the highlights of the event was that all members proudly crossed the arrival line together led by our pipers.

It is with high spirits and confidence in our capabilities that we will meet the challenge of the new training year which will bring us one step closer to our Regiment's 150th Anniversary.

Nemo Me Impune Lacessit.



Route March.

The Tyneside Scottish

Still within the confines of a strictly controlled training budget, 204 Battery life proceeds apace. In May, our team fared extremely well in a NATO Military Skills Competition – Ex Altcar Challenge – particularly Gunner Nicola Hargreaves whose leadership of an international female team, after an eleventh hour secondment to the team, was rewarded with a first placing. Further success followed for Nicola who soon afterwards passed the Officer Selection Board to metamorphose to Officer Cadet status, remaining though ‘in the wake’ of Paul Bastow who passed the RMAS Commissioning Course in July and now proudly sports a pip. She with OCdts Tom Holloway, David Irvine and Will Parker will, we hope, follow suit.

A team of three led by our SPSI, WO2 Steve McCord, undertook the very tough two day Ex Alpine Challenge in Bavaria in June, running, cycling and canoeing across some 65km of arduous country and acquitting themselves well as sole TA representatives in this army competition. Also in June, the adventurous Ex Clarkson Challenge enthralled the 14 participants with RAW quadding, supacat and argocat (whatever they all are) featuring high on the agenda, along with archery (crossbow) and command tasks. Capt Alison Lumley's final bill for this venture was a stunner though the PSAO eventually rallied and agreed to stump up, his office air is now devoid of its temporary bluish hue.

All 101 Regiment sub units held parades in support of Armed Forces Day in late June and early July with the Tyneside Scottish assisting with the 205 Battery event, their Durham Volunteer Artillery 150th Anniversary parade through South Shields, which was followed by a splendid dinner.

Major Phil Haigh's four year tenure of command ended on 11 September 2010 when he handed over to Major Tim Pennett who joins us with impeccable credentials having previously commanded our fellow STA Battery, 269 (West Riding) Battery in Leeds. He knows well our Tyneside Scottish history and traditions, imbued as he is with the

Scottish ‘touch’ from his days with the Glasgow and Strathclyde UOTC. We welcome him and Debbie to the fold whilst wishing Phil and Sue all the best in their future travels. Major Haigh's period of command is notable for several key aspects, not least seeing us through the ever increasing demands of operational support to 5 Regiment RA with the conduct of more frequent joint training exercises with them, together with the extra individual training and Surveillance and Target Acquisition (STA) qualification requirements. Ex Magpie Learner in May 2010 had proved a vital two week opportunity, both for gaining such qualifications and for completion of the annual camp requirement.

Several days earlier a former Tyneside Scottish Battery Commander, Lieutenant Colonel David Middleton, had handed over as CO 101 Regiment to Lieutenant Colonel Mark Mackenzie Crooks. As always at such times, the latter's feet have hardly touched the ground since but he was able to spend his first drill night with us and he and Mrs Mackenzie Crooks dined alongside General Sir Alistair and Lady Irwin, Colonel Roddy and Mrs Riddell and other guests at the annual Black Watch Association (Newcastle Branch) Dinner, held at our TA Centre on 25 September 2010. What a grand occasion it was. Major Pennett missed the occasion due to an exercise in Iceland which, we understand, is unaffected by volcanic ash!



2nd Lieutenant Paul Bastow with 2IC, Major Max Murray, at the TA Commissioning Course at Sandhurst.



Staff Sergeant Davie Barrass (left) and Gunner Dan Holbrough proudly sport their ToSs in Z Battery Lines.



Major Phil Haigh (right) hands the keys to the Tyneside Scottish Battery to Major Tim Pennett.



Lieutenant Colonel David Middleton (right) hands command of 101 Regiment RA (V) to Lieutenant Colonel Mark Mackenzie Crooks.

Drill night attendance figures remain high with our average over the past three months being 30. This bodes well, as do our recruiting figures with seven attestations since 1 April 2010. Two exercises in August and September – Ex Urban Hackle (FIBUA) and Ex Tartan

Progress (both in Catterick) – were very well attended and useful preludes to Ex Iron Storm, our joint STA exercise at annual camp, with 269 Battery, which is to come in October. Three members of the Battery are in Afghanistan; Staff Sergeant Davie Barrass and Gunner Dan Holbrough are on Op Herrick 13 with Z Battery of 5 Regiment RA and Lance Bombardier Brian Borthwick is due to return from Op Herrick 12 (P Battery) in the middle of October. All three are well and doubtless playing their remote parts in preparing Gunner Paul Telford for Op Herrick 14 which is almost upon us. Gunners Dinger Bell and David Gilchrist must wait patiently for their turn, the 5 Regiment Orbat being such that further volunteers are not yet required.

Recent promotions include Sergeants Doc Holliday and Kevin Pardue to Staff Sergeant; Lance Bombardiers Chris Hussey and Jeff Japes to Bombardier and Lance Corporal Dionne Payne to Corporal. We also welcome Gunners Christopher Durrant, Andrew Givens, Adam Henderson and Shaun Renwick to the Tyneside Scottish ‘fold’ whilst bidding sad farewells to Lance Bombardier Steve Stewart on transfer to the RMP (V) and Gunners Sharon Cook and Christopher Hancock who have joined 203 Battery in Blyth and 103 Regiment RA (V) in South Wales, respectively. 2nd Lieutenant Andrew Common who joined us from 4 LANCS in May has just joined 5 Regiment RA on a Full Time Reserve Service engagement after which he might return to our ranks. We end on a sad note with a report of the recent death of Sergeant David Hawthorn, PSI of the Tyneside Scottish (2003-2005). Our condolences go to his family at this sad time. A good, honest and decent man – may he rest in peace.

The Angus and Dundee Battalion ACF

150TH GARDEN PARTY

The past 6 months has seen a tremendous amount of work being carried out in Angus and Dundee Battalion, especially due to the 150th Anniversary of the ACF.

Commandant, Colonel Andrew Cassidy advised us that there were 3 major events for us to work towards but it transpired that there was about 33 events in all or at least it felt like it. Just as well cadets and adults alike put their heart and soul into all the activities.

We started in May with a Garden Party at Balmadies, the home of the Lord Lieutenant of Angus, Mrs Georgiana Osborne and her husband Captain James Osborne.

The evening was organised in conjunction with Cadet 150 and SSAFA. There were guests from the Army Cadet Force, Air Cadets and Sea Cadets as well as guests from both cadet and SSAFA organisations; in addition there were representatives from the education department and school representatives of Angus, members of the Council, the RFCA and Regular Forces and Cadet Associations. It was a fantastic evening which everyone enjoyed. This applied especially to the recipients of awards presented by the Lord Lieutenant. One such award was to Cadet Colour Sergeant Rikki Henderson who is a member of Monifieth Black Watch Detachment, based in Barry Buddon. Rikki received his Lord Lieutenant’s Certificate.

Everyone was talking about the weather and whether it would hold or not! Fortunately, it held from the beginning of the evening and included the fantastic fly past by the Royal Air Force from Leuchars. However, it was not long after the Beating Retreat started when the heavens opened, along with many umbrellas. Needless to say both Angus and Dundee Battalion



A Company drill team.

Pipes and Drums and the Sea Cadets Band were professional to the end and completed their musical extravaganza, even though they looked liked drowned rats.

MEMORIAL WALL

In May, the Battalion received a visit from the Brigade Commander, Brigadier David Alfrey. After a meeting with the senior officers, Brigadier Alfrey visited the cadets training out in the field, enthusing them with his rhetoric. He spent quite a bit of time with the 3 Stars which gave them a great boost, asking them questions as well as answering theirs.

After a curry lunch in the dining room, the Battalion paraded for the Brigadier so that he could present awards to some of the cadets and medals and clasps to three adults, including Captain George Smith, OC of the Pipes and Drums. The day culminated in Padre Andy McCafferty officiating at the dedication of the new memorial wall which was built in the HQ grounds by members of the Battalion adults. The wall will hold memorial plaques for ex members of the Battalion. The wall will be a fitting tribute to past members who gave their time and commitment in support of the cadets.

CADET SUNDAY

We have been very fortunate in receiving Padre Andrew McCafferty into our Battalion. Andy lives in Forfar with his wife Norma and is the Minister in St John’s Episcopal Church in Forfar’s East High Street.

This opportunity has enabled the Battalion to come together for two years running, on the first Sunday of June every year to re-affirm our belief in the Army Cadet Force with the Battalion Banner being draped over the altar.

The Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Sandy Watson and his wife were in attendance along with Peter Murphy, Depute Provost of Angus.

Sandy, Peter and Colonel Cassidy took the salute as the Battalion marched past on their way to the church.

After the service, the ladies section of St John’s welcomed everybody into the church hall for food and refreshments.

CADET 150 CIVIC RECEPTION – BEATING RETREAT

The Lord Lieutenant of Dundee, Lord Provost John Letford is a great supporter of all the cadet organisations and proved this by holding a civic reception in Dundee City Chambers.

Many dignitaries, guests and VIP’S, were given an opportunity to listen to 4 cadets giving a presentation of their time in their respective cadet organisations and what it has done for each of them. Two of the cadets were



Angus Outreach 2010.

from Angus and Dundee Battalion. They were Cadet RSM Cara Clark from Kirkton Black Watch Detachment and Sergeant Mike Weir from the Scots Dragoon Guards, C Squadron.

All the cadets gave an articulate presentation which amazed the guests present.

Afterwards the Battalion Pipes and Drums and Sea Cadets gave a Beating Retreat.

ANNUAL CAMP

Over 200 cadets and 60 adults travelled to Altcar Training Camp near Liverpool for their two week Annual Camp. The first week was Star Board training with the second week dedicated to adventure training.

The Battalion prides itself on Challenger Company. This is the Basic Board where the senior cadets vie for 'adult' positions from Sergeant to the Commanding Officer for the duration of the first week's training, resulting in the senior cadets organising and executing the training of the basics. The board is overseen by adults to give advice and make sure that no safety issues arise. Challenger Company has proved to be very successful, both for the basic cadets and the senior cadets, giving them responsibility and the opportunity to fine tune their existing skills.

During the second week a drill competition was held between the A and B Companies and C Squadron. B Company were unfortunate in coming third, A Company came second and C Squadron quite rightly won the prestigious award, although credit goes to all who took part. The competition is getting harder to separate as each year goes by.

Another event that took place was on the middle Sunday. The battalion travelled to Formby, a few miles up the road. Once formed up, Colonel Cassidy led the parade to the sound of the pipes and drums to a local church. It was an 'alternative' church where the cadets were allowed to play instruments and take part in a couple of activities which involved



B Company drill team.

either standing in the front of the church or running around trying to find clues! Anyway, the cadets seemed to enjoy it. Once the church service was concluded, the Battalion marched back to the car park and immediately got on mini buses and returned to camp, exhausted but exhilarated.

During camp, many cadets received their star board badges, promotions and other awards.

Cadet Colour Sergeant Rikki Henderson received his award for his BTEC in Public Services. At another presentation ceremony for B Company, Rikki was promoted to Company Sergeant Major. Rikki has done very well this year and rightly deserves the accolades that he has been awarded. Amongst other presentations, Cameron Mills, a cadet from Grove Black Watch Detachment, was one of three cadets, presented with an envelope with an undisclosed amount of money (a token gesture) for being the most improved cadet. Cameron is just 12 years of age and although small in stature, has a colossal appetite for the cadet movement.

The Camp Commandant was extremely pleased with Angus and Dundee Battalion as we left the camp spotless and did not incur any bar-rack damages, leaving with our reputation intact.

During camp and as PRO, I was asked by the cadet RSMI to take a photograph of the Battalion. RSMI Michael Pascoe was tasked to think of a good photo opportunity that would represent the Battalion's effort towards the 150 celebration. Not daunted by this task, RSMI Pascoe came up with the idea of cadets actually forming the numbers 150. So he set about organising C Squadron to represent the number one, B Company to represent number five and A Company to represent the zero. No mean feat! I managed to get on top of a 6 foot wall to take some photographs. They weren't as sharp as I had hoped for but at least from the photograph you can get a vague idea of what we were trying to achieve. Unless I went up in a cherry picker, there was no chance of getting any higher. At least we tried.

OUTREACH PROJECT

Hallelujah!! The outreach programme has eventually taken off in Angus and Dundee Battalion. Due to unforeseen circumstances the project never actually got off the ground in Dundee, but Angus have taken to it like a 'duck to water'.

The initial meeting took place in the TAC in Forfar. The second phase was held in Barry Buddon during early September with the main weekend also being held in Barry Buddon at the beginning of October with many activities having been arranged under the watchful eye of the project manager Captain Wend Road.

More news on the project in the next issue of the Red Hackle.



Brigadier Alfrey's visit.



Newly appointed Cdt CSM Rikki Henderson.



CSgt Rikki Henderson receiving his Lord Lieutenant's Certificate from Mrs Georgiana Osborne.

BATTALION PERSONALITIES

As in every unit, there are unsung personnel that work behind the scenes and never get a mention. So highlighted in this edition is our Admin Officer in charge of dealing with all our training admin, SSI Iain Rattray, an ex Black Watch regular soldier. Iain attended his first annual camp this year and worked his fingers to the bone, as usual with his enigmatic smile that is infectious.

Two other 'work horses' who also have the inimitable task of counting blankets and sheets as part of their job are Colour Sergeants Brian Smith, an ex cadet and Jim Carter, an ex regular soldier.

Although C Squadron are not badged Black Watch, they are none the less an integral part of Angus and Dundee Battalion ACF and their merits should also be highlighted.

One member in particular is Cadet Under Officer Mike Weir, Scots Dragoon Guards Detachment.

Mike has had a fantastic year. First he was given the appointment of Cadet Under Officer by Brigadier David Alfrey, the first cadet given this appointment in over two decades in the Battalion. Secondly Mike and a fellow cadet, Staff Sergeant Rory Harte had the opportunity to go to America and take part in Devil Pups, a prestigious honour to work along side other young 'marines'. Both Mike and Rory came back with outstanding reports and were definitely on top of their game. Finally, Mike, a Master Cadet, has just been voted the top cadet in the UK, winning the Clare Short Trophy at Frimley. Mike will attend Frimley again on the 29th October to receive his trophy. An accolade that is a tremendous boost for both Mike and the Battalion.



Cdt Cameron Mills receiving his presentation from Colonel Cassidy.

Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force

As the summer draws to a close, it is an appropriate moment to reflect and write about what has possibly been as busy a time as the Battalion has had for some years. As well as the routine activities such as company training weekends, spring camp, summer camp, Duke of Edinburgh Awards training and sporting competitions, the Battalion has taken part in a number of events to mark Cadet 150. All these events required a lot of preparation and work by those involved. The fact the Battalion has managed to achieve so much is a tribute to the permanent staff and adult instructors without whom none of this would have been possible.

CAMPS

The reporting period began with Spring Camp which set the tone for what was to follow. This year's Spring Camp was unusual for several reasons; the weather was excellent, cadets from the other two services joined us for a truly tri-service week and the camp culminated in a mini Tattoo to mark Cadet 150. Because of the good weather there was a definite spring in the cadets' and adults' steps throughout the week. Everyone seemed to enjoy the training and really put a lot of effort into it and the testing for the various star boards at the end. The cadets from the other services came from Durham Army Cadet Force, Durham and Northumberland Air Training Corps and Hartlepool Unit Sea Cadet Corps and they all joined in whenever possible. The result was not only did the Battalion have its biggest camp for some time but it demonstrated the worth of joint training.

Apart from the training two events stood out. On the first muster

parade nine Detachment banners were dedicated by the Chaplain and then handed over to representatives from the respective Detachments. Each Detachment in the Battalion now has its own banner. Since that parade, all the banners have been carried on a number of occasions and have been favourably commented on by everyone who has seen them.

The second event of note was on the last full day of camp when the Battalion opened its doors to the families and friends of the cadets as well as a number of invited guests. Everyone was given the chance to experience what the cadets do before watching a group of three star cadets taking part in a section attack. No sooner had that finished than, thanks to Major David Gill, Mr Dai Heather-Hays, a civil aviation examiner from the Scottish Aeronautic Club, overcame the country-wide ban on flying caused by the Volcanic Ash Cloud and gave a hugely impressive eight minute aerobatic display. The highlight of the day was, however, the mini-Tattoo which the cadets including the visiting units laid on, under the direction of the Commandant. The acts included a marching display from The Durham and Northumberland Wing Air Training Corps, a musical and drill display from Hartlepool Sea and Royal Marine Cadets and a small vignette depicting the cadet force through the ages. It was interesting to see how much Major Sue Truscott resembled Queen Victoria when dressed up to play the part. The Durham Army Cadet Force Band who had entertained us throughout the week played some stirring music much to the enjoyment of the audience. Unfortunately Lieutenant General Graham, Regimental Colonel Commandant The Royal Regiment of Scotland, who was supposed to take the salute was stuck in England because of the Ash



Cadet Sergeant Scott Macgregor and other cadets from the Blairgowrie Detachment at Alyth Open Day in front of the Battalion Recruiting Caravan with Mr Pete Wishart MP and Mrs Boag, mother of Cadet Corporal Connor Boag.



Cadet Lance Corporals Megan Campbell (Blairgowrie) and Gail Scott (Perth RLC) after being selected to go to Canada this summer on an exchange visit.

Cloud. Brigadier Allfrey, Commander 51 (Scottish) Brigade, kindly stood in for him and was very complimentary and enthusiastic about what he saw. Our Honorary Colonel also came to the event.

Summer Camp this year was at Altcar and was blessed with good weather. Each company took part in a round robin of activities including a very popular adventurous training package, a two day company exercise and a day on the excellent ranges. This year the Champion Company Competition will be spread out over the whole year and culminate at the 2011 Spring Camp. However, the first events took place at Summer Camp. There were two drill competitions – a senior event and a junior one. While Alma Company won the former, Ypres Company won the junior competition. Staff Sergeant Freeman ran a very successful and competitive sports afternoon with success split between the companies. However, Alma Company were the overall winners, closely followed by Ypres Company. The shooting competition was even more closely fought. Korea Company were the overall winners while Ypres Company just pipped Burma Company for second place. There is still a lot to play for before the end of next year's Spring Camp. On the final parade Councillor Paul Cummings, Deputy Mayor of Sefton, kindly came and presented the prizes.

CADET 150 EVENTS

There have been numerous events during this period to mark Cadet 150. The Cadet Tri-Service Forum in Scotland decided it would mark Cadet 150 in Scotland by holding a special event on Edinburgh Castle Esplanade. Colonel Passmore was given the responsibility of masterminding the evening on behalf of the Tri-Service Forum. The final result was a spectacular success in which all cadet organisations played their part. Our Pipes and Drums formed part of the Massed Pipes and Drums and at one stage combined to play as Massed Bands with the Cadet Force Military Band. This event was truly a Celebration of Cadet 150.

On Sunday 20 June the Battalion was given the honour of being allowed to march through Perth to mark Cadet 150 accompanied by the local Sea and Air Cadets. Our Pipes and Drums led the way and all the Detachment banners were carried with pride. After marching past the saluting dais on which were the Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, the Provost of Perth, the Vice Lord Lieutenant of Fife and The Provost of Fife, the Battalion attended a Service of Thanksgiving in Saint Ninian's Cathedral at which the Bishop of Saint Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane gave an excellent address. The cadets and adults were then hosted to a reception by the Provost of Perth.

During summer camp the Pipes and Drums and a small marching contingent under Staff Sergeant Gerrard went to London for forty eight hours to take part in the Cadet Forces march along the Mall and to attend a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace at which several members of The Royal Family, led by His Royal Highness The Duke of Rothesay, were present.

On 12 August Her Majesty The Queen graciously allowed the Massed Pipes and Drums to play for her one evening on the lawn of Balmoral Castle, not long after she arrived for her annual visit. It was a very special event watched by Her Majesty and Their Royal Highnesses The Duke of Edinburgh and The Duke of York.



Cadet Staff Sergeant Joyce, Cadet Corporal Barnes, Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major Brown and Cadet Sergeant Miller at Edinburgh Castle. They were the Banner Party for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

The five cadet force organisations in the United Kingdom were asked to take part in the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo on five evenings, by parading their banners as part of the finale. They had a prominent position right in front of the Senior Director of Music and the Army Cadet Force was represented by cadets from the Black Watch Battalion. They were Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major Brown (Auchterarder), Cadet Staff Sergeant Joyce (Glenrothes Woodside), Cadet Sergeant Miller (Blairgowrie) and Cadet Corporal Barnes (Kinross). The Edinburgh Garrison Sergeant Major who helped Warrant Officer Class 2 Cameron drill the Banner Parties, was particularly kind in his comments about their turn out and bearing.

As well as the official Cadet 150 events, there are two other events worth mentioning here. On 1 June His Royal Highness The Duke of Rothesay visited Balhousie Castle and the Battalion was given the chance to show him a bit about the OUTREACH project. Less than two weeks later, on Friday 2 July, a contingent of about fifty cadets led by Lieutenant Robb took part in a parade in Perth when the 800th anniversary of Perth was celebrated and the town marked Armed Forces Day. The salute was taken by His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex who later met some of the cadets at a reception.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

While the Cadet 150 activities were memorable, it is worth recording some of the other events that have taken place during this period, if only to illustrate that the Battalion did carry on as normal. On 15 May, the Army Cadet Force Association Shooting Competition in Scotland took place at Castlelaw. The Battalion, once again, did extremely well. Cadet Corporal Connor Boag was the overall best shot, Cadet Fennel came third, the Black Watch 'A' team of Cadet Corporal Boag, Cadet Lance Corporal Dobie, Cadet McKeown and Cadet Fennell won the Frankfurt Trophy, came second in the Watts Bowl and were the overall winners of the competition. Four cadets, Cadet Corporals Boag and Fennel, Cadet Lance Corporal Dobie and Cadet McKeown under Sergeants Christie and Girdwood went to Bislely during summer camp and had some success in the Inter-Service Cadet Rifle meeting. They were the highest placed Army Cadet Force team from Scotland and Corporal Boag came seventh in the individual 300 yard competition. He was subsequently one of two Army Cadet Force cadets selected for the Great Britain Team and was part of the Army team. He will also go to the Athelings in September, something no-one in the Battalion has ever achieved before.

The Battalion continues to do well in First Aid competitions. The Scottish Competition was held on 5 June. The Young Adult Team of Potential Instructor Reid, Cadet Staff Sergeant (since promoted) Ward and Cadet Lance Corporal Henderson won their competition. They will go on to represent Scotland at the national event at Sandhurst in November. The cadet team of Cadet Corporals Crawford and Gray, and Cadet Lance Corporals Crawford and Beck came a very creditable third. In addition Potential Instructor Reid, Cadet Corporals

Crawford and Gray entered the St John's Ambulance International Competition for over 16s and came fourth.

The Battalion has continued to support the OUTREACH programme and while the one in Tayside has followed its usual successful form under Major Pover, ably supported by numerous adults and senior cadets, Lieutenant Marshall ran the first one in Fife. This was based on King's Road Primary School in Rosyth and both pupils and teachers have expressed their delight in the way it has been run. It is hoped to build on its success next year.

BATTALION PRESENTATIONS

At the end of August the Lord Lieutenant of Fife and Mr Dean came to the Battalion's annual Presentation Evening in Dunfermline and Mrs Dean kindly agreed to present the prizes. Lieutenant Marshall laid on an excellent evening which started with a small drill display done in time to music. Amongst the awards given out were those who had achieved the level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Public Services and those who had attended the 2010 Outreach Scheme in Fife. Major Gill was presented with the Cadet Force medal and a second bar to the Medal was presented to Captain Robb. Cadet Staff Sergeant Joyce was formally appointed as the Lord Lieutenant's cadet for this year and Cadet Corporal Boag was presented his Army Cadet Force Shooting Colours. There was a chance for the guests to go round a few stands showing off a few of the activities the cadets take part in before devouring a quite excellent buffet prepared by Captain and Mrs Hallum with help from others including Sergeant Dalrymple. It is also worth recording under this section that during this period Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major Ross Brown attended the Master Cadets

Course at Frimley and was awarded an immediate Master Cadet badge – a recognition rarely awarded.

FUNDRAISING

The Battalion is much involved in fundraising for a number of worthwhile causes and Lieutenant Mary Little continues to lead the efforts. At Summer Camp she helped to raise over £700.00 with the help of the bear Sergeant Slingsby. On 28 August she, Lieutenant Charlie Tough and a number of other adults organised a Lap for Life on the North Inch in Perth. Over ninety six runners took part. They ran 350 laps of The Inch raising well over £4000.00 for Holidays for Heroes and BLESMA. The runners from all walks of life, aged from 8-70 years, came from as far as Manchester and included some notable personalities who had served in the 1st Battalion The Black Watch including Jock McInnes, Jimmy Melville and Stewart Sanderson. However, perhaps most impressive were the efforts of Cadet Judd Clark (Glenrothes Woodside) who, on his own, organised a Bowling Tournament, Raffle and Cake Stall at Markinch Bowling Cub and raised £1295.00 for Help For Heroes. Bitten by the bug he is planning another event next year.

CONCLUSION

Cadet 150 has been an inspiring year for so many reasons and the support of Highland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association, the Lords Lieutenant, the Local authorities and many other organisations and people has been much appreciated. The next few months will see no let up in the activity levels of the Battalion which will go forward in excellent sprits and with pride in what it does.

Association News

ASSOCIATION FORECAST OF EVENTS 2010-2011

London Branch Dinner, VSC, London	18 November 2010
WOs' & Sergeants' Dining Club, Salutation Hotel, Perth	20 November 2010
Dundee Branch, Red Hackle Dinner	14 January 2011
Angus Branch, Burns Supper	15 January 2011
Stoke on Trent, Burns Night	23 January 2011
Perth Branch, Burns Supper	5 February 2011
London Branch, Lunch and AGM, Union Jack Club, London	3 March 2011
London Branch, Pte Edwards, VC Ceremony, Parish Church, Chigwell	6 March 2011
Association AGM	16 April 2011
WO & Sergeants Dinner, Salutation Hotel	16 April 2011
Aberfeldy Muster	22 May 2011
Reunion	25 June 2011 or 23 July 2011

ANGUS BRANCH

President:	Lieutenant Colonel Fred Beattie MBE
Vice-President:	Major David McMicking LVO
Chairman:	Major Ronnie Proctor MBE
Vice Chairman:	Mr Peter Tindal
Secretary:	Mr Tom McCluskey 01382 801013 email: tam7578@blueyonder.co.uk
Treasurer:	Mr Jim Penny

Since the last edition of the Red Hackle our monthly meetings have been well attended.

RSM (now Captain) Laurie McDougall and three soldiers of The Black Watch Battalion spoke to the Branch of their experiences in Afghanistan. The members appreciated the lads making the effort to visit us in Forfar, as well as a most interesting presentation about their operations on the front line. It was refreshing to hear their story from the 'Jocks' perspective with humour and undiluted barrack room eloquence.

Sadly our Vice President, Captain Denis Giles, MBE has died but I am pleased to report that Denis had a grand turnout at his funeral. Denis was the backbone of the Branch until he became ill. He did however manage to attend some of our functions, our Standard Rededications in particular, where he was always warmly greeted. Our condolences go to Betty and her family and we hope that some solace can be drawn from the respect Denis was shown. Sergeant Johnny Hughes has also died and our sympathies are with Cathy and their family.

Major David McMicking was elected by the Branch to be our Vice-President at the September meeting.

The Spring dance held on the 10th of April 2010 at Arbroath Royal British Legion was a good evening enjoyed by all who attended. Special

thanks goes to Jim McEwan for his work and effort for this event.

On September 19th, a warm welcome was given to the Branch members and their wives by the congregation of Glamis Kirk, led by the Minister the Rev John Davidson. The Colour Party of John Glen, John Gordon and Bob Mutch were piped into the Kirk by 12 year old Ruaraidh Proctor, grandson of our Chairman Ronnie Proctor. Ruaraidh was resplendent in his Highland garb and played very well. The minister gave an inspiring dedication to us that showed that he had made great effort to research our history. He also included General Wolfe's words to Captain Rickson "That Scottish soldiers should be sent into battle because "they are hardy, intrepid, accustomed to a rough country and no great mischief if they fall." A poignant reminder that we must care what happens to our soldiers.

We were also reminded of the Queen Mother and her brother Fergus Bowes-Lyon who fell during the Battle of Loos. After the service we retired to the RBL Clubrooms, Forfar, where we had lunch and a fine get together. I was given permission to photograph the new stained glass window in the Strathmore Aisle of the Kirk, dedicated to the Bowes-Lyon family. This window is situated in the ancient part of the church, not in the main body, so it was a privilege to be able to view it.

As the year comes to an end we have the El Alamein dinner to look forward to. Also for the future, the Angus Branch is putting forward a proposition for a memorial to be raised at Black Watch Corner in Belgium in 2012. There are no memorials to any of our Battalions in the area, only a mark on a trench map with that name. The Branch is well down the road in researching this project. As well as receiving some valuable help to ship the stone to Belgium, the raw stone itself has been donated to us and a kind group is not only constructing a web site, they have also bought a domain name for us. Once plans have become more firm it is hoped that all other Branches will become involved in the project and attend the unveiling in 2012.

DUNDEE BRANCH

The Regimental Reunion on the 26th of June was a great success with a mixture of the young, the not so young and the very old. Harry Morgan and George Grant in particular were in fine form with Harry telling us of a brief encounter recently in Coupar Angus with a veteran of Normandy who on closer discussion turned out to be from the 21st Panzer Grenadiers. Harry did not remember him! George on the other hand told us about the limitations and lack of comfort in 1940 UK. (He is now 90!).

Our next event was the Armed Forces Celebrations in Dundee in early July. Spread over 3 days, the aim was to show respect to the Armed Forces past and present, raise funds for Help For Heroes and to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Cadet Force. The City of Dundee hosted the events and funded 60% of the cost. Major David Simpson (Black Watch family but a Royal Scot) organised the Parade and some of the static displays. Lord Provost John Letford, President of The Black Watch Association did his utmost to show as many Red



Angus Branch – The Black Watch Association Annual Branch Standard Rededication Service held at St Fergus Church, Glamis, attended by Association President, Lord Provost John Letford.

REGIMENTAL REUNION



George Grant meets a friend.



Angus and Dundee ACF Pipes and Drums.



Angus members put their feet up.



Black Watch Association Chairman, Brigadier de Broë-Ferguson with retired Band Master Norman Rogerson and his daughter Yvonne.



Nearly 120 years service between Major Jimmy Williamson MBE (L), Major Ronnie Proctor MBE, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Smith MBE (R).



Minden veterans Mr Bill Gunning (Left) Mr George Gill, Mr Len Strachan, Mr John Brown and Mr Charlie Clark all ex 1st Battalion.



Harry Morgan enjoys the Reunion.



Dundee Armed Forces Day Parade was held on 3 July 2010.



Dundee Armed Forces Day Parade.



Three Dundee "Musketeers".

Hackles as possible on parade. A Retreat by the Cadets on the Friday evening (2 July) opened the events and on Saturday the Parade was followed by various shows and displays. In the evening the Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland and the Pipes and Drums of the 3rd Battalion played at a concert and on Sunday morning a Church Parade was held in St Mary's, the City Church.

We have our Red Hackle Dinner to look forward to on 21st January 2011 and the Association is working more closely together as Branches attend each other's Parades and Dinners.

FIFE BRANCH

The Kingdom of Fife Branch has been fairly active since the May edition of the Red Hackle. We, along with the Perth Branch travelled up the A9 to Aberfeldy to celebrate the forming of the Regiment. We formed up at the memorial and laid a wreath to commemorate the occasion and then in true Black Watch tradition retired to the Black Watch Inn for lunch and refreshments. A good day was had by all. The next item on our agenda was the annual reunion at Balhousie; again there was a good turnout from the Fife Branch but some of our regulars were missing, namely the Atkinsons. They were at Fort George celebrating the wedding of Jim's daughter to Sergeant O'Brien. Keep it in the Regiment Jim. In August we were invited by the Fife Branch of the Royal Artillery Association to a ceremony to lay up their Branch Standard and to dedicate a New Standard. This was held in Hunter Street TA Centre Kirkcaldy and we were joined by the Lord Lieutenant Margaret Dean, the Provost of Fife Francis Melville, Councillor Alice Soper (Pipe Major Rob Roy's daughter) and our host for the occasion Colonel Jim Kinloch T.D. It was very good of Colonel Kinloch to invite us to this special day and be a part of their Branch history. A few weeks later four of our members joined our friends from Perth at the "Not Forgotten Association" day out at Dalmahoy Golf Club and reports about the day were very complimentary. It was then back to Fife for our next venture, to Ladybank. The town was planning to rededicate the War Memorial and the Haig Memorial Gardens after it had fallen into disrepair in recent years. The Development Trust extended a warm welcome to the Fife Branch to join them on this day and to parade



Ladybank Memorial Service.



The combined Perth and Fife Branches at Aberfeldy.



Members of the Fife Branch, Colonel Kinloch and Pipe Major Rob Roy's daughter Alice, at Hunter Street.

through the town along with other units such as the British Legion and the Black Watch and Air Corp Cadets, who were to march behind the Scots Guards Association Pipe Band. I accepted the invitation and extended it to our other Branches. I am pleased to say both Dundee and Perth sent representatives to join us on the day. The Memorial was opened by Earl Haig's great granddaughter, the gardens by Sir Ming Campbell M.P. and wreathes were laid by Mrs A Halford-MacLeod who was representing Her Majesty as Lord Lieutenant and Provost Melville on behalf of the Fife Council. The welcome by the locals was second to none as was their hospitality in the way of refreshments and chat. The Branch continues to meet on a regular basis with an average of thirty members attending each meeting and I thank them for their support.

HIGHLAND BRANCH

The Branch continues to develop and is well established within the other Highland area Veterans Associations and we had members attending the Armed Forces Day in Inverness on the 24th July.

Within our ranks we have Sergeant Colin Hamilton currently the assistant Unit Welfare Officer for The Black Watch. Colin joined the Battalion from the RHF in Fallingbostal and during a deployment in Kosovo his final task was to escort a train of armoured vehicles into Greece. He was electrocuted whilst trying to save a colleague who had also been electrocuted on a railway line. He woke up in Selly Oak hospital in Birmingham ten days later to find he had had his right leg amputated above the knee. Colin has recently been on a different tour, this time in the United States, playing Basketball with a project called "Battle Back".

Colin Hamilton writes "Battle Back is a UK Military initiative which aims to improve and formalise the use of adventurous training and sport in the aftercare of seriously injured Service personnel, in order to aid their rehabilitation and return to an active life. I attended the American Nationals in June 2010 in Oklahoma, USA representing Team Battle Back. The team consisted of amputees (double and single) and a couple of able bodied soldiers, rank ranged from Lieutenant Colonel to Private. On arriving at Oklahoma University we received a warm welcome and went straight into training with the coach for the USA Olympic team. During our stay there we trained with all the American teams and played training matches, winning and losing some.

On the day of the tournament we were informed that we had to submit two teams. A Team A and Team B. We only had 11 team members and needed 7 per team. Panic set in but the staff offered us two reserves. Two 14 year old girls called Christine Moore and Rachel Manriquez joined our team. They had no experience at sitting volleyball but were pro at standing volleyball at junior level and turned out to be very good players after adapting their skills to sitting volleyball.

The tournament kicked off and we managed to give the Americans a run for their money until we came across the US military team who were a stronger team than us but not by much, as they only beat us by a couple of points on both sets. Team A won the Bronze Medal which was a great result for us under the circumstances".

Our Branch has been formed for over a year and our next priority is to secure funding for our own Branch Standard. There have been many



Sergeant Colin Hamilton (right rear) with his Bronze Medal as part of the British Army A Team on Exercise Battle Back. Sergeant Hamilton had his right leg amputated after an accident at the end of the Kosovo tour.



Two Red Hackles (Gordon Kennedy and Alan McEwan) amongst a sea of glengarries. Inverness Armed Forces Day 2010.

a discussion on who would be the bearer and the shortlist remains Joe Barbour, Eric Mills and Scott Bell but we will accept any candidate except Donald Etherington.

Should any reader have a cheap source for a Standard being made could they please contact Gordon Kennedy with the details.

The Branch FOE is limited with a large number of serving members back on the training cycle, however we have a Ladies Dinner Night and a games evening with the RHF Association before the end of this year. The key dates are as follows.

- November 6th Dinner Night Royal British Legion Inverness
- November 14th Remembrance Parade Inverness
- December 14th Monthly meeting.

THE LONDON BRANCH

Forget Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital Chelsea and the Not Forgotten Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. The highlight of the London Branch 'summer season' has been the 90th birthday of one of our most supportive and active members, Major Peter Watson MC. We had intended to spring a surprise party on Peter on the day of his birthday but fortunately heard in time that his family had booked him and Bobbie, his wife, onto a mini cruise as his birthday present. Joe Hubble was able to rearrange the date of the Branch Summer Lunch at The Albert (although we had to come clean to Peter to make sure he was there) and, from all accounts, a great time was had by all just a few days before he reached the notable age of 90.

Having told readers to forget our usual round of summer activities it would be remiss of me not to mention that several London Branch members enjoyed the splendour and occasion of Founder's Day at The Royal Hospital, the superb setting and hospitality of The Not Forgotten Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace and, for a small but of course select group able to cope with the early morning travel, an excellent visit to the RMA Sandhurst for the Commandant's Rehearsal of the Sovereign's Parade. London Branch member, Richard Cole-Mackintosh, the SO1 G7 Training at the RMA, made this visit possible for us. Needless to say, Peter and Bobbie Watson were among those

who braved the early morning commuter rush to get to Camberley. What a couple, what joie de vivre, what stamina!

Our Branch Chairman, Brigadier Donald Wilson, represented the BW Association at the presentation of the Elizabeth Cross to the sister of Pte Frederick Hyde BW who was reported missing, presumed dead, following the Battle of The Hook in Korea in November 1952.

The death of Lieutenant General Peter Walls, who had initially served in the Black Watch prior to returning to Rhodesia and subsequently becoming Commander of their armed forces, prompted an exchange of correspondence within the Branch. One e-mail in particular, with reminiscences from Forbes Taylor, a contemporary of General Walls at the time of his BW service although they did not meet, would I am sure, be of interest to Red Hackle readers. And so, with Forbes' permission:

A Bit of Ancient History

"The end of World War II in Europe in May 1945 found a large number of infantry cadets, of which I was one, under training. The final show-down in the Far East had yet to come, but the atom bomb settled that in August. Large parts of the world were still in turmoil and it was clear that there would be a continuing need for a plentiful supply of young officers, especially to replace the wartime ones about to be demobbed.

I believe that plans were already in progress to replace the pre-war Royal Military College with a "university-type" Academy, but pro tem the buildings – mainly the Old College – were designated to house 161 Infantry OCTU, formerly at Mons Barracks, Aldershot. Some of the cadets completing their preliminary training at Wrotham were selected to go to Sandhurst for a "crash course" specifically designed to officer an army with a new peacetime role until the Academy alumni graduated. Most of the instructors were from the Brigade of Guards: the Commandant was Sir William Makins, Bt, Welsh Guards, and the Adjutant the Earl of Cathcart, Scots Guards. I was in the senior company, which was the first to pass out at the end of February 1946.

I was commissioned in my family's local regiment, The Black Watch, and reported to Queens Barracks, Perth, along with half a dozen other new sub-alterns. We were taken under the terrifying wing of Major Pollock-McCall. We were sent down the road to Kinfauns Castle, the regiment's Primary Training Centre. I recall 2nd Lts Andy Watson and Talbot Hainault, both of whom must have stood out in some way. I knew Talbot in later life but I doubt if General Watson remembers me. After a week or two the PTC moved to Scone Barracks, Kinfauns being turned over to Polish ex-officers. Then we moved again to Redford Infantry Barracks.

One morning Part II Orders informed me that I, and one or two other young officers were to go to Greece to join the Lovat Scouts. On arrival on the island of Euboea I discovered that most of the Lovats' personnel were from the disbanded 6th Black Watch. My squadron commander was Peter Glass, and the 2i/c Donald Ramsay (who later became Colonel of the London Scottish). Among my peers were John Craik, Frank Liesching and Colin McIntyre, who had come from Argentina. The Lovats stood down in Athens in February 1947. I went to Palestine, then to Glasgow to train HLI National Servicemen. While there I directed a film for the HLI about its regimental history (preserved in the Imperial War Museum), which led to my leaving the Army for a job in the film industry.

Because the war in Korea was going badly I was recalled to the Black Watch with the Z Reserve in the summer of 1951 and joined the 4th/5th Battalion at Spey Bay. My presence was noted in Edinburgh and I was asked to help Colonel George Malcolm of Poltalloch with the Tattoo. The following year I replaced Colonel Malcolm as producer of the Tattoo with the honorary rank of Captain, "working-in" Brigadier Alasdair Maclean, who produced it in later years".

Many thanks, Forbes. I suspect this will stir a few memories and could result in further correspondence.

Sadly we bid a final farewell to five of our members: Pete Graydon, Brigadier Alasdair Loudon, Talbot Hainault, Jim Fergus and Bill Williams. Their obituaries appear elsewhere in this Red Hackle. We also send our sincere condolences to Joe Hubble and his family. Joe's wife Joy, having fought a long and hard battle with cancer, died on 15 September 2010. She will be greatly missed by her many friends in the Regimental Association.

Jim Keating

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE BRANCH

Once again we are summoned to the task of preparation of our contribution to the Red Hackle. It seems no time at all since I was last at this labour.



Major Peter Watson MC at his 90th birthday party, accompanied by his wife Bobbie and other guests.



Peter with the two favourite things in his life: Bobbie and his pipe.



Peter and Bill Parr, Ian Elphick, Ian Howarth and Joe Hubble.

Annual Reunion

The Branch was well represented at the Reunion, with our oldest traveller being Lilly, Bob Chantler's mother-in-law, at a sprightly 101. The journey north was uneventful except for serious delays with the en route catering services. These had been taken over by "Novice Caterers Ltd" who had no way of dealing with more than three customers at a time. A goodly number of our members took part in the parade, although, those not participating seems to be on the increase as the years wear on. Most members made it back to the coach on Sunday morning in good time, if not in good order and, as usual, we stopped in Edinburgh on the way home for the obligatory hair of the dog. Having eventually escaped from Edinburgh, we stopped in the Borders for further refreshment. Shortly after leaving this watering hole, it was discovered that the toilet door of the "en suite" facilities, had become jammed shut. No amount of persuasion or brute force, could gain access and a frustrating, uncomfortable and sometimes fractious journey south seemed to be a lot longer than the 60 miles shown on the map. Mixed feelings greeted the regular transmission of England's World Cup score by an enthusiastic Highlander who insisted in sharing his joy, particularly with those whose hopes, if not their expectations, were being dashed by the regular bulletins. Nothing will prevent our boys and girls hurling themselves enthusiastically northward next year, and we look forward to another Annual Reunion in June 2011.

The Branch Annual Dinner

This was held at the HQ of the Tyneside Scottish Battery on 25th September and we were delighted to have Sir Alistair and Lady Nicola Irwin as our Guests of Honour. Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell was able to bring us up to date with news of the Battalion and, in particular, the awards won by members of the Battalion. Colonel Riddell was accompanied by his wife Jenny. Lieutenant Colonel Mark MacKenzie Crooks who had just taken command of 101 Northumbrian Regiment RA (V), the parent regiment of the Tyneside Scottish Battery, gave an interesting account of the commitment of the Regiment in support of the regular regiments serving in Afghanistan. He was accompanied by his wife Karen. Other guests included Colonel Tony Glenton who is Deputy Lord Lieutenant and his wife Caroline as well as Major Stuart Eaton, PSAO of the Tyneside Scottish, who is to retire next March. Following a magnificent meal, we were entertained by the Pipes and Drums, who had gained a 7th in their grade at the World Championships and 5th at Cowal. As usual, the performance drew praise from all quarters.

We were lucky to have with us, three veterans of the 1st Battalion Tyneside Scottish who had seen service in Normandy during the 1944 campaign in which the Battalion won a battle honour for their defence of Rauray. They were Dr Tom Renouf, Mr John King and Mr Peter Birkett. Their efforts were duly acknowledged.

Following the formalities, the bar did exceptional business and was still going strong when your scribe left the proceedings in the wee sma' hours.



John and Mrs King.



Peter and Mrs Birkett.



Dr Tom Renouf.



Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs Riddell and Colonel Tony Glenton.

On a sad note, our President Frank Bell was unable to be with us due to a sudden heart attack, from which we all hope he makes a speedy recovery.

Retaining contact with members, particularly when they move, continues to frustrate our administration and anyone who is a member of this Branch who reads this and has not made contact for over 12 months, please drop a line to us at 41 Coquet Ave, South Shields NE34 7TF.

PERTH BRANCH

President: Lt Col (Retd) Roddy Riddell
Chairman: Capt (Retd) Alan McEwen
Treasurer: Mr Jim Baird
Secretary: Capt Brian Baxter
Interim Secretary: Mr Allan Stewart
Padre: Reverend Matthew Robertson
Piper: Mr (PM) Alistair Duthie

Membership

While our current Branch Membership remains steady and healthy at 78 Full Members, we would warmly welcome additional members who are serving or have served in the Regiment, whether Regular or Territorial. Our newest (and youngest) member is Allan Stewart, and those eagle eyed readers out there will have noticed that Allan is also our Interim Secretary; we don't let the grass grow under our feet here at the Perth Branch.

Freedom of Perth Parade – Saturday 8 May

On Saturday 8 May, 51st Highland, 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland accepted the Freedom of Perth, on behalf of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, from Provost John Hulbert. The local community joined members of the 7th Battalion, many Armed Forces youth organisations as well as an extremely large turnout of veterans, which included the Perth Branch Standard carried by Mr Bob Shivas and many members of the Perth Branch for a unique experience and thoroughly enjoyable day.

Annual Aberfeldy Lunch – Black Watch Inn

Our annual (this was our second year) lunch outing to the Black Watch Inn at Aberfeldy was held on Sunday 16 May. The weather was fine and nineteen Perth Branch members and their partners were joined by thirteen Fife Branch members and their partners for a visit to the Black Watch Memorial followed by a delicious lunch during which we experienced the hospitality and generosity of Mr Terry Robertson, the manager. A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon was had by all; we hope to see you all again next year.

Perth Armed Forces Day – Saturday 2 July

On Saturday 2 July, in splendid sunshine, members of both the 3rd and 7th Battalions, The Royal Regiment of Scotland, many Armed Forces youth organisations as well as an extremely large turnout of veterans, which included the Perth Branch Standard carried by Mr Bob Shivas and many Branch members paraded through the streets of Perth to celebrate Armed Forces Day. His Royal Highness The Duke of Wessex took the salute.

Dundee Armed Forces Day – Saturday 3 July and Inverness Armed Forces Day – Saturday 24 July

Members of the Perth Branch was represented at both of these events.

Ladybank Rededication – Saturday 18 September

A number of Perth Branch members joined Fife Branch members to take part in the rededication of the Earl Haig Garden and War Memorial service in Ladybank on Saturday 18 September.

Forecast of Events

- Saturday 16 October 2010 – Perth Branch Croix de Guerre Dinner in Perth.
Friday 12 November 2010 – Balhousie Castle Remembrance Service
Sunday 14 November 2010 – Remembrance Sunday
Saturday 5 February 2011 – Perth Branch Burns Supper in Perth

Branch Meetings

These are planned to take place in the Fraser Room of the War Memorial Club, George Street, Perth. The next two meetings will be held on 25 November and 23 December.

Brian (Spats) Baxter in Afghanistan

For those of you (probably no more than one) who Spats has not managed to tell (have you been out of the country) that he is, once again, back in the TA – 51st Highland, 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland; well he is, in the appointment of Quartermaster (V). And not being one to shirk his responsibilities, he recently volunteered for an operational tour of Afghanistan and is currently stationed at Camp Julien employed in an Afghan National Army (ANA) Officer training role (he is working alongside Capt Atholl Stewart, SCOTS). And through brief electronic correspondence, Spats told me that, quote, “everything is fine here at present, apart from the odd Chinese Rocket attack”. “And from a lad who was brought up in Ballingry, deepest and darkest Fife, what’s so odd about that Spats”? Their (Spats and Atholl) current main effort in theatre, he tells me, is organising a St Andrews Dinner in the Queen’s Palace (derelict – once again like Ballingry) in Kabul, which is due to take place at the end of October. You might like to Google this as it does look a rather splendid setting for a Burns Supper. We are hopeful that he and Atholl can write an article and submit a few interesting pictures for the next edition of the Red Hackle. We all, of course, wish them a safe and speedy return to their loved ones and friends.

STOKE-ON-TRENT (MIDLANDS) BRANCH

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported the Branch by buying the Piper Ted lapel badges. The badges were sold at £2.00 each and the proceeds were to fund a Memorial Bench. This has been bought, installed and at present 10 personalised plaques have also been purchased. I am very pleased to say that a large cheque will shortly be donated to the Donna Louise Children’s Hospice and the proceeds of the sale of the remaining badges will be donated to our Association Pipes and Drums. If anyone still wishes to purchase the lapel badges, please phone me, on 01782 372407.

On 18th August 2010, at Preston, members from the Branch were honoured to take part in the Memorial Service for one of The Black Watch soldiers, who was killed in Northern Ireland in 1971. L/Cpl Edwin Charnley, of 1st Battalion The Black Watch was remembered by four of his colleagues who were unaware of his death until they visited the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. A piper and a drummer from our Branch attended and added to the solemn mood of the day.

I would also like to thank everyone who attended the Annual Dinner and Dance at the North Stafford Hotel; the success of this year’s event has prompted us to hold the event next year. Live music will again be on offer and the chance to see the Pipes and Drums playing.

The un-veiling of our commemorative Memorial Bench, took place prior to the Annual General Meeting, held on 14th June 2010, at the Longton Cricket Club, Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent.

It was unveiled by our Chairman, Mr Arnold Shenton and our Secretary, Mr Alex Lackie and witnessed by all of the newly elected Committee members.

The wooden bench has a central plaque with the inscription, ‘Presented by The Black Watch Association. Stoke-on-Trent Branch. In Memory.’ And currently there are ten personal plaques that have been purchased by loved ones, and attached to the bench.

The personal plaques are 3” x 2” and are made of brass. They have a personal inscription engraved onto the plaque and are securely fixed to the bench. Should anyone wish to order a Personal Plaque, please contact Alex Lackie on 01782 372407. The cost of the plaque is £22 and has a maximum of 50 characters. Photographs of the plaque, inscription and location will be sent to the purchaser.

Pipefest 2010

On Saturday 7th August 2010, 16 members of our Pipes and Drums attended the Pipefest 2010 in Edinburgh. They joined a reported 4,200



The Committee of the Stoke-on-Trent Branch and two of the band at the unveiling of the Commemorative Bench.



Members of the Stoke-on-Trent Branch Pipes and Drums at the Edinburgh Pipefest.

other pipers and drummers in the most spectacular event. The march was led by Gavin Hastings, the former captain of the British Lions and Scotland. Players from 27 countries took part in this Edinburgh event, with similar events being staged in 5 other countries, including Canada, U.S.A., England, Holland and Australia.

In total, £768,000 was raised for the Marie Curie Cancer Care Fund.

This was a fantastic spectacle for everyone who participated and for those who were lucky enough to attend. If you have access to the internet, and wish to see the sights for yourselves, please go to www.youtube.com and enter ‘Pipefest 2010’ in the search area, where videos of the parade are shown.

Forthcoming Events

There are a number of events planned for the next six months but the list below is not complete.

Remembrance Day Parades

The Remembrance Parade at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, will take place on Thursday 11th November 2010.

The Cenotaph Remembrance Day Parade will be held on Sunday 14th November 2010.

The Parade at Newcastle-under-Lyme will be on the same date, 14th November 2010 and will be led by our Pipes and Drums.

Burn’s Night Celebrations

The Annual Burn’s Night Celebrations will be on Saturday 22nd January 2011, at the Stoke Town Hall, Stoke-on-Trent. The doors will be open from 7.00 p.m. onwards. Entertainment is provided by the ‘Good Time Combo’. A meal of Haggis Neeps and Tatties will be provided.

Ticket prices are not available at this time, but believed to be in the region of £15.00.

Dinner & Dance

The Annual Dinner & Dance will be held on Saturday 14th May 2011, at the North Stafford Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent. Tickets are priced at £21.00 per person, again, please contact me for further details.

Annual Dinner & Dance 2011

For further information, please contact Alex Lackie on 01782 372407.

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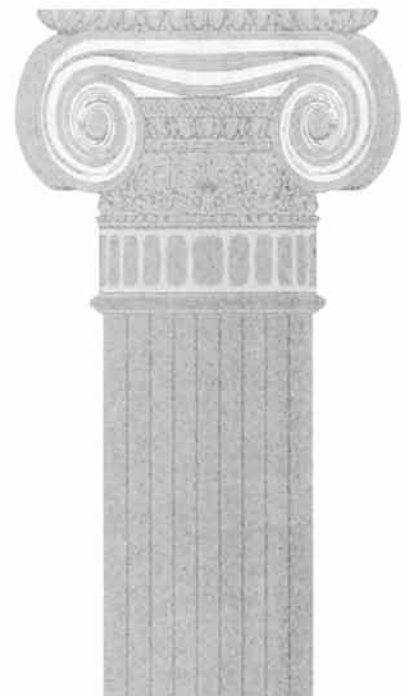
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