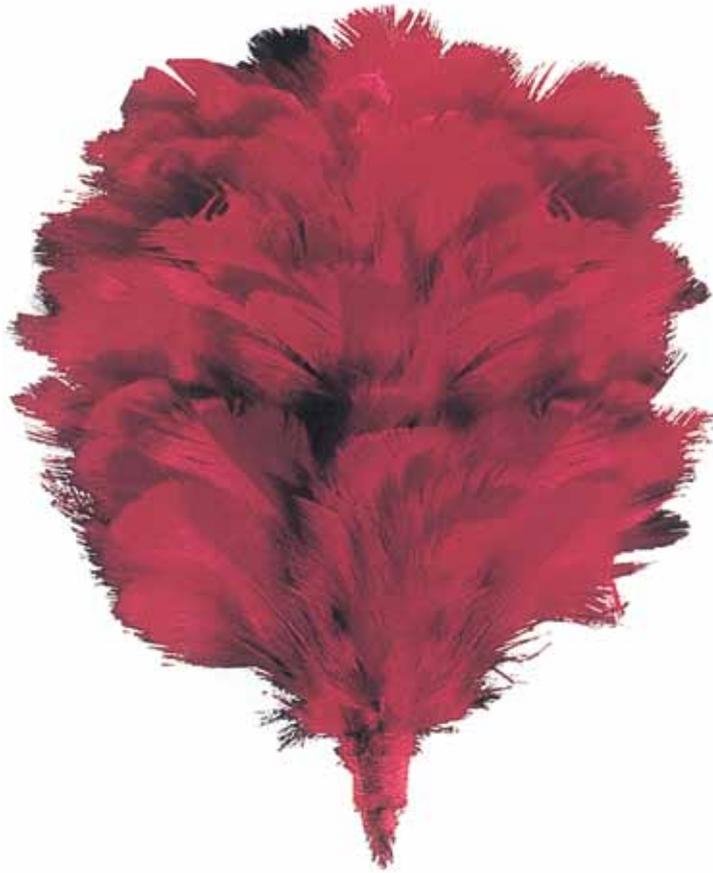


No. 132
November 2013



THE RED HACKLE



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THE RED HACKLE

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



The new extension to Balhousie Castle and the upgraded Museum were officially opened on 24 June 2013.



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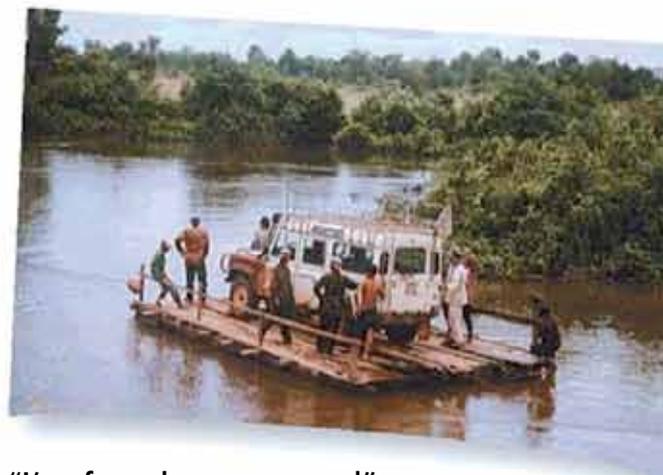
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THE RED HACKLE



*The Chronicle of
The Black Watch
(Royal Highland Regiment)
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The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion
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No. 132**

Published for The Black Watch



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Editorial

The opening of the new museum and extension took place in June and whilst it was later than planned, the event was well attended and was much anticipated. Brigadier Melville Jameson who is both the Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross as well as President of The Black Watch Association officially opened the building and a full report and update is contained on page 7.

Balhouses Castle is the home of the Regimental Association and the Association has been busy at a local level with Branches enjoying annual dinners and lunches and the Association Secretariat have organised the AGM, the biennial Muster at Aberfeldy, as well as the Reunion in the grounds of the newly refurbished Castle. At the same time the planning for the dedication of the memorial at Black Watch Corner has stepped up a gear and details were sent out to the Regimental family over the summer.

The statue has been completed and the granite plinth remains to be cut but the Belgian authorities in Zonnebeke have agreed to prepare the ground-works to accept the granite plinth and statue, to landscape the area of the memorial and to look after the statue in perpetuity.

I would draw readers attention to an excellent spread of articles of regimental interest; with the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo taking place in 2015 there is an article about Captain William Wharton "A soldier of the Napoleonic Wars". With the Middle East so much in the news it is interesting to read about the 2nd Battalion's experiences in the Mandate of Palestine in 1937-38 and to see some previously unpublished images of that era. An article entitled "Viking VC" explains how Private Thomas Dinesen (a Danish national) of the 42nd Battalion Royal Highlanders of Canada (Black Watch) won his VC in 1918. Dr Tom Renouf's article about the battle for Mauny is very moving and there is also a new section of the magazine where we hope to show readers artefacts of interest that are held in the Black Watch of Canada's collection.

The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland seem to have been as busy as ever, fulfilling their role as the United Kingdom Contingency Battalion, as well as carrying out a major training exercise, support to the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, training as fire fighters and organising and running a Regimental Highland Games in Fort George. All of this being achieved through yet another re-organisation to their ORBAT.

We hope very much that as many of the Journal's readers will join us in Belgium on 3 May 2014 for the dedication of the memorial at Black Watch Corner.

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

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

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

From 1 January 2013, bulk orders are supplied at a rate of £7 per copy. Individual copies are sent out to permanent subscribers, both in the UK and abroad, at a subscription rate of £14 annually for UK subscribers, £14 annually to Europe and £16 annually Worldwide by airmail. A Gift Aid Scheme is available for individual subscribers who are subject to UK tax. The magazine fund benefits from tax reclaimed in this way. All subscriptions should be sent to the editor, "The Red Hackle, Home Headquarters, The Black Watch, Balhouses Castle, Hay Street, Perth PH1 5HR, and those interested in the Gift Aid Scheme, will on request be provided with the correct forms for completion.



Regimental News

FORECAST OF EVENTS 2013/2014

2013

7 November	Field of Remembrance – London Branch	Westminster Abbey, London
8 November	Balhousie Castle Remembrance Service	Perth
10 November	Remembrance Sunday, Cenotaph Parade	London
15 November	Curling Match v A and SH	Perth
21 November	London Branch Dinner Victory Services Club	London
1 December	Stoke Branch visit to Birmingham Military Tattoo	Birmingham
21 December	Officers' Regimental Ball	Perth

2014

10 January	Curling Match v HLDERS	Perth
25 January	Burns' Supper – Angus Branch Royal British Legion	Forfar
31 January	Red Hackle Dinner – Dundee Branch	Dundee
TBC January	Burns' Supper Stoke Branch	Stoke-on-Trent
8 February	Burns' Supper – Perth Branch	Perth
2 March	Edwards VC Ceremony – London Branch	Epping London
6 March	London Branch Lunch and AGM (Venue TBC)	London
21 March	Rhine Crossing Dinner – Fife Branch	Kirkcaldy
27 March	Curling HLBCB Bonspiel	Perth
12 April	Spring Dance – Angus Branch Royal British Legion	Arbroath
2-4 May	Service of Dedication Black Watch Corner	Belgium
4/5 June	HLBC Spring Meeting-Golf	Scotland
17 June	Golf v A&SH	Kinross
17 June	Officers and Ladies Lunch	London
20 June	Regimental Golf Competition	Muckart
21 June	Association AGM (am)	Perth
21 June	Regimental Reunion (pm)	Perth
TBC June	Stoke Branch visit to National Memorial Arboretum	Alrewas
1 August	BW Wives Association Reunion Queens Hotel	Dundee
14 September	Rededication Branch Standard and Lunch – Angus Branch	Guthrie & Arbroath
14 September	Alma (Ladies) Lunch – Fife Branch Victoria Hotel	Kirkcaldy
20 September	Loos Commemorative Service – Dundee Branch	Dundee
11 October	Croix de Guerre Dinner – Perth Branch	Perth
18 October	El Alamein Dinner – Angus Branch Royal British Legion	Forfar
24 October	Officers' Gathering Dinner	Perth
7 November	Balhousie Castle Remembrance Service	Perth
20 November	London Branch Dinner Victory Services Club	London
20 December	Officers' Regimental Ball	Perth (TBC)



The statue which is to be placed at Black Watch Corner has now been cast in bronze and patinated and is being stored in Edinburgh until April 2014 when it will be transported to Belgium.

CONGRATULATIONS

To **Major General J M Cowan DSO** on the award of a CBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours List.

To **Major General M L Riddell-Webster DSO** on the award of a CBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours List.

To **Colonel A J Aitken OBE** on his provisional selection for promotion to the rank of Brigadier and appointment as Commander, 20 Armoured Brigade in October 2014.

To **Colonel L R MacDuff** on his selection to become DA in Rome from April 2016.

To **Lieutenant Colonel J C Roddis** on his provisional selection for promotion to Colonel in 2014.

To **Colonel S J Cartwright OBE** and to **Captain L McDougall** on the award of the Canadian CDS Commendation for OP HERRICK 10.

To **Lieutenant Colonel B M A Wrench** on his provisional selection for promotion to the rank of Colonel in 2014 and his appointment as Assistant Director Collective Training.

To **Mrs Janet Telford** on the award of the Imperial Service Medal.

To **Mrs Sonja Arbuthnott** on the award of a BEM for services to the Arts and Charities in Perthshire.

COLONEL THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Her Majesty The Queen has approved the appointment of Major General JM Cowan CBE DSO to be Colonel, The Royal Regiment of Scotland, in succession to Lieutenant General AJN Graham CB CBE (late A and SH), with effect from 28th February 2014.

COMMISSIONING

Second Lieutenants Nicholas Coles and John Young were commissioned into The Royal Regiment of Scotland in April 2013 and have been posted to the 3rd Battalion. Nick Coles is the son of Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) T A Coles MBE and attended Radley and Edinburgh University.

MRS MARGARET DEAN CVO

The Black Watch Association were delighted to note that Mrs Margaret Dean the Lord Lieutenant of Fife and a former President of The Black Watch Association was awarded a CVO in The Queen's Birthday Honours List.

JIM SANDILANDS

On 30 September 2013 the last MOD employee left Balhousie Castle as Jim Sandilands accepted Voluntary Early Retirement after working at Balhousie Castle for over 11 years; he had worked as caretaker, shop assistant, "meeter and greeter" and guide.

As a guide he excelled and with great charm and knowledge he could bring to life the paintings and artefacts in each Gallery of the old museum. Visitors would leave the museum enthused by Jim's knowledge. He put over the information with empathy as only a soldier can.

Jim followed his Great Uncle into the Regiment and he served in the 1st Battalion in the early 1970s in Hong Kong, Colchester and Northern Ireland leaving the Army as a Corporal. He then joined the Post Office, becoming a Post Office Inspector, before taking early retirement. A few years working in the Scottish War Museum in Edinburgh Castle, honed his knowledge of Scottish Regiments before he came to the Regimental Museum.

For many years Jim Sandilands, Hackle his labrador and John Nicoll were the friendly team who greeted both old soldiers and other visitors to the Museum.

TOM SMYTH

Tom Smyth, who was for many years the Regimental Archivist, has retired from what had become a part time post but he will continue to assist Victoria Schofield with her research for Volume 2 of the Regimental History. His knowledge of Regimental characters and facts built up over 25 years will be hard to replace.

ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND UPDATE

Balaklava Company. Her Majesty The Queen visited The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 5th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland on 28 June 2013, in Canterbury. This was her last visit to the Battalion, having been Colonel-in-Chief of The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's) since 1947. Balaklava Company formed up the following day and will move to Edinburgh in 2014.



On Saturday 3 August 2013, 139 people attended the Black Watch wives gathering in the Queens Hotel in Dundee. The event was organised by Doreen Bruce who deserves much praise and it is hoped that the 2014 event will be held in Perth.



The 42nd Royal Highlanders Re-enactment Group make a presentation to the Black Watch Association at the Reunion.

Pipe Banner. Her Majesty The Queen as Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Regiment of Scotland presented a Pipe Banner to the Regiment. This took place on 4 July 2013.

BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT ALDEN

Bob Alden of The Black Watch of Canada died on 12 April 2013 after a 6 year fight against cancer.

He served as an Exchange Officer with 1st Battalion The Black Watch in 1963 during the posting to Minden.

MAJOR JOHN DURBIN

Major John Durbin (GORDONS) who served with the 1st Battalion during the Korean War died in June 2013.

BIKE TOURS FOR THE WOUNDED

The Black Watch Association hosted a visit from "Bike Tours for the Wounded", a charity that aims to give injured servicemen and women a trip of a lifetime.

The charity aims to raise £250,000 to help take injured service personnel as pillion passengers on Harley Davidson motorcycles along the famous Route 66 in America.

The current trip from Land's End to John O' Groats involved injured service personnel and aimed to raise funds for the charity.



Some of the veterans with Major Ronnie Proctor (on bike) and front left is Lance Corporal Ben Hilton and, right organiser Mike Hemming. (Courtesy D C Thomson).

SCOTTISH KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL

Last year Major Bob Ritchie suggested to the Black Watch Association Executive Committee that the Regimental Association donate a Memorial Bench to be installed at the newly upgraded Scottish Korean War Memorial which was to be unveiled on the 27th of July 2013.

The Committee unanimously agreed to this proposal and Major Ronnie Proctor the Association Secretary, was tasked with procuring a suitable bench whilst Major Ritchie organised the ground works and the installation of the bench. He was ably assisted by his son John and

a couple of local tradesmen who had Black Watch connections. The bench was manufactured by J and J Learmonth of Kirriemuir with our Sporan Badge of St Andrew and the wording "In memory of all ranks of The Black Watch who served in Korea 1951-1953" carved into the bench.

The event on the 27th of July which marked the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the truce that brought an end to hostilities in the Korean Peninsula was well attended. The organiser, Major Allan Cameron late KOSB, Chairman of the Korean Memorial Trust received the bench on behalf of the Trust from Major Proctor. Mr Adam Mackenzie late of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders carried out the duties of Parade Marshall and Chaplains from all denominations conducted the dedication service. The Band of the Black Watch Battalion ACF and the senior Pipe Major Instructor from the Army School of Piping and Drumming provided musical accompaniment including the Lament, Last Post and Reveille. Standard bearers from all the Scottish Regiments who took part in the conflict were on parade as well as a good number of Korean War Veterans. Invited guests and families of the Korean Veterans were



Scottish Korean War Memorial bench presented by the Association and now in place at Witch Craig Wood.



The refurbished Korean Pagoda.



Association members and Korean War Veterans who attended the re-dedication service.

then entertained at the Royal British Legion Clubrooms in Bathgate. The monument is in the form of a Korean Pagoda in which the names of all those who lost their lives are shown and it is situated at Witch Craig Wood in the Bathgate Hills near Torphican and is well worth a visit.

R J W Proctor



Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin as part of his Commonwealth War Graves duties, visited the Dorian Memorial in Northern Greece. It records the names of many men of the 13th Battalion who died during the fighting in Macedonia.

BLACK WATCH GOLFING SOCIETY

BLACK WATCH V ARGYLLS – GOLF

On 11th June the annual match between former members of the Black Watch and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders took place at Kinross Golf Club. Since the formation of the Royal Regiment of Scotland the match has been open to any officer who is serving or has served in their respective Battalions and it is hoped that younger members will wish to play in this most historic of matches, as the average age of team members on both sides must now be in excess of 70. Without an injection of younger blood this great fixture is in danger of falling by the wayside which would be sad considering its history. The match for the Depot Cup was first competed for in 1898 and the names on the Cup bear witness to many fine soldiers of the past.

Prior to the match, members met for an excellent lunch hosted by Sir David and Lady Montgomery. The match was contested at a Pinhurst Stableford Foursome and the Black Watch came out on top with an average score of 32 points against an Argylls score of 29.5. For the Black Watch, John Rankin and Alex Stewart lead the way with a most creditable score of 37 points. For the Argylls, the ever reliable Douglas Haldane at nearly 90 and former Argylls MO during the Korean War, along with his partner, Peter Church, scored 35 points.

Next year's match will be on 17th June at Kinross and new blood will be very welcome.

FORECAST OF EVENTS 2014

The Highland Brigade Golfing Society Spring Meeting will be held at Panmure Golf Club, at Carnoustie on 4th & 5th June 2014 to which any serving or retired officer of a reasonable golfing standard is encouraged to play. 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. For further information contact the Black Watch Golfing Convenor, Bruce Osborne if you wish to play in any of the matches and do not wait to be asked. Best form of contact is by email: bosborne301@yahoo.co.uk

CURLING

The following Curling matches are planned for the 2013/2014 season:

15 November 2013	Black Watch v A and SH – Stirling
10 January 2014	Black Watch v Highlanders – Perth
5 February 2014	HLBCC v The New Club – Kinross
13 March 2014	HLBCC v The Royal Company – Kinross
24 March 2014	HLBCC Bonspiel – Perth

The Black Watch Heritage Appeal, and Friends of the Black Watch

THE NEXT CHAPTER

Project Balhousie

It was almost five years ago, back in 2008, that the Regimental Trustees took the decision to buy Balhousie Castle from the Ministry of Defence in order to ensure that it remained the home of The Black Watch Collection and Archives. Increasing pressures on the Defence Budget meant that there was always a danger that future funding of Regimental Museums would at some stage fall under the spotlight and it was felt that the time had come for us to become masters of our own destiny.

The major implication of the Regimental Trustees buying Balhousie Castle and removing the Black Watch Museum from under the MOD umbrella was that, for the first time, we had to make plans to make the enterprise commercially viable and financially self-funding. Visitor numbers would therefore need to rise significantly from previous levels, as would the revenues derived from them. To attract more visitors to the museum, we had to be offering a much wider and better range of facilities including a café, expanded retail space and car parking provision. Project Balhousie was born.

We set ourselves the pretty daunting task of raising £3.5m through The Black Watch Heritage Appeal to fund the purchase, redevelopment and expansion of Balhousie Castle. The launch of the Appeal could hardly have been more unfortunately timed, coinciding as it did with collapse of Lehman Brothers and the ensuing global economic slump from which we are only just now emerging. Against this background, it is fairly remarkable that the ambitious £3.5m fundraising target was duly achieved and in March 2012, the Regimental Trustees were finally able to give Project Balhousie the green light when the final piece of the funding jigsaw, the £778,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, was confirmed.

Work started in May 2012 in the Wavell Garden which was converted into a new car park for visitors. Construction on the new building extension started in July and the entire Museum Collection was moved into storage in August, following which Balhousie Castle itself was handed over to the contractors to begin the necessary internal works. The dream was that the re-titled Black Watch Castle & Museum might re-open to the public around Easter 2013 but that was to prove overly optimistic. Using the Cocktail Party (20th June) and Regimental Reunion (22nd June) as critical long stop dates, contractors and sub-contractors were 'encouraged' to re-double their efforts to have the building ready. To their credit, we made it by the skin of our teeth with landscaping being done and contractors moving off site on the afternoon of the 20th June, just a couple of hours before the Cocktail Party was due to start!

The Black Watch Castle & Museum was re-opened to the public at the start of the following week on 24th June and was combined with the raising of the Armed Forces Day flag, a ceremony attended by Liz Grant, Provost of Perth & Kinross. This ceremony was then followed by the official opening conducted by Brigadier Mel Jamieson, Lord Lieutenant of Perth & Kinross and President of The Black Watch Association. We were delighted too to have the Pipes & Drums of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, on parade and playing for the assembled invited guests.

With Project Balhousie almost concluded, within budget and almost on time and only the 'snagging' programme still to complete, now would seem an ideal time to pass on some heart-felt thank yous to all that have enabled it to happen. The difficulty is knowing where to start and apologies at the outset for any key omissions!

First of all, could we start with thanking everyone who gave so generously to the Appeal. Thank you to the Regimental family who rallied around and collectively donated significant sums and indeed to the many individuals and families with no obvious direct links with The Black Watch but who recognised the importance of preserving the heritage of the Regiment for future generations. We

owe a particular debt of thanks to our Royal Patron without whose encouragement and practical advice and support we could not have achieved the goal.

Our thanks too go to local firms and organisations, such as Rotary & Probus Clubs, which also gave very generously. There were a significant number of charitable trusts which kindly pledged sizeable donations and the names of which are recorded on the plaque just inside the entrance. They are too many to list here individually but special mention must go to the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Gannochy Trust, The Rausing Trust and the Forteviot Trust, all of which made significant 6 figure donations to the Appeal.

Secondly, the Trustees would like to express their gratitude to all our staff at the Museum, both salaried and volunteers, for being utterly brilliant throughout. Despite working long hours from basic portacabins in the car park and being inconvenienced continuously as contractors worked around them, they remained universally upbeat and never failed to 'muck in' together enthusiastically whenever required. We are so fortunate to have a really great team and the Trustees are so proud to be associated with them.

It is perhaps invidious to pick out individuals but two in particular require special mention. They are Alfie Iannetta, our former Chief Executive, and Emma Halford-Forbes, the extraordinary efforts of both of whom over the course of the last 2 years in particular made it all possible. Their respective contributions were immense and we would have struggled to get to where we are today without them.

Thirdly, we would like to thank all those others who have been involved in Project Balhousie. Architect Lachie Stewart of Anta has designed a building which we think not only complements the original Balhousie Castle from the outside but is stunning inside. Our thanks go too to the main contractors, Clark Contracts and to all the huge number of sub-contractors involved in the various aspects of the project. We could not have managed without the invaluable support and advice of our Project Manager Mark Bruce of Turner & Townsend and the watchful eye of our Quantity Surveyor Bryan Key of the John Duguid Partnership.

As regards the redesigned Museum displays, our thanks go to Studio MB who masterminded this side of the project and to Alan Carswell whose input on the interpretation side was invaluable. We believe that we now have a military museum which is right up there with the very best. Indeed, after a recent visit to the Museum, a trustee of the Army Ogilby Museum Trust, said that in his opinion that it was quite the best that he had seen anywhere.

Finally, our thanks go to Perth & Kinross Council, from the Provost to councillors and executives, all of whom have been extremely supportive in not just helping us navigate through the often tortuous planning process but also agreeing to the change of use of the Wavell Garden to a visitor car park. Also, we are so grateful to local newspapers and in particular the Courier and Perthshire Advertiser for providing so much positive support and coverage during Project Balhousie, helping to keep us firmly in the public eye.

THE BLACK WATCH CASTLE & MUSEUM

With all the construction and refurbishment almost complete, our attention now has switched to establishing the Black Watch Castle & Museum as a major visitor attraction. The early signs are encouraging, with visitor feedback about the Museum itself and the new café and retail facilities being almost universally positive. From a standing start, it will obviously take time to raise our profile in order to achieve the levels of visitor numbers we aspire to in our 5 year plan but we are now on our way.

The revamped museum displays and layout are worth two hours (and hopefully much longer) of anyone's time. We are fortunate to have an astonishing collection of Black Watch memorabilia and archives which are now extremely well displayed with detailed interpretation. It is perhaps important to emphasise that as time

passes the main displays will be refreshed. This, together with the programme of special exhibitions, will ensure that to the best of our ability as many of our artefacts and as much of our great history as possible, including the continuing story of the Black Watch Battalion at Fort George, will be there for our visitors to see. We are now in the process of training up a number of museum guides from our growing team of volunteers to help enhance the visitor experience.

Our Copper Beech Café is also starting to prove a hit with visitors, both those visiting the museum and those just coming to meet friends over a coffee and coffee or meal. We have deliberately given it a different brand in order to promote it as a stand-alone café and it is hugely encouraging to see how many 'regulars' we now appear to be attracting. The café offers cooked breakfasts and hot & cold lunch dishes whilst also offering those wanting tea or coffee with a range of mouth-watering tray breaks throughout the day.

We expect to develop a full schedule of evening events ranging from formal dinners, regimental or other, through drinks receptions to music recitals, talks and plays. By the time you are reading this, we will have had several of these types of events 'under our belts' and other ideas and options will surely have materialised.

The shop is benefitting from having much greater retail space and the range of goods on offer is continuing to increase. The new Education Room, situated off the café and shop, is being well used and will soon be fitted with a high quality audio visual system which will significantly enhance what we can currently offer. Upstairs, the new museum stores have greatly improved the way we store and access the archives and those parts of the collection not currently on display in the Museum.

All in all, these are exciting times for all involved with the Black Watch Castle & Museum and we encourage all readers of the Red Hackle to visit and re-visit Balhousie. In this connection it is important to emphasise that Balhousie remains the home of the Black Watch Association, whose offices are easily accessible in the old part of the Castle.

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE

We were saddened to learn that Alfie Iannetta, having steered us through Project Balhousie, had decided that the time was right for him to relinquish his post as Chief Executive and to move on to



*Brig Mel Jameson at the official Opening Ceremony.
(Courtesy of DC Thomson).*



The new First World War Gallery.

undertake a different challenge. We are extremely grateful for all his efforts over the last few years. We have advertised for a new Chief Executive to take over from him and, at the time of writing, we have received over a dozen of what appear to be very high quality applications for the post. The Trustees' intention is that, having undergone an extensive interview process, to have offered the post to the successful candidate by the end of October. Whoever is appointed will start work as soon as possible thereafter.



The Copper Beech Cafe.



The Museum Shop.



The Pipes and Drums of The Black Watch Battalion playing during the Opening Ceremony on 24 June 2013.

FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH CASTLE AND MUSEUM

Thanks to a huge amount of hard work from many hands, giving the impression of a reality television make over show rushing to the finish line, the doors of Balhousie Castle reopened on Thursday 20th June. The first people through the door were the guests attending the Friends of The Black Watch Castle and Museum's Cocktail Party. Those attending had an opportunity to see inside the new extension to the Castle, which houses the Copper Beech Cafe and The Black Watch Museum Shop, and also be the first people to tour the refurbished Museum.

The Cocktail Party took place in the part of the new building which houses the Cafe. With its vaulted roof and the impressive painting, *Black Watch at Bay*, hanging in pride of place above the fireplace, the room was a fitting venue for such an occasion. As it was a warm and sunny evening the French doors were opened from the Cafe into the courtyard so that people could stand outside and admire the new building and the beautiful carvings in the stonework above the front door. Among the guests were many of the regimental family and Friends who have been so supportive of Project Balhousie. It was also tremendous to see a number of the new Volunteers who now play such an important role within the Castle and Museum on a daily basis. The Museum is now open seven days a week so the Volunteers are a vital part of the team.

June and the re-opening seem a while ago now and the Friends have been busy. In early September, Helen Smailes, Senior Curator of British Art at the National Galleries of Scotland, gave a fascinating talk called "The Sword and the Pencil." The talk expanded on the prints, photographs, and watercolours on display in the special exhibition that had been sponsored by the Friends. Friends enjoyed an exclusive reception before the event and joined members of the public for the lecture. Attendees were able to hear about the pictures, which have rarely been seen before, and also hear more about the extensive art collection held by The Black Watch Museum.

As I write this article we are preparing for the Friends Annual General Meeting on 21st October which will be followed by a lecture entitled "The Military Tattoo" given by Brigadier Melville Jameson. In November the Friends have been invited to visit the museums of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and The Royal Scots in Edinburgh Castle. This follows on from a very enjoyable visit that a number of the Friends made to The Royal Highland Fusiliers Museum in Glasgow in June.

Among the advantages of being a Friend of The Black Watch Castle and Museum, is not just the free entry to the Museum and selected events, but also a 10% discount in the Cafe and Shop. On the 21st November from 6.00-7.30pm the Museum Shop will host an exclusive Friends Christmas shopping evening where mulled wine and mince pies will be available. For this evening only Friends will have a 20% discount! As the shop is considerably larger than it was before, you should be able to find something to suit everyone in your family.

Balhousie is now a hive of activity, there is much to see, do and enjoy. If you visit the website at www.theblackwatch.co.uk you will find the **Calendar of Events** which outlines what is going on. There has never been a better time to become a Friend. If you are not already then please do consider joining. We would welcome you and you would be making a valuable contribution to the success of the Museum and our Black Watch home.

Remember, if you are a member of The Black Watch Association, your Friends membership will cost you as little as £1 per month.

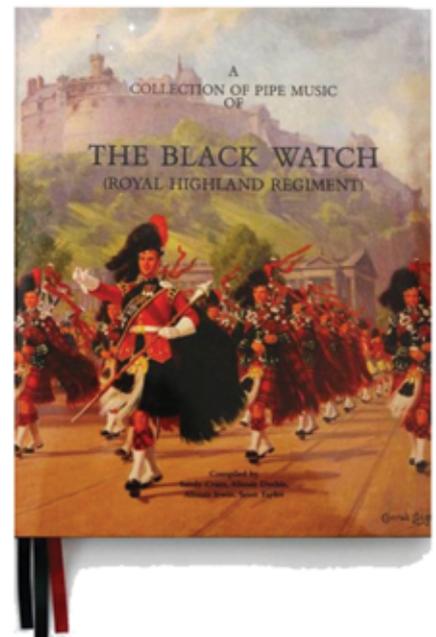
Sarah Riddell-Webster, Friends Chairwoman

Many years in the making, this beautifully produced, illustrated book is now complete and available for purchase. It is a tribute to over 260 years of Black Watch piping. Established in 1739 the Regiment introduced the tradition of piping into the life of the British Army and the Regiment remained at the forefront of that tradition until its merger with the other Scottish infantry regiments to form the Royal Regiment of Scotland. The book has been compiled by Colonel Sandy Cram, Pipe Major Alistair Duthie, Sir Alistair Irwin and Pipe Major Scott Taylor with much valued input from many others.

This collection of over 250 tunes is the first substantial record of Black Watch pipe music ever to be produced. It includes tunes composed by Black Watch men, tunes whose titles have an association with the history of the Regiment and tunes that formed part of the daily routine and traditions of Black Watch regimental life. It includes favourites such The Queen Mother's Century by Pipe Major King, for 10 years the personal piper to Her Majesty; the tune commemorates Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's 100th birthday in 2000, her 63rd year as Colonel in Chief The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment).

The core of the book lies in the tunes themselves, each supported by a short text explaining the significance of the title or the composer. The value of the collection is further enhanced by a wealth of interesting background information, including an insight into the early days of piping in the Black Watch, the roles of the pipers and drummers in the life and work of the Regiment, and a fine selection of colour and black and white illustrations.

HRH The Duke of Rothesay, who succeeded Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother as Colonel-in-Chief, states in his foreword, "I was delighted to learn of the project to create this collection of pipe tunes associated with the Regiment – a long overdue record of its proud piping heritage. I trust that it will inspire future generations of pipers to step forward, eager to help carry a great tradition forward into the future." The book contains a tune especially composed for the book in His Royal Highness' honour by Major Steven Small, Director of the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Drumming.



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*
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Prices are correct at time of going to print.

The Black Watch Museum Shop will be open Mon - Fri 0900 - 1700 and Sun 1000 - 1600



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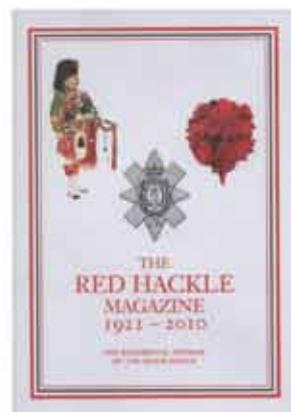
Poppy Field Bookmark

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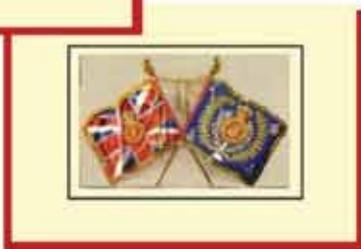
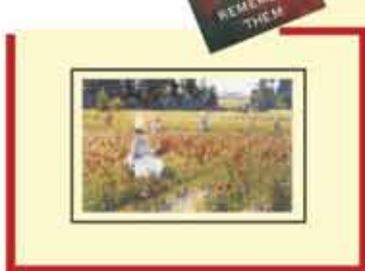
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Black Watch Quich

With carved wooden stand

£35.00



Carved wooden coaster

£2.99

Correspondence

12 Barvas Street
Karitane
Dunedin 9064
New Zealand

Dear Editor

I thought that readers may be interested to see a “sick note” issued to one of my soldiers and relayed to me. I had ignored the first sick note and somehow the RMO, Robin Short discovered this.

The note said “*Pte Johnstone 843 12 Feb '74. Excused use of right arm. When I excuse a soldier from shooting I mean my instructions to be observed no matter how glorious the history of his Regiment.*”

I was left in no doubt that I had strayed and that Pte Johnstone was excused shooting. Robin was a very good doctor and reduced the morning queue at the Medical Centre considerably, so that it was only the seriously injured who were treated. I think he was eventually promoted to 2 Star rank!

Richard Parata

allanmclelland@btinternet.com

Dear Editor

I thought that readers would be interested to see three photographs taken at the Passing Out Parade of 131 Squad in 1958. They were taken by my brother and I am the tallest in the squad line up photograph.

Allan McLelland BEM



RSM Brian Masson.



Brigadier B C Bradford Commander 153 (Highland) Infantry Brigade was the inspecting officer.



131 Squad Passing Out Parade 1958.

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Obituaries

HAROLD ABBOT

Harold Abbot died on 18 August 2013 aged 84. Born in West Bromwich in 1929 he was called up for National Service in 1947 and he joined the 1st Battalion which was stationed in Duisberg and then Berlin. During his service he was nicknamed "Bud" and he always looked back on his service in the regiment with great pride.

A good family man, he lived with 2 of his sisters for many years and he was surrounded by and was able to enjoy, his immediate family. He was always helpful and had a genuine love of life.



GEORGE BARR

On 22nd August 2013 "Dode" Barr died at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee. He was 74 years of age having been born, the youngest of nine in Dundee in 1939. Following school, which he left at the age of 15, he had several jobs, initially as a coalman then in the jute industry and finally as a bricklayer's labourer, before deciding to join The Black Watch as a regular soldier in 1959. He was to serve for 9 years, all in the Pipes and Drums, as a piper. During this period he served in Cyprus, Warminster, Minden and again in Cyprus as part of the UN Force. He also took part in the 1963 tour by the P&D of North America having also performed on Moscow's Red Square. During the American tour the P&D performed, by special request, for President Kennedy and his family at the White House. Sadly they were to return to the White House, following the assassination of the President, at the request of Mrs Kennedy.



In 1968, following completion of his engagement, Dode left the Army and returned to civy street initially at NCR Ltd before returning to become a bricklayer's labourer. He always preferred working outside in the fresh air to being confined in a factory environment. At the same time, as is the case with many, he missed the army life as a result of which, in 1971, he joined the Black Watch TA as a private soldier. His previous training stood him in good stead and promotion came quickly to Sergeant in 1975, Colour Sergeant in 1978 and Company Sergeant Major in 1981 initially as CSM A Company and finally Signals Warrant Officer before retiring from the TA in 1984.

He officially retired in 1998 but continued to make a living from collecting cockles on the Tay sandbanks and doing odd building jobs to help out some of his many friends. In addition to playing the bagpipes Dode was an accomplished singer and player of the accordion, mouth organ and keyboard although he never used these talents to earn a living preferring simply to give pleasure to all who listened to him.

Always with a beaming smile and wonderful character Dode was a very popular friend and colleague who will be sadly missed by many, not least his wife Zena and children George, Jane and Julia. In keeping with the character he was, and in line with his wishes, Dode's body was donated to medical science.

R I Rose

JOE BUTTERLY

Joe Butterly died aged 69 on the 1st of May 2013 after a long period of illness. He was a great supporter of the Black Watch Association and a member of a number of Branches as well as the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Dining Club.

He joined the Battalion in Minden after transferring from the Gordon Highlanders and served with the 1st Battalion in Minden, Kirknewton and Hong Kong and took part in all the deployments to Cyprus, Gibraltar and Northern Ireland. He was employed as MT Sergeant in Hong Kong and then transferred to the RCT where he completed his service. The Black Watch was always close to his heart as was well demonstrated by his support to the Black Watch Association.

R J W Proctor

TAM CAMERON

Tam Cameron or TC as he was known died on 28 August 2013 at Victoria Hospital Kirkcaldy after a brave fight with a short but devastating illness. He was cremated in Kirkcaldy Crematorium on 5th September and the service was packed by his many comrades who attended from all over the UK.



Hailing from Buckhaven in Fife, Tam or TC as he was known to his many friends, joined the army as a Junior Leader before being posted to his local regiment. He joined the 1st Battalion in Colchester and he was a well-known and popular member of the regiment, serving in every Company at some stage and successfully completing a full and colourful career packed with memorable milestones and episodes.

Well known for his impeccable turnout, TC's reputation was built on his professional attitude to work combined with his natural ability and his willingness to pass on his skills and experience; those he assisted and inspired include many other NCOs and officers. Well known for his love of life and adventure, his exceptional ability as a soldier accompanied by a wry sense of humour, made him many friends throughout the Army. A keen adventure trainer he was also an accomplished skier and hill walker, taking part in several expeditions including one to the Pyrenees.

Tam served in many countries throughout the world including Guyana, Belize, Germany, France, Northern Ireland, Canada, Hong Kong and Brunei. He served in the Recce Platoon in Belize and thereafter joined Support Company where he played an influential role in the establishment of the Battalion's first MILAN Platoon.

He successfully completed the MILAN Detachment and Section Commanders Courses and spent several years in "The Savages" before deciding to turn his skills to jungle warfare where he was so successful on the Jungle Warfare Instructors course that he was requested to return as an instructor. He also gained a "Distinction" pass from the Infantry Battle School at Brecon where he was once again requested as an instructor and he led a platoon to complete the French Commando Course. His desire for new challenges was once again shown later in his career when he undertook a tour with the special duties unit in Northern Ireland. On his return to the Battalion he showed his versatility by turning his hand to the Assault Pioneer Platoon.

Many colleagues will have fond and varied memories of Tam; he will be remembered by those who knew him best as an excellent soldier, great father, decent fun loving guy and a steadfast friend. He is succeeded by his two adoring sons Tommy and Scott to whom he was a hero and will be sadly missed by his partner Pat and by his large number of friends.

Denis Lundie

JOHN CHALMERS

John died on the 5th of August 2013. John was born in Lochgelly, Fife and his father was a Black Watch veteran of the First World War who had been wounded twice at the Battle of the Somme.



He (John) was brought up and attended school in Lochgelly and on leaving school took up an apprenticeship as a Platerer in the Burntisland Shipyard. Although working in a reserved occupation John joined the 6/7th Battalion of the Black Watch until he enlisted into the Regular Army on the 3rd of January 1952. Following his basic training at Queens Barracks Perth he then went north to Fort George for his final ten weeks training before being posted to the 1st Battalion who were by this time in Korea. He was held in reserve in Hong Kong for a short time until being posted in to Korea on the 2nd of December 1952. He served in the Pipes and Drums until the 13th of July 1953. He then served in Kenya, a new but different conflict and it was during his time in Kenya that he moved from the Pipes Band to the Technical Stores. He served a further 15 months until finally arriving home in

Perth on the 14th of November 1954 awaiting discharge on the 9th of January 1955.

On completion of his service John joined the National Coal Board serving in the Nellie and Seafield Collieries as a foreman until his retirement. John left a fairly large family behind but also a lifelong friend and Korea/Kenya veteran, Mr Jackie Erskine who I am sure will miss him as will many others.

R M Scott

STANLEY PHILLIP EDWARD

Stanley Philip Edward died at Orchard Care Home, Tullibody after a short illness.

Stanley a native of Arbroath worked with Robb Brothers Lemonade Factory until he enlisted into the Regiment and joined the 5th Battalion. He sailed with them from Liverpool to Egypt where he had a chance encounter with his brother who was serving with a tank recovery unit. He was taken prisoner during the invasion of Sicily in 1943 and was eventually moved to a Prisoner of War Camp in Austria where he remained until the last months of the war.

During his time as a POW Stanley and a few of his fellow prisoners saw their chance to escape and headed towards the advancing Allied forces as they advanced eastwards through Germany. By the time Stanley was demobbed in 1946 from the Highland Brigade Training Centre at Fort George he had been promoted to sergeant.

He returned to Arbroath and resumed married life with his wife Irene whom he met in Brechin and married before the war and worked as a driver for a number of years before gaining promotion to sales manager before his retirement in 1985. Stanley is survived by his son Robin.

R J W Proctor



DENNIS HALL

Dennis Hall died at Dunkirk Memorial House near Taunton on 29 May 2013. In 1941 as a youth he joined the Nottingham Civil Defence Cadet Corp and enjoyed the rigour and the training which he received. It was not surprising that he signed up to join the army as soon as he could. He was called up on his eighteenth birthday. He served in the 7th Battalion Black Watch and was one of the first troops to make the successful crossing of the Rhine in the closing stages of the 2nd World War. He described the event in a short article he published in the Red Hackle Magazine (November 2005). He entered Dinxperlo in the Netherlands, a town he was to revisit in 2005 and again in 2011. Following officer training he was posted to Egypt. Having left the army, Dennis trained as a Textile Technologist taking up an appointment in his home town of Nottingham before moving in the mid 1950s to join Pasolds in Langley, Slough, the manufacturer of Ladybird children's wear. When production ceased in 1983 he and his wife moved to Culmstock in Devon where he ended his career as a factory manager at Heathcoat Fabrics of Tiverton. Dennis attended a number of Regimental events in recent years and like many of his generation who fought in the 2nd World War, he was a gentleman who was very modest about the events of 1945 which shaped his life.



R M Riddell

ELI GORDON HODKINSON OSt J

It is with great sadness that I report the death of Gordon Hodkinson who died on the 1st of April 2013. Gordon was born, grew up and was educated in Bolton, Lancashire.

As a boy he was always interested in joining the Army and although a Lancashire lad he always wanted to join The Black Watch as his family had originally lived in Scotland.

He joined the Regiment as a boy and became a drummer in the Pipes and



Drums and a keen and highly proficient Highland Dancer. On reaching the age of 18 he left the 10th Battalion and was posted to the 5th where he served for the remainder of the war. At the end of the war he was again transferred, this time to the 1st Battalion and served in Germany and played with the Pipes and Drums at the Victory Parade in London. He remained in the 1st Battalion until he was demobilised in 1948.

On leaving the army he trained as a nurse and worked for many years as a Superintendent in charge of Operating Theatres and before his retirement he was promoted to the post of Control of Infection Manager for all the hospitals in the Warrington Area.

Gordon was a great supporter of Black Watch Association and on leaving the Army he joined the Lancashire and Yorkshire Branch and became the Secretary and eventually the Chairman, roles he continued to fulfil until the Branch went into abeyance some three years ago. He became a member of the Black Watch Association Executive Committee and regularly attended all Association activities until ill health prevented him. However he called the Association Secretary from time to time to keep abreast as to what was happening in the Regimental Family. He was also an avid reader of the Red Hackle magazine.

Gordon was a great supporter of the regiment who is sadly missed and our sympathies go to Sylvia and the remainder of his family.

R J W Proctor

GEORGE LAW

George (Geordie) Law died in Arbroath on the 13th July 2013 aged 75 and his funeral took place in Arbroath six days later and was well attended by his family and friends and members of the Angus Branch of the Association.

George was a close friend of Fred Beattie. They grew up together in Arbroath and when George told Fred he had enlisted into The Black Watch, Fred not to be outdone went to the Recruiting Office in Arbroath the next day and followed George into the Regiment. George trained in 99 Squad at Queen's Barracks in late 1955 and Fred followed in 100 Squad in 1956. On completion of his training George was posted to the 1st Battalion which was serving in Berlin and joined B Company in which he was to serve for the remainder of his military career.

He returned with the battalion to Edinburgh in 1957 and then moved to Cyprus the following year. George enjoyed his time in a Rifle Platoon but eventually moved into the Company HQ as a Company Storeman and returned with the battalion from Cyprus to Barton Stacey in December 1961 from where he left the Regiment and returned to his home town of Arbroath.

George married Ansa in 1959 and settled down to married life and raising a family. Sadly Ansa predeceased George but he continued in his indomitable way and spent lots of time with his children and grand children of whom he was very proud.

On the Angus Branch of the Association being formed, George rallied to the call and became a member and regularly attended Branch meetings and events until ill health prevented him from doing so. He always kept himself fit and was a keen sportsman and was a competent boxer when he served in the Regiment.

He will be sadly missed by all those who had the privilege of knowing him.

R J W Proctor

WILLIE LONGMUIR

Willie Longmuir died suddenly at home on the 7th May 2013. He joined the Regiment in 1970 and after basic training joined the 1st Battalion at Kirknewton and was posted to A (Grenadier) Company where he remained for a good number of years. He served in a Rifle Platoon and then moved to Company Headquarters as a driver and later as storeman. His talent as a storeman was soon noticed by the MTO and Quartermaster and he was transferred to the FAMTO stores where through his diligence and attention to detail he eventually gained promotion to Sergeant and was responsible to the MTO for the day to day running of a busy and essential component of a Mechanised Battalion in West Germany.

During the battalion's tour in South Armagh in 1985-86 he was tasked with the running of a very busy helicopter airhead as part of the Air Operations Officer's (Buzzard) Ops Centre at Bessbrook Mill.

All movement of troops and materiel, stores, rations, charcoal's stock and water to the hill top Observation Posts was moved by helicopter and it fell upon him to ensure that the correct load

of stores, mostly under slung, were delivered to the correct place at the correct time. He was also responsible for supervising the loading and unloading of all troops who took off from and landed at Bessbrook. Running the airhead was no mean feat as some 200 sorties a day were flown in and out of the airhead which supported what was reputed to be, the busiest heliport in Europe at that time.

His flair for stores accounting and organisation enabled him to be flexibly employed within the MT and Quartermaster's Departments and he was promoted and transferred to run the Ration Stores in Berlin and Ballykinler where he eventually received a final promotion to WO2 and was appointed TQMS in a theatre where equipment was technically complex and expensive with a high turnover amongst the Rifle Companies.

Willie stayed with the 1st Battalion throughout his career and served in the UK, the Far East, Germany and Northern Ireland. On the completion of his service he settled down in his home town of Arbroath and gained employment as a civilian storeman with B (Black Watch) Company of 1st/51st Highland Volunteers in Forfar. On the Reserve Forces reorganisation in 1995 his post was disestablished and he was then employed as civilian driver with 45 Commando in Arbroath where he was well known and respected.

He always kept himself fit and was a good Company football team member and great supporter of the "Gers". His bunk in the WOS' and Sgts' Mess was decorated in his team colours which contrasted to his friend and next door neighbour RQMS Davey Stacey who is a great Celtic supporter!

Willie was a good Black Watch soldier who will be sadly missed. He was popular and respected by all who had the pleasure of knowing him and this was shown by the large turnout of Black Watch veterans and members of staff from Condor who attended his funeral.

R J W Proctor

RONALD LOVATT

Ron Lovatt was born in Stoke on 23 July 1927 and served in the 10th Battalion towards the end of the 2nd World War. He then worked variously for Michelin, the National Coal Board and Severn Trent Water.

He was a founder member of the Stoke on Trent Branch at its formation in 1968 and he was a great supporter of its events. Ron died on 5 June 2013 and he will be greatly missed.

ROBERT MCGOWAN

Robert McGowan who was known as Rab died very suddenly at home in Kirriemuir on 24 April 2013, two months short of his 51st birthday. Rab and his twin brother Alistair (Ally) joined the Infantry Junior Leaders Battalion, Shorncliffe on leaving school in 1978 and joined the 1st Battalion the following autumn at Catterick, after the battalion had returned from the tour in Belize.

As a young boy, Rab had always wanted to be a driver and to join the army and he fulfilled both his ambitions. He passed an AFV 432 driving test and was soon driving around the training areas in Germany during the battalion's five year tour in Werl, West Germany. His brother joined the Signals Platoon and Rab moved to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess as a Mess Steward where his quiet but reliable character and great sense of humour made him popular with his peers and Mess members alike. He also felt privileged to wait upon The Queen Mother when she visited the 1st Battalion in Werl in 1982.

He was deployed with the battalion to West Belfast to 1982-83 and in South Armagh in 1985-86. He served for 2 years in Edinburgh and then decided to leave the forces and moved down to Chichester to join his other brother Rod where he gained employment as a civilian bar steward in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess of the



Royal Military Police Training Centre. On the Training Centre's closure he moved to the Post Office where he achieved another lifetime ambition of becoming an HGV driver.

Although he was a quiet man he was a good Black Watch soldier who will be sadly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

R J W Proctor

GEORGE O'DELL

George O'Dell who served with the 5th Battalion The Black Watch died in July 2013 aged 90. He served with the Battalion at the Battle of El Alamein during the invasion of Sicily and he landed in France with the battalion on the evening of 6 June 1944 (D Day), serving to the end of the war in Europe.

Before joining The Black Watch he served from the age of 15 in the Merchant Navy and he was on board 2 ships that were sunk but he survived.

After the war he worked for Vauxhall Motors in Luton. In 2006 he returned to France and to Breville, the site of fierce fighting for the battalion (12 June 1944). He visited the graves of fallen comrades such as Captain M H A Stuart-Hamilton MC and Corporal D Dodd as well as many others. He found this visit a profoundly moving experience 62 years after the action.

A family member described him as "a good and honest man who was proud to be part of The Black Watch".

His funeral was held in Luton and was attended by Dick Goodwin and Dennis Simpson of the London Branch.



GORDON OGILVIE

Gordon Ogilvie died on Saturday the 13th of April 2013 in the Royal Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy.

He was a National Serviceman and after his basic training was posted to the 1st Battalion and served with them in Korea and Kenya. After his demob he joined the 6th/7th Battalion (TA) in St Andrews where he spent a number of years. He was then transferred to the Fife and Forfar Yeomanry and served with them until the end of his TA service.

He was known to his friends as Ginger due to the colour of his hair and was a frequent visitor to Balhousie Castle until illness stopped him. He was most upset that he could not attend the Korean War weekend in November, again through ill health. Gordon was happily married for nearly 54 years and is survived by his wife Helen and their son David.



R J W Proctor

VIC SCOTT

Vic Scott of Polruan in Cornwall died in February 2013 aged 93.

At the outbreak of the 2nd World War he enlisted in the Royal Artillery and joined an Anti Aircraft Regiment operating the Bofors gun. His Regiment was posted to North Africa and later he saw action in Italy (Salerno, Monte Casino and Florence) and then France. At some stage he joined The Black Watch (possibly the 6th Battalion) and was proud of his association with his new Regiment.

After the war he returned to Cornwall and in 1947 he married Rhona and they had four children. He worked in Fowey for many years as well as helping his family in the "Lugger" Public House. He was a convivial character and singing and drinking were central to his life.

We salute the passing of another old soldier.

Editors note: I am grateful to Carol Franklin of Murthy who provided the information on Vic's life.

ROBERT HENRY VESTY

Sergeant Robert Vesty died aged 97 on 25 March 2013 in Stockport. Originally from Leith he served in the 2nd Battalion from 1940-45 and then the 1st Battalion in 1945/46 until his demob.

He served with the 2nd Battalion in Crete, Syria, Tobruk and the Chindit Campaign and finally in Germany.



JOSEPH WILLIAM WALKER

Joseph (Joe) William Walker died on the 5th of May 2013 aged 91 and his funeral took place in Arbroath on the 13th of May. Joe was born in St Andrews on the 15th of March 1922 and was the second son of a railway engine driver who had served with the 2nd Battalion in Mesopotamia in the Great War. Shortly after his birth, Joe's family moved to live in the Hawkhill area of Dundee and later moved to Letham Grange Station House outside Arbroath.

His first employment on leaving school aged 14 was working for the railway at Cove Bay Railway Station. However Joe fell foul of the Station Master who did not appreciate his action when he gave a sack of potatoes which had fallen from a train to a destitute widow and was told that everything on the station platform belonged to the Station Master. Neither did Joe's sense of humour go down well



with the Station Master when a live ferret was left on his employer's desk and the ferret devoured his sandwiches. This cut short his career on the railway!

Joe returned home and became a gardener on Letham Grange Estate and developed his passion for athletics and ran as a sprinter at Powder Hall in Edinburgh. During his time at Letham Grange he enlisted into the regiment and after basic training was posted to the 6th Battalion. On his 21st birthday he embarked with the battalion from Liverpool to join the First Army and take part in Operation Torch. Despite the conditions in North Africa his horticultural knowledge came to the fore as he marvelled at the beauty of the azaleas growing in the mountains of North Africa.

During the Tunisia campaign Joe was shot in the head and suffered shrapnel wounds to his arm and was evacuated to Bristol by ship and then to Stracathro Hospital near Edzell in Angus which was quite close to home.

After he was demobilised and although disabled, Joe obtained employment as a Mess Steward at HMS Condor on the outskirts of Arbroath where he worked until his retirement. It was at Condor that he met his future wife; they set up home in Arbroath and remained there until his passing. Married for 67 years he had six children, twelve grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren of whom he was immensely proud and to who we extend our condolences.

His love of gardening and pride of having served in the regiment remained with him all his life.

R J W Proctor

The following deaths have also been recorded:

Alistair Matthew who completed his National Service from 1954-56 died on 25 August 2013.

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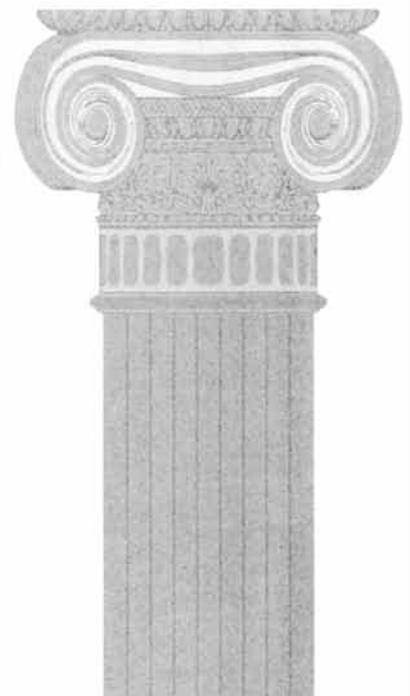
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CAPTAIN WILLIAM WHARTON, “A SOLDIER OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS”

By Colin Heape

Captain William Wharton was my maternal great, great grandfather and I am directly descended from him through his son Dr Henry Samuel Wharton. William served in 2nd Battalion of 73rd (Highland) Regiment of Foot and is a hero to our family for the part he played in the battles at Quatre Bras and Waterloo in June 1815. The Battle of Waterloo was a moment of high drama and national pride for the British and a bad memory for the French, who have argued about it ever since. Many books have been written about that battle and anyone who fought in it left his footprint in military history. William's world, two hundred years ago, was very different to ours in so many ways; yet human values have not changed that much. His basic values shine down through the intervening years, his courage and ambition, his hopes and fears; these are still much the same as our own. I hope what I have written about him reflects this and that he would have approved.

His story begins with finding the will of a wealthy gentleman named Samuel Wharton dated 23rd May 1797 in the records of the parish church of St George, Hanover Square in London. Mr Wharton was a footman to King George II. He was lodging in the Neat Houses in Chelsea. He left his estate to his son Samuel Wharton, who was living in the Stables Yard at St James Palace. Both father and son were employed in the Royal Household of King George III. Samuel Wharton junior became the Clerk Comptroller of the King's kitchen. He married Mary Killick at St George's Church in February 1783. They had three children named William, Barbara and Catherine. William Wharton was born on 31st January 1785 and baptised at St George's Church in February that year. He spent his childhood in the Royal Palaces.

William decided that life in the Royal Household was not for him because he joined the Army as an Ensign in 5th Regiment of Foot in 1806, without having to purchase his commission. His father's connection with the Royal Household and the rapid expansion of the Army at that time may have helped him to obtain his commission. He was a bright lad and he was quickly promoted to Lieutenant in 7th Garrison Battalion in December 1806. He then joined 2nd Battalion of the 35th Regiment in Manchester in 1807. He must have been ambitious because he wrote a letter from Manchester dated 1st October 1808, asking to be transferred to a regiment more active than recruiting. The War Office Record (WO17/145) contains the Adjutant General Returns of the 35th Regiment, which shows that he was transferred to the 85th Regiment in 1808. I have the original document granting “*Our trusty and well beloved William Wharton, gent*” a commission (without purchase) as a Lieutenant with 85th Regiment of Foot (Bucks Volunteers) given at the Court of St James on 6th October 1808.

Captain Wharton's military obituary records that he took part in the Walcheren Expedition with the 85th Regiment in 1809 and was present at the Siege of Flushing. He also fought in the Peninsular Wars at Fuentes d'Onor and Badajoz with the 85th Regiment in 1811. He was promoted to Captain in 1812 and joined the 2nd Battalion 73rd (Highland) Regiment. He served with 2/73rd in the Stralsund Expedition under Major General Gibb in Swedish Pomerania in 1813-14 and was present at the Battle of Gohrde in Hanover. He commanded No 10 Company of 2/73rd at the battles of Quatre Bras and Waterloo in June 1815 and was severely wounded at Waterloo. He was fortunate to die peacefully in his bed 40 years later.

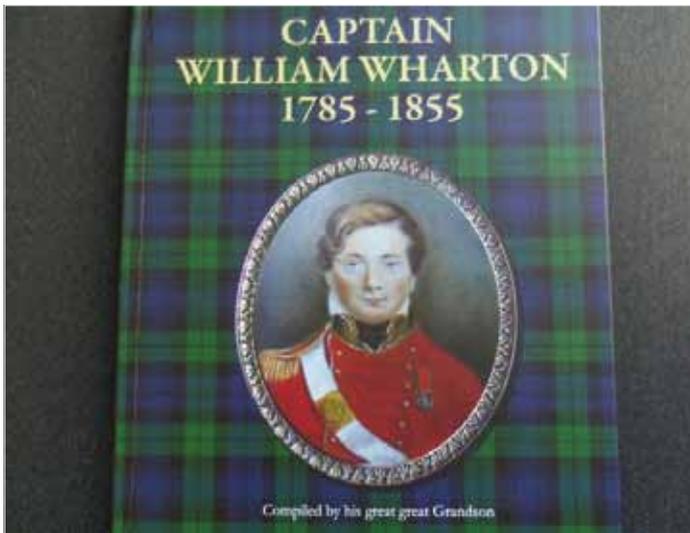
The 2nd Battalion 73rd (Highland) Regiment was raised in 1808 and commanded by Colonel Sir William George Harris. Although nominally a Highland Regiment, Colonel Harris was granted permission to abandon Highland Dress, so that the Battalion could be brought up to full strength as quickly as possible, by encouraging volunteers from all parts of the Kingdom. The Adjutant General Return for 2/73rd

Regiment (Ref: WO17/194) shows Captain Wharton in command of No 10 Company stationed at the Tower of London in December 1812. There are a number of English names among the soldiers in that Company. During the extremely cold winter of 1813/14, there was an outbreak of dysentery among the men while they were on board ship in Gothenburg. The Regiment sailed back to England and left those, who were still seriously sick, with the women and children in Yarmouth. Captain Wharton was one of those left behind in Yarmouth at the beginning of December 1813. He subsequently wrote a letter dated 14th January 1814 from London to General Harris, stating that he had now fully recovered and wished to rejoin the Regiment. This letter ensured that he was present with his regiment at Waterloo and has been preserved among his papers.

The 2/73rd joined the 5th Brigade commanded by Major-General Sir Colin Halkett, which included the 30th, 33rd and 69th British Regiments of Foot and became part of the 3rd Division commanded by General Baron Von Alten. On 16th June 1815, they were summoned to meet the French at Quatre Bras. The 5th Brigade was caught out in the open by the French Cavalry and suffered heavy casualties. The 69th lost their King's Colour. They were called back on 17th June to take up a new position in the front line of the Allied Army on the field of Waterloo.

The 5th Brigade were ordered to take up their position on the Mount St Jean ridge in the centre of the front line between the chateau of Hougomont and the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte. The Brigade formed two squares in the front line between 1st Guards Brigade on the right and 1st Hanoverians on the left. The 69th and 33rd Regiments combined to form one square on the right and 30th and 73rd the other on the left. They were made to form two squares instead of four, because all four regiments were under strength, having fought at Quatre Bras the previous day. The 5th Brigade was in the thick of the fighting again on 18th June and was charged repeatedly by the French Cavalry during the late afternoon. The French were unable to break a single British Square that day and the steadiness of the British Infantry at Waterloo became a byword for future generations of the British Army. Barely 50 men and 5 officers of 2/73rd were left standing at the end of the fighting. All five Captains, named in the Waterloo Roll, were either wounded or killed during the battle. They had to spend the rest of the night on the battlefield listening to the cries of the wounded. Belgian peasants, who came to rob the dead and dying, had stripped many of the bodies naked by morning. The Duke of Wellington remarked that “*Next to a battle lost, the greatest misery is a battle gained.*”

Captain Wharton was not among those left standing at the end of the battle. He had been shot through both his legs. His daughter Emma said that her father had been taken for dead and put on a cart the next day. Luckily, neither leg was broken, because broken limbs would normally have been amputated. He must have recovered quickly, because he managed to stay with his regiment and is listed as wounded in the Muster Roll of the 73rd. He is still listed as wounded in the Pay Roll on 21st September while the regiment were camped in the Bois de Boulogne outside Paris. The regiment remained in France as part of the Allied Army of Occupation until December. They arrived back in Ramsgate on Christmas Day 1815 and were marched off to Nottingham. They returned to their old barracks at Colchester in 1816, where they received a rapturous reception. By 1817, the Government had started to reduce the size of the Army, as all Governments are still wont to do in peacetime. The 2nd Battalion of the 73rd was disbanded. William applied for a pension but was told that his wounds did not qualify him for one. He applied for the post of Sub-Inspector of Militia on the Isle of Corfu and was posted there on Christmas Day 1817. He returned to London for his wedding to Sarah Turner at Holy Trinity Church in Clapham on 18th May 1818. William went back to Corfu with his new bride and their first child was born there on 27th April 1819. He was placed on half-pay on 1st June 1820. Their second son,



Captain William Wharton.

my great grandfather Henry Samuel Wharton was born on 22nd July 1822 in Ville Antony in France. I do not know if they ever went back to Corfu after the birth of their second child. They returned to London in December 1822 and Henry Samuel was baptised at St George's Church in Hanover Square. Captain Wharton was then transferred to the 43rd (Monmouthshire) Regiment and applied for the post of Barrack Master at Brecon in Wales. This was a civilian posting and his salary of £137 per annum plus free accommodation was paid by the Ordnance Department. He remained in Brecon as Barrack Master until his retirement in 1841. He died there on 5th February 1855 aged 70 years. His widow Sarah was granted a pension, because William was still technically an Army Officer on half-pay at the time of his death. Sarah Wharton went to live with her son Dr Henry Wharton. She left the miniature picture of her husband and his medals to my great grandfather.

It has been fascinating for me to find out about my ancestor's life as a soldier in the Napoleonic Wars and I am indebted to Mr Tom Smyth at the Black Watch Museum in Perth for providing me with details of William's Army career. Mr. Smyth also told me about

Alan Lagden's book "The 2/73rd at Waterloo" and Thomas Morris's book "Sergeant Morris of 73rd Foot", which give graphic descriptions of the fighting. If you would like to read more about William Wharton and the people, who fought at Waterloo please visit the website www.waterloo200.org and click on Waterloo People.

Victoria Schofield has recently written a new book "The Highland Furies". It is an official history of the Black Watch and gives details of the history of the Regiment from 1725. If anyone reading this has personal details about their ancestor, who fought with 42nd or 73rd at Waterloo, I am sure the Black Watch will be pleased to hear from you. Such is the fascination of history, as the 200th anniversary of the great battle approaches.

2 Grays Inn Square
15th January 1814

Sir

When the 73 Regt came into Yarmouth I was unfortunately very unwell and consequently was obliged to remain at the place when the Regiment sailed for Holland, with the intention of following as soon as I had recovered, but have since received an order from the Adjutant General to join the depot at Colchester at the expiration of my leave, which will be on the 24th Inst but being now perfectly recovered and am anxious to join my Regiment I have taken the liberty to beg you will obtain permission for me to go out immediately, as there are but four Captains with the Regiment and I know the Colonel expects me.

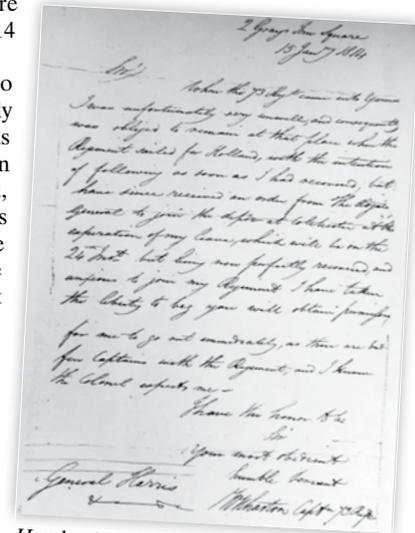
I have the honour to be

Sir

Your obedient
Humble servant

General Harris

William Wharton Captain 73 Regiment



Hand written letter from Captain William Wharton - see left:

THE CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN – A 60th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION – 20th JUNE 2013

Andy Watson and I carried the 2nd Battalion Colours at the Coronation in 1953. I was fairly newly Commissioned but was chosen because I was, and still am, much the same size and shape as Andy Watson. The Battalion was stationed in Hubbelrath outside Dusseldorf. The Scottish contingent assembled in Redford Barracks and went by very slow train to Olympia where we were all housed. It was all very primitive – serried ranks of beds, no privacy whatever and the Colours were stored under the bed. We had one rehearsal. The day dawned grey and rather overcast and chilly. We set off from Olympia and our part of the Column halted in Constitution Hill for a comfort stop. Just as we were doing our business the guns roared in Hyde Park. The Queen was crowned – "Fall in" and off we started. It was a very long, wet march but the cheering crowds kept us going. The Colours were carried over the shoulder until we reached The Mall when they were at the carry. They got heavier and heavier as the rain poured down and so we marched all the way back to Olympia. Our uniforms were ruined as the white blanco had run from our crossbelts. Just as we were about to hit the town, RSM 'Hookey' Walker appeared and said "Mr Gurdon you are the junior subaltern, the Colours must not be left unattended and you will stay here to look after them". I was the only officer in Olympia that night.

60 years later Brigadier Mel Jameson, the Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross invited The Black Watch Association Vice

Chairman to nominate two couples to attend the service on 20th June in Westminster Abbey to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Queen's Coronation. Andy and I were privileged to be asked. I was accompanied by Mary Graham, my sister-in-law. It was a quite beautiful summer's day, so unlike the day of the Coronation. Getting to the Abbey was a bit of a nightmare – the roads were blocked, the crowds huge and the police took us on a route march round Parliament Square to get to the West Door. There we had to



The Coronation Contingent 1953.

go through security similar to airports so we only made it just in time and as a result did not get very good seats. However we could see well enough and it was a most wonderful occasion. One of the early processions was the clergy of every conceivable faith represented in Britain. There must have been fifty of them. The organ music prior to the service was quite lovely and the time passed very easily. As with all things that Britain does so well, the timings and arrangements were impeccable. The entire Royal Family arrived steadily and were escorted to their seats ready for the arrival of The Queen and Prince Philip. It was a very simple but beautiful service and the singing was exquisite. The Prime Minister David Cameron had a very difficult lesson to read which he managed faultlessly and the Archbishop of Canterbury preached a thoughtful sermon. We could follow the ser-

vice on the TV screens throughout the Abbey. Wearing a hearing aid was a blessing as the Abbey is on the 'loop' so we could hear every word perfectly.

So back out into the sunshine. The Abbey bells rang forth majestically. My son was lurking round the corner in his car and our departure was much less stressful than our arrival.

It was a very memorable occasion and it was a privilege to be there.

R T T Gurdon

Editors Note: Mr "Sash" Prescott and Mr Joe Stacey are we believe, with Major General Andy Watson and Colonel Robert Gurdon, the only surviving members of the 1st and 2nd Battalions who took part in the Coronation Parade in 1953.

CANADA'S VIKING VC

By J A C Maitland

The Imperial War Museum in London has recently acquired the medals of Thomas Dinesen, VC. On 12th August 1918, Private Thomas Dinesen became the first and only Victoria Cross winner of the 42nd Battalion Royal Highlanders of Canada (Black Watch). He was also one of only three Danes to have won Britain's highest award for gallantry.

As his medals are now on display in London, it seems very appropriate to retell the story of this extremely brave Black Watch soldier. This fascinating story includes not only why he first crossed the Atlantic in the wrong (westerly) direction merely to sign up, as well as how he won the VC in August 1918 for extraordinary bravery in ten hours of hand-to-hand fighting in the Battle of Amiens in France, during which he accounted for 12 Germans.

Thomas Dinesen was born into a well-to-do family of army officers and landed gentry in Denmark on 9th August, 1892. His family's affluence enabled him to attend university and to indulge in a variety of sports, including hunting and sailing, which were his favourites. He became a graduate civil engineer in 1916 and, as it seemed likely by this time that Germany would invade Denmark, he decided like many other Danes to enlist in one or another of the Allied armies. Having been since 1914 a member of the Academic Rifle Corps, a volunteer organization, and being a first-class shot, he felt well qualified to fight his country's old enemies the Germans who, as recently as 1864, in a short but bloody war, had invaded and grabbed the southern part of Jutland.

His offer of service was cordially received by both the British and French legation officials in Copenhagen, but in each case the answer they received from their capitals was the same: only British or French subjects could be accepted. Later, both countries were to change that ruling, but meanwhile Thomas Dinesen in his eagerness to get into the fray had decided to try the American army. He sailed to New York in the Scandinavian-American liner "Kristianiafjord", but he was disappointed once more. The United States having just entered the war – this was the spring of 1917 – 'Uncle Sam' had all the volunteers he could handle, and Dinesen's offer was again rejected. Quite by accident, however, he spotted a Canadian recruiting office in New York City, was promptly accepted there and on 1st July found himself ensconced in the Guy Street Barracks, Montreal, as a member of a Black Watch reinforcement unit. Dinesen was the only soldier in the whole Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) who had crossed the Atlantic from East to West – at his own expense, too – to fight the Germans.

In October 1917 Dinesen, to his great delight, crossed the Atlantic again, this time in the right direction. Arriving in England, the usual period of training followed at Bramshott and Aldershot. It was March 1918 before he was sent to France and could report for duty with the 42nd Battalion Royal Highlanders of Canada, which was then holding a line of trenches in front of Avion. Thanks to his unparalleled perseverance and determination he had finally achieved his objective and was soon doing his share, and more, of the fighting.

During the spring and early summer of 1918 the 42nd Battalion took its turn with the other units of the 7th Canadian Brigade in manning various sectors of the Canadian Corps front and conducting night raids of enemy trenches. Although no large-scale battles were fought during this period, many casualties were incurred, including the gallant CO of the 42nd, Lieutenant Colonel Bartlett McLennan DSO, who was killed by shell-fire on August 3rd, while making a reconnaissance

of the area over which his unit was shortly to advance in the Amiens battle. Pte Dinesen volunteered for every raid he could and, according to the regimental historian: "was conspicuous for his fearlessness and invariably in the thick of every undertaking in which his company was engaged". Nevertheless, in a letter written about this time to his family in Denmark (he wrote lots of letters during his time in the trenches, in between the action) Dinesen expressed regret that he hadn't had a chance to take part in any real fighting yet! But his turn was soon to come. The great adventure he had been seeking lay just ahead.

Following the end of the war with Russia, the German Army had been able to transfer hundreds of thousands of troops to the Western Front. It carried out a series of offensives during March to July 1918 with some advances, but failed to make a decisive breakthrough and by July its temporary manpower advantage had been spent, with both its troops and supplies exhausted. General Foch then tried to move the Allies onto the offensive. The Allied plan involved the large scale use of tanks (580 in number) to achieve surprise. It also avoided a preliminary bombardment on most of the front, using artillery fire only immediately prior to the advance of the British, Canadian and Australian forces.

The Battle of Amiens, which commenced on 8th August, was the opening phase of this Allied offensive (later known as the Hundred Days Offensive) that ultimately led to the end of the First World War. Allied forces advanced over seven miles on the first day, one of the greatest advances of the war. It was one of the first major battles involving armoured warfare and effectively marked the end of trench warfare on the Western Front, fighting becoming mobile again until the Armistice was signed three months later on 11th November.

The 42nd Battalion, Royal Highlanders of Canada was one of the three Black Watch units in the Canadian Corps (the others were the 13th and 73rd). An indication of the fierceness of the fighting may be seen in the fact that no less than 10 Victoria Crosses were won by Canadian soldiers during this seven-day battle.

August 8th was a great day for the Canadian Corps. It captured ten villages, thousands of prisoners, hundreds of guns of all calibres and vast quantities of ammunition and material. On August 9th (Dinesen's twenty-sixth birthday) the story was much the same, and the advance continued until August 14th when there was a marked stiffening in the German defence at many points and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig, decided to break off the battle. Before this decision was taken, however, the 7th Brigade was thrown into the line in the vicinity of Parvillers and here the 42nd Battalion became engaged in the most striking trench battle of its existence, clearing miles of strongly held, stubbornly defended trenches during more than ten hours of bitter fighting with bomb, bayonet and Lewis gun.

In the course of the fighting No 16 Platoon under Lieutenant Adam Sherriff Scott (who drew the accompanying drawing of a 42nd Highlander, which bears a striking resemblance to Dinesen) penetrated more than 1500 yards into enemy territory and was cut off from the rest of the unit. Lieutenant Scott ordered the retirement of the platoon, and this is what the battalion history has to say on that point:

"The withdrawal was successfully effected due to the almost superhuman work of a small party which included Pte Thomas Dinesen, Pte D Young and Pte J L Halley who by sniping and showering bombs over the enemy kept him under cover".

Later in the day No 16 Platoon lost its direction and again encountered stiff opposition. Lieutenant Scott at this point of the action

was seriously wounded and, says the historian: “*Pte Thomas Dinesen once more held the enemy at bay until his comrades were able to carry Lieutenant Scott to safety*”.

The battalion history compiled by Major Topp also contains the following report written by Major D B Martyn MV, of the 44th Battalion who was detailed to proceed to the support of Lieutenant Scott’s platoon:

“Never was there greater dash nor perseverance shown by men than that by the company of the 42nd who cleared about four miles of a network of trenches and fought steadily and at deadly close range for ten hours. The spirit was such that throughout the men continually cheered. Every man played his part.....”

Major Topp, who became Second-in-Command of the 42nd, won the DSO and MC for conspicuous bravery and was wounded three times, concludes his account of the Parvillers engagement with the following comment:

“Perhaps in no action in which the battalion was engaged is the historian at such disadvantage in adequately recording individual instances of gallantry as in respect of this one at Parvillers... Many an act of intrepid heroism carried out as a matter of course in the ordinary line of duty passed unnoticed and perforce without material recognition.

It was from the testimony of the men themselves that it was afterwards learned that Private Thomas Dinesen was the outstanding figure of these memorable days. Throughout the action he was the spearhead of “D” Company’s thrust into the enemy’s lines. His work with the bayonet was deadly and his carefree courage was the keynote of the spirit of the men which Major Martyn describes so vividly in his report.

Repeatedly Dinesen led the way into the midst of groups of the enemy, wielding bayonet and clubbed rifle with irresistible effect. Repeatedly, also, he rushed forward alone in the face of machine gun fire from which it seemed impossible to escape unhurt and personally put the machine guns out of action.

It was therefore with pride and satisfaction that the battalion later learned that Dinesen had been awarded the Victoria Cross”.

The citation for Dinesen’s VC was published in The London Gazette of October 26th, 1918, and is reproduced below (following the Parvillers action, Dinesen was promoted from Private to Lieutenant, being one of the few “other ranks” in the CEF to be commissioned in the field):

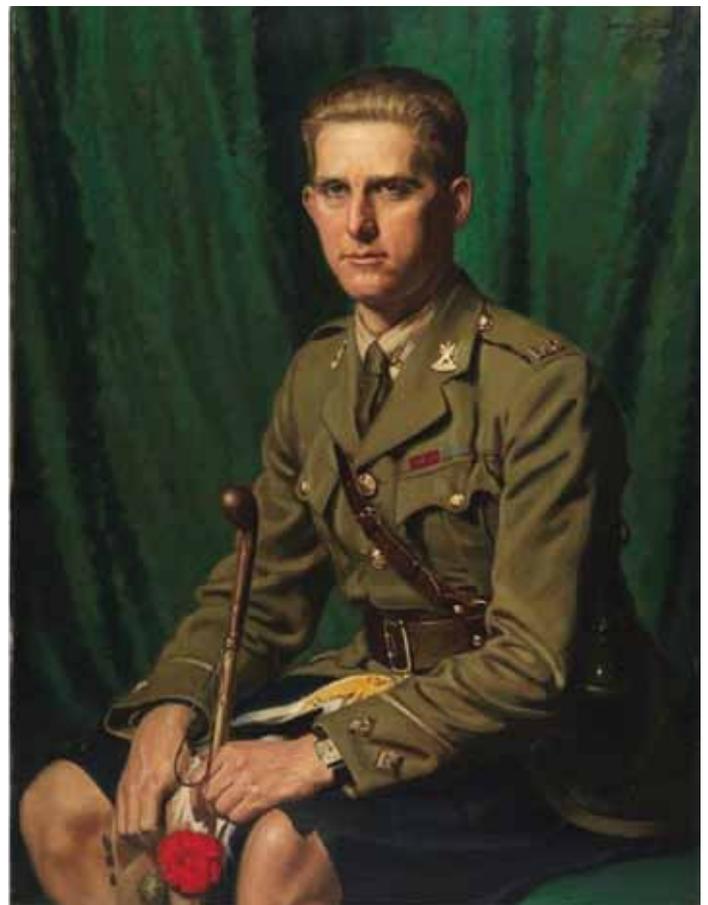
Lieut DINESEN, T, 42nd Battalion, CEF LG 30975 D.26-10-18. For most conspicuous and continuous bravery displayed during ten hours



This sketch drawn by Lieutenant Adam Sherriff Scott bears a striking resemblance to Thomas Dinesen and appears in Major Beresford Topp’s regimental history.



Thomas Dinesen’s VC is now housed in the Imperial War Museum.



This portrait of Thomas Dinesen was executed in 1918 by Howard Summerville and is housed in the Canadian War Museum (artefact 19710261-0664) and appears by kind permission of the CWM.

of hand-to-hand fighting, which resulted in the capture of over a mile of strongly garrisoned and stubbornly defended enemy trenches.

Five times in succession he rushed forward alone, and single-handed put hostile machine guns out of action, accounting for twelve of the enemy with bomb and bayonet. His sustained valour and resourcefulness inspired his comrades at a very critical stage of the action and were an example to all.

PARVILLERS 12-8-18

Dinesen's own version of the events of that day provides some additional insight into the dangers. The platoon had to cross a road first in order to get into the German trenches. The first soldier sent up was killed on the road, while the second was killed and fell back into the trench. Dinesen was then called forward, being the tallest man in the line (he often told his son how proud he had been to be called forward). He crossed successfully, and went forward alone, as apparently his platoon commander thought Dinesen had been killed as well. Dinesen's height advantage meant also that he could look over some of the corners along the German trench network, so could see where enemy were waiting for him. Apparently, it was only after he had progressed about four hundred yards along the trenches that he turned round to find no one else from the platoon was with him! He used to say that he was sure other men were coming up behind him, but was too busy to be sure!

Lieutenant Dinesen, as he now was, had the Victoria Cross pinned on his tunic by King George V at an investiture at Buckingham Palace in December, 1918. Previously, he had received the Croix de Guerre from the Government of France, and later the King of Denmark made him a Knight of the Order of Dannebrog (the Order of Dannebrog is the second senior Danish Royal Award). Early in 1919 he requested and was granted his discharge from the Canadian Army and returned to his home in Denmark. Incredibly, it was only a year and nine months since he had sailed westward seeking an opportunity to fight for freedom and, like his Viking ancestors, a chance to test to the utmost his full strength, endurance and courage. Fate ordained that Canada should provide Thomas Dinesen with that opportunity. He seized it, with the amazing results described above and miraculously without suffering a scratch.

After the war Dinesen went to Kenya where he engaged in farming, civil engineering and writing from 1920 to 1925. Returning to Denmark permanently, he combined a literary career with extensive farming

and forestry operations on his estate "Leerbeck", situated in one of the most beautiful parts of Jutland. An erudite author of a number of books (like his internationally famous sister Karen, the late Baroness Blixen who wrote "Gothic Tales" and scores of other novels under the pseudonym "Isak Dinesen", and whose time in Kenya inspired the film "Out of Africa"). Thomas wrote one dealing with his war experiences. Entitled "No Man's Land", it was a best seller in Denmark.

Although he was never a resident of Canada (if one ignores the three months he trained in Montreal), Dinesen kept in close touch with his many Canadian friends, particularly old comrades of the 42nd Battalion and visited Canada several times. He also attended gatherings in England of Commonwealth VCs and was present at the festivities in London in 1956 when the 100th anniversary of the institution of the Victoria Cross was observed under royal patronage. As well as his war medals, he was also awarded the King George VI Coronation Medal (1937), the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal (1953) and the Silver Jubilee Medal (1977).

Dinesen was once on parade at a ceremony in Denmark when Queen Elizabeth II visited the country. As a Dane, he used to wear his Knight's Cross of the Order of Dannebrog first, before the VC (in the UK the VC is the senior medal and has precedence over all Orders, Decorations and Medals). The Queen passed Dinesen, noted the order of his medals, frowned but did not stop and speak to him. Some years later, Dinesen was at a formal parade in England and changed the order of his medals so that the VC was in first position. His son recalls that the Queen noticed this and said: "Thank you very much, Mr. Dinesen!"

Thomas Dinesen died in 1979 at the age of 86.

The Lord Ashcroft Gallery at the Imperial War Museum houses the world's largest collection of VCs, along with a significant selection of George Crosses. Three other Black Watch VCs are featured (those won by James Davis VC and William Gardner VC in India in 1858 and by Samuel McGaw VC in Ashanti in 1874).

Editors Note: This article is based on one that appeared in the Legionary in Canada but was re-written by Andrew Maitland and approved by Tore Dinesen the son of Thomas.

2nd BATTALION THE BLACK WATCH IN PALESTINE 1937-1938

By Lieutenant Colonel A P L Halford-MacLeod

I was attracted by some photographs of the 2nd Battalion in Palestine dating from 1937 to 1938, by Bernard Fergusson's account of the Second Battalion's tour in Palestine in 'The Black Watch and the King's Enemies' and by the appropriate passages of the 'Red Hackle' Magazine from 1938-1939. What is certain is that the two years in Palestine were the finest training that Platoon and Section Commanders could have

enjoyed. Young Subalterns and Section Commanders had to make decisions on their own and be responsible for their own security. Life was exciting and fun, as good as it ever might be. Casualties were few by comparison with those incurred later in World War 2. The opposition was elusive but there were opportunities to tackle them. You might say that the insurgents helped train the 2nd Battalion.

We should perhaps ask why the battalion was in Palestine.

The Mandate of Palestine was a geopolitical entity under British



Soldiers of 2BW on patrol in Jerusalem.



Officer leading an armoured car patrol near the Jaffa Gate, Jerusalem.
Note the Lewis Gun mounted on the lead vehicle.



Black Watch soldiers in emergency order near the Jaffa Gate (1938).



A vehicle check point on the Nablus Road (1938).



A patrol mounted in Morris Commercial.



Jocks man an observation post on the Nablus Road.

administration, carved out of Ottoman Southern Syria dating from World War 1. Ottoman Northern Syria passed to the control of the French. The British obtained legitimacy for their administration, which lasted from 1920-1948, by obtaining a Mandate from the League of Nations in 1922, ostensibly 'until such time as they could stand alone'. Palestine West of the Jordan was under direct rule. East of the Jordan was Transjordan, which was semi-autonomous, under the rule of the Hashemites and became independent in 1946.

Two major nationalist movements emerged during the British Mandate; Jews and Arabs. The Jews were promised a homeland in Palestine [Balfour declaration] and the Arabs their own independent state [support for the Allies against Turkey]. The Arabs understandably opposed massed Jewish immigration. Arab violence peaked in 1936-1939, which is when 2 BW comes into the story. As a result of the emergency, more troops were needed to police Palestine. The 2nd Battalion sailed from Southampton in August 1937 for Port Said and arrived in September. During the course of the journey the District Commissioner of Nazareth Mr Andrews was killed going to church, the Arab Higher Committee was made illegal and the Mufti of Jerusalem escaped to Syria. 2 BW was diverted to Sarafand, which was a hot primitive tented camp and did not move to the comparative comfort of Talavera Barracks in Jerusalem until mid-October 1937.

The 2nd Battalion took part in numerous operations in aid of the civil power and comprised Battalion HQ, HQ Company with the Military Band, MT Section, Mortar Platoon, Signal Platoon and Boys and A,B, C, and D Companies. The rhythm of operations was up to eight weeks out of barracks and on the ground seeking out the 'oozlebarts' or brigands or gangs. Then there would be three weeks in barracks mounting guards in VIPs, spit and polish, parades and opportunities for walking out in places like Tel-Aviv, a Jewish area. The Jocks much preferred to be out of barracks and up-country.

In the meantime the British almost lost control of Nablus and Hebron in the autumn of 1937. One Rifle Company was usually deployed to Jerusalem, sometimes two depending on the security situ-

ation. The other Companies would often be on operations in the North near Nablus or in the South near Hebron. These might be:

- Surrounding villages while police searched the houses for arms, ammunition, and undesirable characters. This meant moving out by midnight, being in position by dawn and maintaining a curfew until 4.30 am.
- Following the trails of murderers and saboteurs with police dogs.
- Picketing roads.
- Escorting convoys.
- Providing road patrols and ambushes for bandits who attempted to destroy telegraph lines or railway bridges.
- Taking part in organised drives and searches over large areas of mountainous country. Patrols were often aided by donkeys to carry stores.

The Arabs tended to deploy their scouts some distance from where they were carrying out their sabotage operations, so that they could escape before our troops arrived. If contact was made, mortars were used to silence the enemy snipers who themselves were not that effective especially in the dark. The advance guard often pressed on with "Araminta" the 15 cwt armoured car in the lead and the main body held back trying to stalk the enemy to the left and right behind their backs.

There is a delightful story about one Platoon Commander, 2nd Lieutenant Wilder, who was returning to base with his section escort, when he bumped into five formidable roadblocks covered by fire. Ammunition was getting low so he sent back his Austin 7 for reinforcements. Everybody had been deployed and all that was left was the Ration Platoon and the Brigade Commander Brigadier HC Harrison and his Brigade Major Lt Col PDW Dunn, who all duly set off, in the latter case in their mess kit, to clear the road blocks.

Once the Arab Revolt petered out in 1938, a mild lull set in and the Battalion pursued a policy of paying routine flag visits to villages in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

The terminology used in the reports are serious but jocular in tone. "Exceedingly busy owing to the disturbances which are much in vogue".

Or "Our soldiering has been varied and interesting and fearful competition and jealousy arise, whenever there is a chance of going out. Space and the censor, however, forbid a description of the shows in which we have taken part". "We paid a visit to Hebron in March in search of gangsters, who had destroyed telegraph wires. While Companies searched the area, Headquarters were established on top of a hill in a nearby village. Here we remained in a howling gale and pouring rain for twenty four hours. The gangsters did not oblige". "Our outlook on life is divided between three schools – those who are going on leave and are determined to avoid all contact with grenades and bullets, until this ecstatic date; those who are returning from leave and, faced with a whole year before they get any more, don't care what happens and those whose leave, almost certainly will not be granted, are determined to take it out on someone else".

On arrival in Palestine the Battalion's equipment and training changed; signalling equipment and motor transport are two examples.

The Signals Platoon was introduced to the heliograph on arrival; there had not been much use for it in their previous posting in Glasgow. More signallers had to be trained. A Rifle Platoon often had allocated to it what was normally expected in a Rifle Company, 8 to 10 signallers.

The Horse Transport was left behind in Glasgow and the Motor Transport Platoon expanded to 62 vehicles, which included 4 armoured 30 cwt and 1 armoured 15 cwt, the last affectionately known as "Araminta". Most vehicles were Morris Commercials with two seats in front and four behind. Mules and donkeys however, were used for mountainous country.

The RAF provided reconnaissance and liaison. Sometimes they air-dropped stores. It was recalled that they delivered blankets in the evening for patrols out on the ground.

Rationing was wholesome. The Jocks seemed to live on McConnachie's tins of stew, bully beef or fish. Vegetables were rare but fruit was plentiful.

Dress was usually summer emergency order; topee and hackle, KD shirt and shorts, sand coloured hose, red garter flashes, boots and puttees. TOS or cap-comforter was normally worn at night. Certainly at

the start of the tour in Palestine in winter, pullover, kilt and apron was worn in emergency order. There was great pride in wearing the kilt.

Married families were permitted to come out and live in quarters next to Talavera Barracks. Sport played a big part in the soldiers' lives and this was reflected in the pages of the Red Hackle Magazine; football, hockey, cross-country running and swimming. The officers tried to play polo mostly at Sarafand but then the Arabs stole the ponies and curtailed the games for a while.

Immigration into Palestine from 1920 to 1945 was 367,845 Jews and 33,304 non-Jews. 88% of the population in Palestine was therefore Arab but not as well organised as the Jews militarily. On the whole the Jocks preferred dealing with the Arabs, who seemed to have greater pride and dignity than the Jews. The latter were always complaining.

The opposing belligerents of the Arab Revolt on the one side were;

- The British Army, maintaining the Mandate and keeping opposing parties apart. About 10,000.

Palestine Police Force trained and commanded by the British. Jewish Police, a considerable force of 6,000 men including Special Night Squads organised by Charles Orde Wingate, which were a mixture of British and Jews and very effective against the bandits. There was also Haganah and Irgun

And on the other;

- Arab Higher Command until October 1937 but then the Central Committee of National Jihad in Palestine after October 1937.

The Arab Revolt ceased in 1939. The real losers were the Arabs for the Jewish paramilitary groups allied to the British military, benefited from the military training and equipment. This was to prove to their advantage in the War of 1947-1948. On the 1st of July 1940 the Battalion was on the move from Palestine. There followed an extraordinary and demanding period on operations during the 2nd World War in Somaliland, Crete, Syria, Tobruk, India, Burma and Bangalore but that is another story.

Editors Note: I am most grateful to The Honourable M W M Davidson who sent us excellent images some of which we have used to support this article.

THE MAUNY PILGRIMAGE – 1st JUNE 2013

By Dr Tom Renouf MM

Following the breakout from the Normandy bridgehead, the 51st Highland Division was diverted eastward and fought a number of hard battles in a seven day drive to Lisieux, its final objective. Before being stood down, 153 Brigade was required to mop up a few remaining strong points bordering the Seine. 5th Black Watch were ordered to attack Mauny, a skirmish by comparison with the big battles fought to date, but I had good reason to remember Mauny because that was where I was wounded.

During our 60th Anniversary Pilgrimage to Normandy, best remembered for our superb HD monument erected at Breville, we met an HD re-enactment group dressed immaculately in the wartime uniforms of the Highland Regiments. In befriending them we expressed our appreciation and admiration for the role they play and the honour they pay our veterans.

Two years later I received a dossier from the organiser, Laurent Lecomte, giving me details of the group's activities and to my surprise the group and their activities were centred around Mauny.

I was later informed that the group had compiled a Roll of Honour of the six 5BW comrades killed in the battle for Mauny, that they intended to erect a monument to honour their sacrifice and inviting me to perform the unveiling on 1st June 2013.

This was an honour close to my heart but what I considered to be more important was that the families of my fallen comrades should know that after 69 years the sacrifice of their loved ones was being honoured and that they should have the opportunity to attend the ceremony.

The six weeks prior to 1st June were spent in an intensive search to contact the families of those killed in 1944. The names and wartime addresses of the next of kin, showed that three of our comrades came from Scotland and three from England. I wrote to the Provosts and the Mayors of the six towns of the next of kin and each one offered to help trace the families. The newspapers also gave my appeal good coverage. Within ten days I had made contact with the family of Sergeant

Thomas Kirkcaldy of Dunfermline, the family of Private George Hildred of York and Major Donald Mirrielees, who was well known in the Regiment.

Every avenue was explored to contact the families of Corporal O'Keefe with a Dover connection, Lance Corporal Billington of the Wirral and Corporal Chapman of Hull. Despite weeks of enquiries by kind souls anxious to help and further newspaper appeals, no trace of these three comrades could be found.

My wife and I arrived at Mauny on 31st May and after booking in at a nearby hotel we assembled for discussions with the friends who had come for the ceremony. In our company were Ian and Jacqui Scales, the niece of George Hildred, two other 5BW families and David Cowan of Scottish Television who had come to record the ceremonies for STV News.

On Saturday 1st June our first event on the official programme was a reception and garden lunch at the family home of Laurent Lecomte.

The scene on the sundrenched lawn was set by Laurent and his Highland Division re-enactment group, all dressed immaculately in Regimental attire, intent on adding a period background to the proceedings. To our delight Valerie Parkinson, friend and guardian of our Highland Division monument at Breville was invited to act as our interpreter for the day.

At 1.30pm the ceremonies opened with a grand military parade that impressed the villagers as it marched up the main street to the Maire and his guests of honour positioned in front of the Monument. It was headed by the Normandy Highland Pipe Band followed by the Highland Division Re-enactment group led by a few stalwarts immaculately dressed in the No 1 Dress of the Argylls, bearing a Union standard and the others in battle dress with rifles at the slope bearing a Highland Division standard.

The procession, some forty strong, took up their positions, forming a semi-circle on the high ground behind the Monument.

After a welcome given by the Maire, Dr Tom Renouf addressed the large crowd that had gathered. He told the villagers what happened on the day Mauny was liberated and in referring to the battle for the

Chateau he described how the intense shelling had caused many casualties and indicated where most of his comrades had been killed.

Jacqui Scales in her address talked about the short life of her uncle George and told of the grief suffered by his many brothers and sisters at his death and how his grave had been visited regularly by her father. A number of wreaths were then laid, including three representing the bereaved families.

In his speech, the British Military Attaché told that ceremonies of this nature were important because they strengthen the bond between our countries. Then finally the Maire recalled how the joy that Liberation brought was tinged with sadness when it was known that their freedom had cost the lives of six liberators. "Sixty nine years later" he stressed "we still remember the debt we owe these young men and today we pay tribute to their memory by erecting a memorial in their honour." The Maire then invited Tom Renouf to unveil the memorial.

All the speeches were translated into or from French by Valerie Parkinson who by her sensitivity and clarity made the spectators feel part of the ceremony.

The lines "To the Fallen" and the French equivalent were said by the French Liaison Officer. This was followed by God Save the Queen played by a twelve piece band from the St Ouen de Thouberville School. Without hesitation Flower of Scotland was played by the pipers and then the Marseillaise had everyone singing to the school band. The bugler sounded the Last Post, silence was observed and the Reveille signalled the end of the ceremony.

A vin d'honneur was held in the Marie during which presentations were made and gifts exchanged. As the sole representative of the liberators, I was made a Citoyen d'Honneur of Mauny and introduced to Madame Pavloff, the only survivor of Liberation Day. It seemed that the whole population of the village and many more had turned out to support the event. The school band played war time favourites, cameras clicked everywhere, the pipe band gave a recital and the celebrations continued for the rest of the afternoon.

With time pressing and Dave Cowan anxious to film the battle site, our group accompanied by the Maire and a few others, moved to the starting point where 'A' Company, led by Corporal Chapman's section, was fired on. Everyone dived for cover as the bullets sprayed around us. I did not realise I had been wounded until I felt hot blood running down my back. My army buddy Alex Corris, risking his own life, crawled over to me to help me on my way back to the RAP. At this time I did not realise that Corporal Chapman had been wounded. Dave's camera man filmed as I described what happened, using our HD re-enactment group to reconstruct the action.

With 'A' Company pinned down unable to advance 'B' Company led by Major Mirrielees was ordered to make a flanking attack on the left. They advanced into the woods surrounding the Chateau where bitter fighting took place as the enemy withdrew into the Chateau and prepared to make a last stand.

As 'A' and 'B' Companies manned the boundary wall preparing to storm the Chateau, intense shelling and mortaring rained down on the area causing many injuries. It was at this time that Major Mirrielees and George Hildred were killed.



Some of the Highland Division Re-enactment group at Mauny.

The filming continued as I walked with Jacqui to the gates of the Chateau to tell her the one thing she wanted and yet dreaded to know – the spot where George died. She did not speak and I could only imagine the feelings of sadness and finality tugging at her emotions.

During the battle for the Chateau, 'C' and 'D' Companies were ordered to attack the village of Mauny. There was some enemy resistance but small by comparison. It is assumed that Corporal O'Keefe and Lance Corporal Billington were killed in Mauny village.

The day ended with a reunion back in Laurent's family home where it was agreed by all that the result of the planning and efforts had exceeded all expectations. As we talked in the glow of the setting sun I had to admit that there was one feature that gave me cause for concern and then I told them the story about Ginger.

After my wound was dressed and the ambulance was full of casualties, we set off for the hospital in distant Bayeux. When I heard groans coming from one of the two stretcher cases I went to see if I could help. To my horror I found the casualty to be Corporal Chapman suffering from a fatal bullet wound to the head. When I looked at the other stretcher case I was shocked to find that it was my friend Ginger, our platoon runner, seriously wounded by shrapnel and bomb blast.

When we stopped at the second dressing station the doctor examining my two comrades pronounced that they were about to die. As I stood by the stretchers paying my last respects I heard a song coming from a nearby wireless which brought tears to the saddest moment of my war, for it was playing "J'attendrais" which I knew was their favourite song.

My concern was that Ginger did not correspond to any of my six fallen comrades. As I remember he was a private, a Yorkshire man and had an old-timers' Army number. To complicate the matter Sergeant Kirkcaldy was also called Ginger and knowing Army Records to be near perfect I could not explain why Ginger's name was not listed on any of the Rolls of Honour. The matter causes me great concern and I am exploring all avenues for information that will resolve this sensitive confusion.

Next morning at St Desire cemetery Dave Cowan filmed the six gravestones as we placed small wooden crosses on each one. When we came to the grave of Major Mirrielees, Jacqui pointed out that a root of poppies had been planted there in recent times. It is possible that this was done by some relative which surprised me greatly because my researches indicated that the family line had died out.

We left St Desire to go our separate ways. I would spend two days at St Valery where I found our Highland Division flag bearers Raphael Distant and Maggie Savoye planning for the 75th Anniversary of the 1940 Battle and delighted to know that some surviving veterans, God willing, were determined to attend in 2015.

On 5th and 6th June we attended the official ceremonies organised by the 6th Airborne Veterans Association. There was an amazing number of Paras present, all of them in great form, despite their years, all of them showing great comradeship towards one another and looking forward with enthusiasm to the 70th Anniversary of the



The memorial at Mauny was unveiled on 1st June 2013 and commemorated the men of 5BW killed liberating the village.

Invasion in 2014. Landing in Normandy was the biggest thing in their lives and they had every reason to be proud of it.

Immediately the Highland Division landed on D-Day it was ordered across the Orne to give badly needed support to the 6th Airborne who had suffered heavy casualties in the drop and for 12 weeks fought critical battles side by side with the Paras. Those who fought there consider the action to be one of the finest hours of the Division and yet at the Parachute Regiment ceremonies 69 years later there was no mention of the Highland Division.

Next year in June 2014 the 70th Anniversary of the D Day Landings, let us hope that something will be done to ensure that when the Paras have their ceremonies the speeches will acknowledge the gallant part played by their Highland Division comrades.

Editors Note: After this article was written the niece of Major Donald Mirrielees made contact with Dr Renouf. She had found an article on the internet describing the ceremony on 1 June 2013 and was thanking Dr Renouf for his efforts in remembering his fallen comrades.

QUEEN'S BARRACKS AND THE DEPOT COAT OF ARMS

By Lieutenant Colonel R M Riddell

The Black Watch Association has been working with Perth and Kinross Council to establish an information board close to the site of the old Queen's Barracks in Perth. The most iconic item from the old Black Watch Depot is the magnificent Coat of Arms now housed in the Drill Hall of the new Queen's Barracks on Dunkeld Road and home of 51st Highland, 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland. The last record of discussion in the Red Hackle Magazine about the Coat of Arms was in January 1960 and so it may be time to remind younger readers about this piece of Black Watch history.

Queen's Barracks named after the first occupants – the 4th (Queen's Own) Dragoons – occupied the ground around the current Police Headquarters in Perth, from 1794-1961 and for 57 years Queen's Barracks was the Depot of The Black Watch. Generations of Black Watch soldiers were trained in Perth and fought in the two World Wars (1914-18 and 1939-45), the Korean War (1950-53) and served throughout the British Empire and in the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR). The Regiment had first been stationed in the barracks in 1830, again in 1857 and in 1873 and so had a connection stretching back over 130 years. The barracks was closed and vacated in June 1961.

In 1960 the librarian at the War Office Library and Historical Section stated that "According to the Fourth Report of the Commissioners of Military Enquiry, the barracks at Perth were completed in 1794, for cavalry. The same report lists the names of the builders as Messrs John McEwan, George Sandeman, Henry Hepburn, Robert Menzies, William Gray, James Morison, James Ballingall, David McLaren, John Frazer, James Bissett, Carron Company and Eleanor Coade.

The magnificent Hanoverian Coat of Arms measures 4.5 metres in length and is 2.5 metres high and was displayed on the main building of the Depot The Black Watch (the Officers' Mess) and after extensive conservation was moved to the new Queen's Barracks on Dunkeld Road. It is carved from wood and shows the Royal Arms as used by King George I, II and III until 1801. They can therefore be dated from 1714-

1801 and so may well have been in place when the barracks opened in 1794. The makers name Coade of London is displayed.

Mrs CGW Roads LVO, Lyon Clerk and Keeper of the Records, Court of the Lord Lyon described the Coat of Arms as follows:

"This is indeed a beautiful carving and I particularly like the Supporters. It is relatively unusual to see them lying down although not unknown particularly during the 18th century. It shows the Royal Arms as used by George I, II and III until 1801 and are in the form used in England. They can therefore be dated between 1714 and 1801. Behind the shield are displayed various weapons linking this carving with a military background so all in keeping with the provenance of the piece.

They show in the first quarter the dimidiated Arms of England and Scotland (in Scotland they would have been reversed with the Scottish lion rampant on the left and English lions on the right); in the second quarter the Arms of France; in the third quarter Ireland, and in the fourth the Arms of Hanover (consisting of Brunswick, Luneburg, Hanover and an inescutcheon for the Arch Treasurer of the Holy Roman Empire. The crest is that of England (in the Scottish form it would be a lion sejant) and the supporters show the English supporter on the left and the Scottish on the right (again in Scotland these would be reversed). The shield is encircled with the belt of the Order of the Garter – replaced in Scotland with the Collar of the Order of the Thistle.

In 1801 the ancestral claim to France was eventually abandoned and Scotland and England moved to have a complete quarter each (Scotland in 1 and 4 in Scotland and England in 2 and vice versa in England, with Ireland in the third quarter and the Hanoverian quarter moved to become an inescutcheon surmounted of an electoral bonnet which in turn was replaced by a crown in 1816. This element of the Arms disappeared when Queen Victoria came to the throne as she could not succeed to the throne of Hanover being a woman."

After the closure of the Depot in 1961, the Coat of Arms was renovated and was in position when Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother opened the new barracks in October 1975.



The Hanoverian Coat of Arms from Queen's Barracks.

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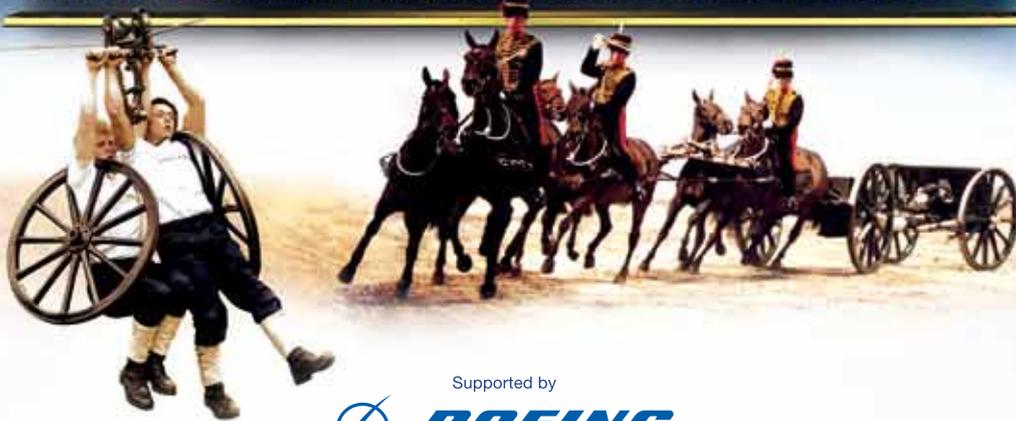
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The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

For the last six months we have been at high-readiness as the United Kingdom's Contingency Battalion: a task that has required us to be prepared to assist the Government in civil emergency. We have trained to contain and control public disorder and were primed to assist police forces for the G8 Summit in Northern Ireland; and more recently we have had a number trained as fire-fighters to provide emergency cover in the event of potential industrial action. Our preparations for the task and our waiting on-call have been busy enough but we have also managed to enjoy some time at home with our families (including our first summer leave over the school holidays in five years). We have also enjoyed the opportunity to conduct our own training, free from the pressures of preparing for an operational tour.

Our training this year was focussed by an examination on a test exercise on Salisbury Plain in June. The Battalion deployed south for 3 weeks, conducting a series of Company battle exercises before then being put through our paces, as a battalion, over a 5 day finale. The Jocks performed brilliantly, crossing the Plain several times, on foot, in at first hay-fever inducing clouds of pollen and then unseasonably poor weather, fighting a tenacious enemy force. We completed our final advance with an early morning assault to capture Copehill Down training village and proudly received the plaudit of having done so quicker and with fewer casualties than any other battalion in the last few years. The unique spirit and tenacity of our Jocks prevailed and I vividly recall the whoop to the Black Bear, played by the Pipe Major from cover, as an assaulting section threw themselves daringly through a window; assaulting to the skirl of the pipes was alien to the observers adjudicating our action but the result certainly impressed.

As we near the end of our contingency role, we are already preparing for another: to train members of the Libyan Armed Forces as part of a British National commitment to that country. The details of our potential task remain opaque but we anticipate deploying members of the Battalion later this year or early next year to Basingbourn in Cambridgeshire, to deliver training for up to 500 Libyan servicemen. The task will be a challenging one, in which we must find a balance between making use of our own experiences and focussing upon the particular needs of providing security in Libya. We must be culturally sensitive and modest too, because many of those that we will train along side have already proven themselves worthy soldiers.

Some of you may have been fortunate enough to have attended the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo this year, where the Battalion provided the Guard of Honour, our Pipes and Drums, and the arena party that makes the whole show run so smoothly. Our support to the event was provided by Support Company. Support Company has had to deal with significant change as we adopt our new structures in readiness to lead the Army as the first Light Protected Mobility Infantry battalion starting next year. Our Rifle companies have each received a Machine Gun platoon from Support Company, which is now structured very differently with a reintroduced Anti-Tank platoon and an Assault Pioneer platoon alongside the Sniper, Reconnaissance and Mortar Platoons. We are preparing to deliver the crew training that our new Foxhound platforms will require, whilst anticipating some significant building work to house our new equipment, weapons, and personnel. Concurrent to our own preparations, we have also been working with our paired reserve battalion – 7 SCOTS – to understand how we will train together to provide an integrated force for future deployments. These are interesting times.

Redundancies were in the news earlier this year and the Battalion has 27 soldiers – all of whom were volunteers – that will be leaving the service as part of the Army's structural reform. For the first time in memory the Battalion is now fully manned – a consequence of a reduced structure and also of the arrival of soldiers from 5 SCOTS in Canterbury as that Battalion reduced down to a single Company. It is a luxury to have a full complement of soldiers but it is one that we must work hard to sustain because recruiting in Scotland is, as ever, challenging. We are putting teams of soldiers out to reinforce the message that the Army is still recruiting and to do everything that we can to convince potential recruits that a career in Scotland's combat infantry is a worthy

and honourable one and we would appreciate any assistance that our wider community can give to assist us in this.

At home we have been enjoying life in the Highlands as part of the vibrant community there. We challenged the Regular and Reserve battalions of the Regiment to compete together in a Highland Games held at Fort George – the first clan gathering of its kind, and the first time the battalions have been together since Her Majesty presented us New Colours in Edinburgh in 2011. The competition was fiercely contested but comradeship on and off of the field was warm and made all the better by the presence of Association members and the local Cadets who may well provide our future. To see the Regiment piping, dancing, throwing, running and jumping, in their kilts marked the uniqueness of Scottish soldiers and their proud heritage; it was fabulous to see and I very much hope the fixture will become a regular one in the future.



The CO visits A Coy Training.

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel A P Reilly
Second-in-Command:	Major A Richards
Adjutant:	Captain R Colquhoun
Operations Officer:	Captain A Phillips MC
Intelligence Officer:	Captain E Gorrie
Regimental Accounts Officer:	Major D Dunford MBE
Regimental Sergeant Major:	WO1 (RSM) Shaw

The Battalion assumed the role of United Kingdom Contingency Battalion (UKCB) mid-March, tasked with providing support to the UK's civilian authorities in whatever guise that may be. This has provided us with a degree of security when planning our summer activities and has allowed us a concerted period to operate as a Battalion. In June, we deployed on Ex WESSEX THUNDER, a two week package on Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) whose purpose is to test the operational readiness of an infantry battalion. We were not scheduled to undertake this exercise until 2014 but owing to an amendment in our anticipated forecast of events, we were afforded this fantastic opportunity which we grabbed with both hands.

The current personalities of Battalion Headquarters have been in post for close to 9 months and whilst the day to day operation of the Battalion provides a staunch challenge, test exercises and operations provide the litmus test. During the months running up to Ex WESSEX THUNDER, we had spent periods of 1-2 days practising the estimate and orders process. Always in the shadow of Fort George, these rehearsals whilst proving very valuable are too easily interrupted by the daily running of the battalion.

Transporting a battalion, its required manpower, kit and equipment from Inverness to Salisbury is not an easy endeavour but careful planning ensured that from the outset we were always on the front foot.

Ex WESSEX THUNDER has provided a test for battalions preparing to deploy on operations, with the exercise having a natural focus on situations likely to be encountered in Afghanistan. We are the first



Lt Tait wondering if being a watch-keeper in BGHQ is as good as it gets.



Major General Cowan GOC 3(UK) Div visits the battalion during Ex Wessex Thunder.



Battlegroup staff planning during Ex Wessex Thunder.

battalion to undertake the exercise without a deployment looming, and it was with this in mind that we looked to shift the focus of the exercise away from Afghanistan and toward the contemporary operating environment. The purpose quite simply, is to ensure that the British Army – and this Battalion – is prepared for ‘a war’, rather than ‘the war’, and has required a consolidated shift in our mindset.

The Battalion, particularly the Jocks, acquitted itself fantastically, demonstrating a drive and determination to succeed. As a result, the

challenging scenarios provided by the exercise conductors were met with calm heads and logical thinking, ensuring that we succeeded at every turn. The time away allowed us to focus on the basics of the skills which make us infantry soldiers; for many it was the first time since basic training that they had lived under a poncho, a result of our Afghan centric focus.

We took a thoroughly well deserved period of Summer Leave in July, which allowed all to reflect on what had already been a very busy and productive first half of 2013. We were fortunate that leave could be taken in conjunction with the school holidays, maximising the opportunity for all to spend time with family.

In July we were made aware of a potential fire-fighters strike, our first tasking as the UKCB. We were required to train 160 soldiers, capable of operating alongside civilian firemen in preparation for strikes likely to begin in September. Whilst for many this brought back memories of Green Goddesses from bygone days, the training which was provided was of a very high standard, providing those who completed the training with the requisite skills to support and work alongside the fire service.

In March of this year the Commanding Officer challenged the 4 Regular and 2 Reserve battalions to compete in a Regimental Highland Games, to be held here at Fort George. Fort George provides an unchallengeable backdrop for such an event, the ramparts providing a natural arena for the competitors. As well as the Regiment, it was of utmost importance to involve the Associations enabling us to maintain our strong links with our past and enhance those bonds for the future.

Our training in preparation for industrial action by the fire service meant that we had to conduct a significant degree of reorganisation



The Highland Games at Fort George brought together the battalions of the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

and distribution of tasks to ensure that we would not only perform well on our UKCB training but also make a success of the Games.

We were fortunate that the weather held out and all those who attended were provided with a fine spectacle of competition between the battalions. That 3 SCOTS won the event was but a bonus, on a day which demonstrated the strength of the Royal Regiment of Scotland and the wonderful camaraderie between the battalions and the Associations. It is hoped that the Games become a highlight of the Regimental calendar in the future, and the key to this will be the continued support of the antecedent Associations.

We are entering an exciting period over the coming months and into 2014. The Battalion will deploy in November to conduct a live firing training package over 2 weeks. The first week will be spent in Warcop conducting platoon level training, before we hop across the country to Otterburn. Here we intend to conduct Company level attacks which is a fantastic opportunity, usually only afforded to the Battalion when in Kenya or in preparation for operations.

Of note is the Duke of Rothesay's Patrol Competition, again diligently planned by WO1 (RSM) Shaw, at the end of November. The competition will take place over 5 days across the unforgiving terrain of Cape Wrath, which will provide a formidable task for all taking part. Once this is completed, we will turn our eyes to the prospect of an enjoyable festive period and some well earned Christmas leave in December.

We welcomed Captain Steven Lewis into the fold to take up the role of Detachment Commander in September. He had previously worked with the Queen's Royal Lancers in Catterick. We hope that he enjoys his time with us in the wilds of Fort George.

Much has taken place since our last entry into the Red Hackle as you will read – the next period provides plenty more opportunities for all personnel within the Battalion to get involved in some excellent training and we look forward to sharing this with the readership in due course.

THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee: Major J A Reid
 Mess Secretary: Captain T Towler
 Mess Treasurer: Captain M Dobson

With the Mess experiencing an unusual period of stability in terms of the officer plot, it is a rare treat to be able to report mainly on activities and achievements instead of arrivals and departures. Having said that, there have inevitably been some moves and the Mess has been enriched by the arrival of Gordon Adamson (OC Alpha (Grenadier) Company), John Bailey (OC Delta (Light) Company), Nigel Drapper (returned from his Regimental Signals Officer course) and David Hamilton (Second-in-Command Bravo Company) as well as the arrival of new platoon commanders Nick Coles and John Young. To make way, we have seen the departure of Rob Hedderwick, Alex Jackson and Christian Voce-Russell. But the news is overwhelmingly about camaraderie and enjoyment.

The officers have had the opportunity to command their troops in a number of 'Brecon-style' field exercises, an opportunity that was rare in the recent counterinsurgency era. With company exercises dotted all over Scotland in April and May of this year, followed soon after by the Battalion exercise on Salisbury Plain Training Area, it was very enjoyable to test the skills learnt so, so long ago in Wales. On the fifteenth of May the junior officers once again paid for the laxness of their Crimean predecessors by rising early, donning service dress and standing to attention to listen to the Crimean Long Reveille – a long held and always cheerfully observed Black Watch tradition.

As always, though, the bulk of Mess activities have been extra-curricular. In April, the Mess was visited by Generals Sir Alistair Irwin, Seymour Munro and Patrick Marriott for a very successful dinner which was swiftly followed by the Fathers' Dinner Night, during which various members were embarrassed by their patriarchs; but an enjoyable time was had by all. The evening was topped off by the presentation of a very handsome claret jug, given by the grandfather of Alex Phillips MC, to the Mess adorned with the message: *If you spill you will fill...*

In August, a number of members disappeared to Edinburgh where they spent the bulk of their summer entertaining the crowds at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Multiple fines were incurred for appearances in the press and only a very small number of girls were impressed by the swinging sporrans of Charlie (Fire Support) Company. Despite this it was a great experience for all involved.

This left those of us at the Fort with long days to fill. Fortunately the



Cpts Doughty and Seligman and Lt Smyth looking smart.



2Lt Fish explains the history of Crimean Long Reveille to the assembled officers.

good weather allowed for several games of cricket and croquet on the lawn, kayaking with the dolphins in the Firth and the prospect of the Northern Meeting Ball, to be held in the Fort for the first time since the 1990s, to look forward to. As expected, it was a fantastic party, with red jacket and kilt-clad officers impressing all with the proficiency of their reeling. What is certain is that it has been a thoroughly enjoyable summer at Fort George and the Mess has been busy with work and play.

Finally it would be very remiss not to mention a number of announcements that there have been over the last few months. Andy Richards and his wife Cath celebrated the birth of Daisy and we also celebrated the engagement of Alex Jackson to Charlotte Dabbs, of Craig Treasure to Holly Robinson and Christopher McRobbie to Gina McLellan.

With the Mess so full and so much on the horizon I have no doubt that the next issue of the Red Hackle will contain tales of an enjoyable autumn and of carols badly sung over the Christmas season. Until next time, toodle pip!

WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

PMC: WO2 Beaton
 PEC: Sergeant Nichol
 Property: Colour Sergeant Mair
 Messing: Sergeant Primrose
 Treasurer: Sergeant Crawford

Since our last submission for The Red Hackle, the pace of life has meant that as a Mess, we have not been together much in the past 6 months as the Battalion has been spread to the four winds with dif-



WO2 'The General' Tollan looking anything but cool at the Mess Fest.



Tea and toast regulars.

ferent tasks ranging from the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo Op FODIENT and A Company having a slightly different training and leave pattern from the rest of the Battalion and WO2 Allan Dunn always on the golf course! The Mess itself has had a refit of carpets and Balhousie Castle kindly donated new display cabinets which have certainly brightened up the place. Despite all the comings and goings, we were able to hold our Summer Mess event and this year, it was the theme of "MessFest 13" and led by Colour Sergeant Taylor who gives us his account below:

Mess Fest 13

When given the task of being the PMC for the Summer Ball 2013, I thought that it would be a piece of cake but how wrong I was! Firstly, I thought of what the theme would be and how I would keep people entertained. Then, during a drunken conversation with CSgt Ross McBride and his wife Sandie at CSgt Scott Mitchell's wedding, we hatched a plan to hold a summer festival in the Fort – and the idea of "Mess Fest 13" was born.

I set about organising the event by hiring three, day time stage acts: The Robbie Williams' tribute act, a one man band and a two piece folk band called "The Mad Ferrets". They were all exceptional acts and everyone enjoyed the different types of music provided throughout the day.

The Festival opened its gates at 1400hrs with a huge cheer from the crowd, who turned up before the stated time in the hope of starting the first ever open air gig to be held in our prestigious Fort George home and they didn't stop rocking until the last transport at 0100hrs the next morning.

The catering tents had a fish and chip shop that even had jars of pickles and muscles as you would expect from your routine chippy in the high street. There were also burger bars and cake stalls to keep the ladies happy. WO2 Elliot Clutton and his staff must be praised for the superb food served throughout the day. Well done and thank you.

I would like to say a big thank you to both CSgt Ross McBride and his wife, Sandie who worked as tirelessly as Bob Geldolf during Live Aid to ensure that the day ran smoothly. It was a great occasion with some "festival goers" even dressing up for the occasion which added to the atmosphere. Hopefully the pictures will do this event some justice!

Comings and Goings and Celebrations

There has inevitably, been a big change of personalities in the Mess with people leaving and returning, notably WO2 Stephen McSeveney who has returned. He appears to have found the pace of life too much with 6 SCOTS and asked for an early return to unit! You will be reassured to know that he has now made a full recovery from his experience! We would also like to welcome back the following: WO2 McMillan (AQMS) from 32 Sig Regt, SSgt Smith from 12 Log Sp Regt, RLC, SSgt Downie from AFCO Aberdeen, CSgt Hannah from RMAS, CSgt Carlisle from RMAS, Sgt Robb from 5 SCOTS, Sgt Copeland from AFC (H), Sgt Thomson from 4 SCOTS and Sgt Dunn from SRTT. The RSM would also like to welcome our new Mess Manageress, "Livvy" who has already made an impression in her first few months, as we have seen more of her than we ever did of Sgt Davie Muirhead for the 3 or so years he was in post!

Celebrations are great and there have been a number of promotions within the Mess of late. Congratulations must go to the following people who have been selected for promotion: WO2 Wotherspoon to WO1, CSgt Anderson to WO2, SSgt Marshall to WO2, Sgt Copeland to CSgt and Sgt Moodie to SSgt. There have also been a number of births and the Mess would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the following on their increasing families: CSgt Mair and Gemma and the birth of their daughter Ava, Sgt Walker and Emma on the birth of their daughter Indi, Sgt Bruce and Vicki on the birth of their son Dwayne, Sgt Young and Sammi on the birth of their daughter Layla and Sgt Porter and his wife on the birth of his daughter Emily.

The Mess has also inevitably had to say farewell to a number of members whether through promotion, posting, completion of their service or the recent round of redundancies. The Mess would like to take this opportunity to say farewell to the following: WO2 Wotherspoon), WO2 Wilson, WO2 Gibson, CSgt Braid, SSgt Marshall, Sgt Anderson, Sgt Porter, Sgt Winton, Sgt Pow, Sgt Muncie, Sgt Muirhead, Sgt Walker, Sgt McKeown, Sgt Cunningham and Sgt Leslie. We wish you all the very best and you are welcome back whenever you wish.

With all the changes taking place, it was about time that the Mess Committee members also changed and we have recently completed this. The RSM would like to take this opportunity to thank the old committee for all their hard work over the past 6 months and looks forward to seeing whether the new committee will be any better.

The Future

As we start to move into the back end of 2013, we have a lot of events planned for the latter part of the year, such as the St Andrews Ball, Christmas function and Burns Night, although the RSM is still unsure if the location for the Burns Night will be Fort George as the Battalion may well be out of station at the time. You will be reassured to know however, that auditions, rehearsals and the "volun-told" are dusting off the poems already!

CORPORALS' MESS

PMC:	Corporal Smith
PEC:	Corporal Wishart
Treasurer:	Corporal Steele
Property:	Corporal Harris

The Corporals' Mess has continued to grow in strength under the direction of the PMC. The Mess as a whole has continued to improve our own environment with the implementation of a more robust duty barman rotation and the introduction of tea and toast being available on a regular basis for which there has been good representation. The Corporals' Mess has also taken the opportunity to allow others to 'lease' our premises to be used to host events for such things as Company smokers and most recently, after match drinks for the Battalion Rugby team.

The year has been dominated by a number of successful events. Significantly but not covered in the last submission, the Corporals Mess Burns' Night was held in the cookhouse on the 1st and 2nd of February 2013 which for some is the highlight of the calendar year. A fantastic evening, it kicked off with drinks in the Mess, creating the right atmosphere for all involved – and perhaps settling the nerves of many of the artists too! The Mess members that were hosting the Warrant Officers thought they were pop stars when they all turned up in a big fancy limo (check them out!). It is a pity they never had the wages to match their arrival judging by their poor performance at the bar!

The evening got under way with Corporal McIntyre doing a fantastic performance of "The Immortal Memory" which certainly set the tone



WO2 (CSM) Dunn, WO2 (CSM) Fraser and Cpl Davies enjoying the Cpls Mess Burns evening 2013.

for the remainder of the night. The artists that were reciting various poems did a great job, making the Corporals' Mess proud, a sentiment echoed by the guests. The remainder of the evening was a great success due to the combined efforts from all members of the Corporals' Mess and this was reinforced when everyone returned to the Mess for a knees up with a local ceilidh band which of course carried on into the wee' small hours! Overall, the night was a fantastic occasion and served as a reminder to the rest of the Battalion of the ethos and camaraderie within the Corporals' Mess.

Returning on Saturday night, gave the Mess Members and their guests a chance to enjoy the evening with wives and girlfriends. During the evening we were entertained by a ceilidh band and a DJ and the night proved to be another roaring success and so now we all look forward to the Burns Supper 2014; it certainly has a lot to live up too.

The Summer Ball 2013 was held on the 5th of July with Lance Corporal "Q" and Corporal Vaniqi taking the lead on organising the function. A Hawaiian theme was deemed to be the flavour of the night, with all Mess Members taking full advantage of this and Timmy Mallet sunglasses and garish shirts were the order of the day. Lance Corporal Grandison struggled to get a shirt for the evening, and WO2 (CSM) Beaton stepped in at the last minute and squared him away with his best attire!

Everything went according to plan but there was some concern about the ladies gifts because we had to order them all the way from Fiji, and it took two months. However they did arrive – on the day of the event and there was a huge sigh of relief all round!

The party kicked off in style with a typical Fijian war dance which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. This was swiftly followed by a gondola dance around the hall and the dance floor was overcrowded with people dancing away including the RSM who then informed me that he was only staying until 2200hrs – but instead he stayed until we closed the function at 0100 hrs! Stating a falsehood indeed! A break in proceedings allowed the food to be served which was excellent and kept to the theme of the night – BBQ and a pig spit roast. This allowed numerous stomachs to be lined and ensured the guests were ready for round two!

Overall, the function was a roaring success with all guests clearly in the party mood. Entertainment was provided by local DJ "Geordie" and a Fijian war dance group. The night culminated with a live band from Dunfermline; the dance floor was by now in full swing with plenty of dubious dancing on show! The function ended at 0100 hrs and as always, some stragglers had to be coerced to their beds. It was a fantastic night and now the new Mess Committee has it all to do next year – something which we are all looking forward to!

Recently, members of the Mess attending external courses have had a good show. Representation in such courses as the Section Commanders Battle Course in Brecon with the Junior Non Commissioned Officers within the Battalion taking the top positions. Most notably, Lance Corporal Ure achieving an Instructors recommendation on the tactics phase. We have also been privileged to receive Lt Gen (Retd) Sir Alistair Irwin, KCB, CBE who visited the Battalion in order to open the new, re-vamped Red Hackle Club. He was kind enough at the same time to present members of this Mess with Long Service and Good Conduct Medals.

Future functions for the Mess will see us dining out some of our members who have departed recently after 22 years loyal service. This will also provide an opportunity to have a final knees-up and say a hearty farewell to those from the Mess who will also be departing as a result of the Tranche 3 Redundancy.

By the time this article is printed within the Red Hackle, the current committee members will have recently changed over. The RSM would like to take this opportunity to thank the current committee for all their hard work over the past 6 months and looks forward to working with the new one.

A (GRENADIER) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major G Adamson
Second-in-Command:	Captain C McRobbie
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 J Fraser
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Carlisle
Officer Commanding 1 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant J Young
1 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant A Welshman
Officer Commanding 2 Platoon:	Lieutenant Z Smyth
2 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant C Sharp MC
Officer Commanding Machine Gun Platoon:	Second Lieutenant J Fish
Machine Gun Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Pratt

Collective Training

Following on from the Battalion's Public Order training and Ex HICKORY HACKLE earlier in the year, which had been aimed at preparing us for our current role as the United Kingdom Contingency Battalion (UKCB), this Company along with the Battalion, began to focus on preparing to get back to more conventional soldiering or what has been officially called "the return to contingency"; soldiering in the classic sense. The capstone event was to be Ex WESSEX THUNDER, or TESEX in old money, which required a shift from the counter-insurgency skills that the Battalion has been engaged in over the past ten years. Each Company would be tested on everything from platoon attacks and recon patrols to fighting in woods and forests (FIWAF) and operations in built up areas (OBUA). Longer term, the aim is to re-instil an understanding from the youngest Jock up, that we are now operating in the contingent environment where we have to be adaptable for "a war, not the war".

This process is ongoing but it 'began' by ensuring that each Company could achieve Collective Training Competency Level 1 (CTC1). Each had specific exercises in different locations in order to achieve this but there is a fairly tried and tested "list" by which Companies can be assessed as having reached this basic start state. The first step to this all would be low level training as platoons prior to the various company level CTC1 exercises. Alpha (Grenadier) Company, being keen to focus on the basic skills and drills, decided to split Ex BASIC GRENADIER between RAF Kinloss and Training Area 3, just East of the Fort George range complex. The two rifle platoons would rotate between the two training areas while our new addition of the Fire Support Group (FSG) now an integral Company asset, would move with 1 (Senior Highland) Platoon.

As 2 Platoon 'The Doomers' began in Kinloss, they were tasked with setting up a standard platoon harbour and establishing basic routine before being tasked with patrols and eventually our first FIWAF clearance exercise. Although, inevitably, the plan did not survive contact and we were constantly harassed by those unwilling to stay dead, the platoon systematically cleared its objective in what had been its first, tested, full scale attack of the Exercise. For the next day or so we were kept constantly busy having to deal with probing attacks and receiving orders. Our next task was to be an Advance to Contact through a vast swathe of the area surrounding the airfield and covering all manner of terrain. Not only would this test our basic soldiering skills, but also the Casevac chain and our means of communication in dense areas of woodland and scrub. Nonetheless, we emerged at the other end victorious and ready to move back to Area 3 where we would cover individual skills in more depth having learned from our experiences at Kinloss.

Once in the all too familiar Area 3, we established our harbour and set about individual, pairs and fire team attack lanes in order to assess and analyse the Platoon's skills in depth. At night, junior NCOs were tasked with reconnaissance while the Jocks were reintroduced to harbour routine and just how much Sgt Sharp values the one-way system on a track plan – a mistake not soon forgotten! By the end of the week Alpha (Grenadier) Coy had had the chance to look in depth at where it felt work was required or what topics had been neglected in the



WO2 (CSM) Fraser pictured during field training.



Adventurous Training in Wales.



Cpl Graham senses the enemy.



2Lt Smyth passing on his advice to GOC 3(UK) Div.

HERRICK-centric mindset of the past ten years and ensure that it was in good order to operate as a conventional Rifle Company when called upon for Ex WESSEX THUNDER.

Bravo Company meanwhile were taking advantage of the battalion's unique location this far north in the Highlands by carrying out their Company CTC 1 exercise on Ben Wyvis Estate – at the end of April. The exercise was designed to test the thorough application of battle procedure and integration of Battle Group assets in a company context, giving the Company the use of Snipers and the Recce platoon. This was also the first exercise they have conducted in line with the Army 2020 restructuring, allowing them also, an integral FSG Platoon.

The exercise began with the usual coach journey up the A9 towards Dingwall and everyone's eyes were pressed to the glass to keep tabs on the weather (which at this point was relatively mild) thereby filling the troops with hope for the rest of the week. Sure enough, in true Scottish style the heavens opened as soon as the Company were on the area, leading to too many less-than-desirable water features in the harbour area; this was to be one of the recurring themes of the exercise.

On arrival the platoon's set about establishing themselves and getting used to operating with the FSG, using the increased firepower and range they can bring to bear to our advantage whilst static. The Recce and Snipers were deployed forward to locate the enemy and the Company started preparing for their first actions of the exercise; section level recce patrols. 5 Platoon were given the earlier time slot to investigate a likely enemy presence by night, while 7 Platoon were to investigate another, however the elements closed in and after some close calls it was decided to reign in the activities until either the weather calmed down or more suitable routes through the terrain could be found.

Bravo Company adapted from here and continued to practice all that they had set out to simply in a different location building up to the final attack, on an identified enemy position. The Recce Platoon and snipers came back to the Company's location having spent several horrid nights

out in the wild and offered different options for the attack before then leading the way, under the cover of darkness, to the forming up point. The situation was rather surreal as there was B Company formed up in the dark awaiting a dawn attack and yet across the Loch there was a gamekeepers lodge with people sleeping soundly in it completely unaware of the impending attack!

The company advanced, 7 Platoon in the lead, under the cover of mortar fire and snipers while making best use of the integral FSG who were deployed to a flank, giving suppressive machine gun fire for the last stretch of the move. 7 Platoon broke into the enemy camp, clearing all buildings, before allowing 5 Platoon to echelon through and clear the woodland to the West. In an almost poetic gesture, the weather lifted and the sun came up allowing everyone to dry out prior to moving back through the area to the awaiting coaches. The exercise will always be remembered for the horrendous weather and awkward terrain but the Company managed to achieve all they set out to with the Jocks performing admirably and much learnt as the Company readjusted to conventional soldiering.

Meanwhile Delta (Light) Company, keen for a challenge, had made their way North (way North) to Cape Wrath, a spectacular training area at the very North-Western tip of Scotland, for Exercise GOLDEN WRATH. To put it into context somewhat, this is a part of the country so desolate it is usually reserved for bombing runs or ship-to-shore firing. As a result, the area is devoid of trees or cover of any kind, and as such the personal admin, not to mention patience and grit, of each Jock would be fully tested.

Happily, the weather was largely kind and allowed the Company to make best use of the spectacular hills. The terrain, with its lack of cover and sheer slopes, made for very challenging attacks, and a wide spectrum of conventional platoon level operations was tested. Every serial was met with great enthusiasm by Jocks, NCOs and officers alike, who all relished the opportunity to polish skills learnt long ago at both Brecon and Catterick. It was also a first chance to shake out and put the Company through its paces in front of the new commander, Major John Bailey. The exercise ended in classic British Army fashion: with a dawn attack (in which overwhelming victory was achieved) and a company photo opportunity. Great satisfaction and training benefit was derived by all, and plans are already afoot for GOLDEN WRATH 2014.

Life within the Company

Clearly all of this training has been punctuated by the myriad other tasks that fill Battalion life. Grenadiers have been involved in recruiting, support to ACF and OTC units, been the lead UK Contingency Company, adventure training, celebrating Ticonderoga Day and completing our annual training tests through the medium of a pursuit exercise.

The variety has not only been activity based; the Company has seen a large number of personalities change over. Although too many to mention, a few stand out: The MTO has now been dragged kicking and screaming out of the Fort and back up to the MT Platoon. Whilst his resistance to leaving the mighty Grenadiers was understandable, not having to manage two jobs means that his hair is looking distinctly less grey (either that or some weapons-grade Just for Men has been involved!). On a serious note, I could not have wished for a better handover and I am sure that every Grenadier would extend the same level of thanks to Captain MacKenzie for his efforts whilst in command.

Lieutenant Voce Russell and Corporals Mackie, Culligan, Davies and Palmer have been posted to various training establishments and Lance Corporal Wilkie has gone recruiting. But of all the farewells, none has been more protracted than that of the almost perpetual farewell that we found ourselves saying to Corporal Graham during Ex WESSEX THUNDER. His ability to die within the first 30 seconds of almost every phase of the exercise made his zap number notorious on the net and a Section Commander out of Private Frearson. In fact Corporal Graham's willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice was so prolific that Private Frearson gained enough experience to justify his promotion to Lance Corporal shortly after the end of the exercise.

Other changes in the "Bond Department" saw Capain Russell Doughty take over as the FSG Platoon Commander from Captain Andrew Halliday. Captain Halliday's loss was hard felt by the FSG. His skills in camouflage and concealment are so accomplished that nobody has seen him in or out of work since the last edition of the Red Hackle. Captain Doughty clearly found the exercise traumatic and this, coupled with the abrupt end to his long-term "bromance" with Lieutenant Voce-Russell due to the latter's posting, meant that he opted for voluntary redundancy... and a proper girlfriend. We wish

them both the very best of luck. Second Lieutenant's Young and Fish arrive in the Company to take over 1 (Senior Highland) and 3 (MG) Platoon respectively.

The position of Alpha (Grenadier) Company Quartermaster Sergeant has proved a difficult one to fill. Colour Sergeant Anderson has moved on to CSM Delta (Light) Company and this left a gap that was ably filled by CSgt Mitchell from the FSG until he was posted back to the newly reformed Anti-Tank Platoon within Charlie (FSp) Company. At the time of writing Colour Sergeant Carlisle has taken over the role having been posted in from Sandhurst and assures me that he intends to stay... thank goodness for Corporal Brown!

In between all this hive of activity the soldiers have still found time to remain busy at home. The Company wishes to congratulate CSgt Mitchell on his marriage to Anastasia and thank her for not locking him up on Alcatraz. The Company also welcomes the pitter patter of children's feet and wish LCpl Frearson; Ptes Meechan and Chamberlain all the best in trying to get some sleep during their time at home!

BRAVO COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major J A Reid
Second-in-Command:	Lieutenant D Hamilton
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 M J Fairweather
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant C Weir
5 Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant A Deck
5 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant B A Young
6 (Machine Gun) Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant R M J Martin
6 (Machine Gun) Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant L Walker/ Sergeant M Robb
7 Platoon Commander:	Lieutenant I Walker
7 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant D Bruce

United Kingdom Contingency Battalion

Regular readers of the Red Hackle may be familiar with the term United Kingdom Contingency Battalion (UKCB). The UKCB is a relatively new capability whereby Defence has tasked the Army to hold a unit at readiness to support pre-planned and short notice operations in support of the civil authorities within the United Kingdom.

The Battalion has been on this commitment since April 2013 and will relinquish this role at the end of October 2013 and has been held at short notice throughout this period. The commitment brings with it a wide range of potential tasks but very few specifics. Likely tasks may be to provide support to other Government Departments for natural or man made disasters or indeed to provide support during periods of disruption caused by industrial action. There is always a risk, however remote of unforeseen 'black swan events' such as Lockerbie. We would have very little part to play during the early stages following an incident but as the UKCB we may be one of the first units to get called upon to assist with the aftermath. Let's hope and pray it is a long time before we see a repeat of anything on that scale.

In spite of such a wide remit, planning guidance has allowed the Battalion to construct meaningful training over the period so that we could achieve and sustain the standard required. That standard would hopefully be recognised by most; a trained Infantry Battalion. While it sounds simple, after a decade of training specifically for Iraq and Afghanistan a degree of conceptual study was needed to re-orientate all ranks and imbue them with the flexibility of mind that is essential when there are fewer certainties, be they short term and pertinent to our current commitment or longer term and in the world at large.

A (Grenadier) Company will elaborate on the period given over to Company level training in April and May while D (Light) Company will cover the Battalion Field Training Exercise (FTX) on Salisbury Plain Training Area in June. Conducting a full summer training programme while being held at readiness has created additional planning considerations, as well as constraints, that on one level are an additional burden, however it has brought emergent benefits as well. Indeed it has been the G4 personnel who have had the most to consider. Bravo Company were the Lead Company Group (LCG) for UKCB over the period of the FTX and had to keep our standby equipment to hand as well as all that we required to deploy for a field exercise on Salisbury Plain. The CQMS's team managed admirably under the watchful eye of Colour Sergeant Weir and being at readiness did force the company to practise some good old battle procedure not least of observing the principle of 'anticipation at all levels'.

The additional planning required has brought out many lessons for the future. One has been to remind everyone to 'fight light' and to



7 Platoon during fire training.



Drying off after fire fighting training.



Ptes Turner and Dougall during Machine gun Cadre.



MG Cadre – An unlikely Rambo.

ensure we are as prepared as possible without hoarding too much for 'just in case', whether it is in the webbing pouch or in the OC's battle box. Gone is boot polish and ten packets of cigarettes from one, and filter coffee and hip flask from the other. I shall leave the reader to decide which was in which...

Bravo Company and the Dutch

In addition to the exercises covered elsewhere, Bravo Company were in the Cairngorms above Kinlochleven on a joint exercise with the Dutch Army during a very wet and cold week in early April. The scenario saw soldiers from Bravo Company providing a presence at a number of key points across the training area and the Dutch were to covertly observe and reconnoitre over a number of days. On orders, Bravo Company

were to fall back across the mountains to pre-determined positions with the Dutch forces in pursuit. A number of ambushes and deliberate attacks later and the tables were to turn and Bravo Company was to become a hunter force with the aim of tracking down and capturing the Dutch as they conducted a tactical extraction. That was the plan anyway.

Even the hastiest look at a map showed that this was going to be a difficult exercise. The blurring of contour lines into a pink, solid mass suggested any movement was going to be tough and communications difficult at best. On the morning of the deployment Bravo Company dropped off at two separate locations; 5 Platoon to the South of the area and 7 Platoon to the North. From there the platoons tabbed to harbour areas that were to be their home for the next few days. Although the going was relatively slow due to the terrain, 5 Platoon had

a straight forward insertion march and soon arrived at their destination and settled into a routine. To the North, 7 Platoon had more difficulty. On the move onto the area, sodden with rain and under the weight of the vehicles, a track and bridge sustained damage and caused one of the trucks to become stranded and block the way. The resulting recovery took 7 Platoon and the REME some time to complete and by the time they reached their home for the night they were soaked through and exhausted. Commanders learnt a lasting lesson that day, not to take a six tonne truck over a one tonne bridge!

The next two days saw the Company conducting patrols around the training area, ever on the look out for our Dutch enemy. The weather was miserable with low temperatures, driving rain and gale force winds over the 48 hour period. When the order came through for a move East over the mountains to form a hasty defensive line the men ran into difficulties and sustained two casualties with mild exposure. The Dutch were having their own problems with cases of exposure; the UK and Dutch Company Commanders took the decision to call an early end to the exercise on safety grounds.

A lot of lessons were learnt (or re-learned) by the British and Dutch alike. While a large number of soldiers from both forces could claim to be battle hardened against the enemy and climate of Afghanistan, neither force were as prepared for the rigours of Kinlochleven in April as they could have been. The final score was one – nil to Mother Nature on this occasion! Despite the Exercise having to be cut short, all soldiers returned to barracks safely and it proved to be a huge learning experience for all involved. The shared hardship no doubt contributed to a closer bond being forged with our Dutch allies.

Routine Notices

Moving onto domestic issues, we welcome a number of new arrivals since our last journal. Some old, others not so! As part of Army restructuring the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 5th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland will become Balaklava Company. The restructuring has resulted in a number of our fellow Jocks making the move North to join the Battalion. Lieutenant David Hamilton was in the vanguard, arriving as Company Second-in-Command but we also welcome Sergeant Robb, Corporal Fay, Lance Corporal Bell and Privates Austin, Leith, Graham, and Minta Junior.

Even younger new arrivals were celebrated by a number of men in the Company over the past few months. Sergeant Brian Young and his wife Tammy-Joe welcomed their fourth child Layla; Sergeant Lee Walker and Emma welcomed their son Indie, while Sergeant Duncan Bruce and his wife Vicki became proud parents to baby Dwayne. Private Ebrima Jammeh and his wife Jorr were blessed with their daughter Mariam while Private Kachimanga and Sarah celebrated the arrival of daughter Nowatah. Last but by no means least, Private Jackson and Jodie moved to Inverness and had baby Jayden just a week or so later. Congratulations to them all. Finally Private Kah and Maimuna tied the knot over the summer and we wish them the very best of luck for their future together.

As a result of success on the Section Commanders' Battle Course, promotion beckoned and our congratulations go to newly promoted Corporals Purre and Connor. We also welcome a new generation to the Corporals' Mess; Lance Corporals Stevenson, Wallace and Austin who all promoted after completion of the Infantry Section Second-in-Command course. We wish them all the best of luck and give them our support as they transition from private soldiers to junior commanders.

CHARLIE (FIRE SUPPORT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding and Pipe President:	Major C M B Broadbent
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 (CSM) Beaton
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant McCulloch/ Colour Sergeant Hannah
Reconnaissance Platoon Commander:	Captain T Towler
Reconnaissance Platoon Second in Command:	Colour Sergeant Taylor
Reconnaissance Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Pow
Anti Tank Platoon Commander:	Gapped
Anti Tank Platoon Second in Command/ CQMS:	Colour Sergeant Mitchell
Anti Tank Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant Brady

The period covered by this contribution to the "Red Hackle" has seen the platoons within this Company involved in a wide range of activities from supporting the Rifle Companies with their integrated training



Members of the Tattoo Guard of Honour are interrogated by the Edinburgh GSM and Pte Pike from Dad's Army.



Pte Murdoch receiving his Class 3 Pipers Certificate from the Pipe President.



Tattoo Arena Party troops relaxing.

requirements, to focusing on developing their core specialist skills, to Community Engagement and to being front and centre at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. We have now moved to implement the new Army 2020 structure having seen the Fire Support Group move to provide integral Machine Gun Platoons within the Rifle Companies and within our own ranks, the reintroduction of the Anti-Tank Platoon and the Assault Pioneer Platoon (covered by the Pipes and Drums). With so much diverse activity it has been fast and furious. You will read about the separate platoons and their specific activities in the entries which follow this overview.

As a Company we are keen to foster and build relations where we can and so were delighted when we had the opportunity to host members of the Fife Branch of the Black Watch Association on a long planned visit to Fort George. Receiving a tour of the Mortar, Sniper and CIS platoon's they also had a personal performance from the Pipes



The Guard of Honour at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

and Drums and were hosted by the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. It was great to meet, chat and exchange banter with them – we must have made a good impression as the soldiers were complimented as being 'just as good as they were back in our day' – praise indeed from the old and bold! We were delighted then, when an invitation was made for the Company to join them at their 'Crossing of the Rhine' dinner which proved a wonderful evening for those able to attend. We very much hope that we will be hosting them again soon. We also built upon our maritime links as we hosted a number of crew from our affiliated ship, HMS MONTROSE. They seemed to have a fantastic time getting involved with the infantry training laid on for them in the field, on the ranges and experiencing life in the Fort. I'm sure they all left contemplating whether they would rather "jump ship" to 3 SCOTS!

As the summer approached there was significant training required to prepare each of the platoons for deployment on Ex WESSEX THUNDER which will be explained in more detail elsewhere. It was a disjointed period which saw both the OC and CSM lost to (perhaps 'in'?) Battle Group Headquarters training, the platoons squeezing extra range and training time along with trying to achieve the mandatory training requirements. The Company did extremely well within the Section SAAM competition, beating the Rifle Companies to win across the board – of particular note was CSgt McCulloch's CQMS team winning the March and Shoot!

During Ex WESSEX THUNDER, the Company switched seamlessly into their roles of providing specialist support whether that was through the provision of MFCs and mortar fire, the Recce leading troops in, the snipers causing havoc or the FSG providing the firepower. Consequently, it was a tired Charlie Company that headed towards a well-earned summer leave, allowing us to relax and prepare for the task we were to undertake immediately upon return.

On 28 July, the Company formed up at Redford Cavalry Barracks, Edinburgh which was to be our home for the next month. Despite the pull of manpower requirements to support other contingency tasks, we took on the mantle of the Tattoo Support Group (TSG) for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT) 2013. This is the second year in a row that 3 SCOTS have had the privilege of carrying out this task, leading on from Bravo Coy in 2012. This year's theme was 'Natural Scotland' with performers from New Zealand, South Korea, Mongolia and Mexico and as always, a strong representation of military music. Performing to 8,500 people each night really did bring home that this was the jewel in the crown event for the Edinburgh Festival and that this really was a unique experience. The Pipes and Drums as always were critically involved within the performance, but during their downtime, they were also practicing for and competing in, civilian Piping and Drumming competitions for which they have done very well and more is described in their report later. Suffice to say, practicing during the day, performing at night and performing on their days off, meant they did not have the time to be bored!

The Reconnaissance Platoon assumed the role of Guard of Honour led by Captain Tim Towler, Acting Captain Jamie Tait and Colour

Sergeant Taylor. Being the face of 3 SCOTS, the Royal Regiment of Scotland and the REMT every evening, they executed their duties with professionalism and perfection, receiving well deserved praise and the odd bottle of champagne! Corporal Millar, Lance Corporal Armstrong as door openers and Privates Pattie as Quaich holder, joined Major Broadbent in welcoming the salute taker onto the Esplanade each night. VIPs ranged from the Secretary of State for Defence to the new Chief of Defence Staff and from the Moderator of the Church of Scotland to the First Minister.

Not quite as glamorous but just as important was the Arena Party, made up of a composite team under the command of Sergeant Muncie whose role was to ensure the slick and speedy movement of kit, equipment and people and that it was all done at the right time and in the right place. Again, they were continually complimented as to the manner in which they conducted themselves and in the interaction they had with both the public and performers alike. More still were involved in the less glamorous yet equally essential role of Bus Escorts ensuring that the performers got from their excellent 'hotel' accommodation of Pollock Halls to the Edinburgh Castle Esplanade and back again – on time. Those working in the Ops Room were taken under the wing of Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Rupert Forrest and were not only responsible for ensuring the safety and security of the venue itself but also got to take charge of the CCTV cameras – and a considerable amount of Haribo!

We were also pleased to be able to support the return of the 'Glasgow Boys' for the second year. This is an intervention project from the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) of Police Scotland and championed by Brigadier (Retd) David Allfrey, which aims to give a selected group of young men from often very difficult and violent backgrounds, many of whom have offended, exposure to a different way of life. I was tasked with bringing them into the Company, where they lived and worked alongside the men and got involved in much of our ongoing military training for their interest. They were put to work as part of the Arena Party and it was not long before they and the Jocks were working closely together – at time it was hard to tell them apart! This experience has been hugely positive for the 'Glasgow Boys' and has imbued them with a considerable amount of self-confidence, self-respect, a small but honest wage, hard work, an amazing experience and exposure to a different way of life. In fact, of the seven on the programme, four have signed up to join the Battalion and one is seeking to pursue a career in the Army Reserve. Whilst I am sure there is an element of Stockholm Syndrome, we look forward to seeing how they progress! Whilst the project is in its infancy, given the success this year and in 2012 with Bravo Company, there is considerable headway being made for greater funding and the development of this project.

By the end of the run on 28 August, the Savages were ready to return to Fort George – being based in Edinburgh for a month during the Festival had taken its toll on both liver and bank balances! Being involved in the Tattoo was an excellent experience for all involved. Not only had the Company worked hard but we had also ensured that a considerable amount of low level training such as MATTS had been achieved.

Since our return from Edinburgh the Company has been focused upon continuing to develop our support weapon competencies and so the Cadre season has begun in earnest. Each platoon is involved in training which has been undertaken in Fort George, Tain, Barry Buddon and Warcop. With nearly the entire Company deployed, we can focus upon re-establishing the Anti-Tank Platoon under Colour Sergeant Mitchell and planning their Cadre for early 2014. With the Pipes and Drums having given up their FSG role, we are also focusing on their cadre which will take place near Weymouth (Company HQ will be seeing a lot of motorways shortly as we visit everyone).

Within such a large Company, there have been considerable movement. Whilst these will be addressed within the platoon articles, collectively Tranche 3 Redundancy has seen a number of individuals begin transition to civilian life and we wish them and their families all the very best for the future. As people leave, others arrive and the changes within 5 SCOTS have seen a number of personnel from Canterbury swell our ranks. They are all welcome. There have also been a number of marriages and births and our congratulations and best wishes go to them all.

So life in "The Savages" continues apace. We look forward to the challenges of the Cambrian Patrol, Field Firing, the Duke of Rothesay's Patrol Competition, further contingency training, further cadre and individual training courses, some adventurous training (walking along Hadrian's Wall) and on into 2014; there is much truth in the old adage that 'a rolling stone gathers no moss'.

THE RECONNAISSANCE PLATOON

The Reconnaissance Platoon has had a rather diverse existence since the last submission. From 'starring' in a television program about obesity (not focused on us!), to the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT), not without a few classic reconnaissance tasks along the way, the platoon has had to adapt quickly to a number of new challenges. As the Army continues to change and reduce in size, so must the platoon change and adapt. Under Army 2020 (A2020) we will decrease from thirty two to twenty four; and it appears all individuals must be as talented in front of the cameras as they are at hiding from them in the more conventional role!

The unconventional reconnaissance tasks have been great training but also great fun. The platoon's small role in the BBC's *Scotland the Fat* (broadcast on BBC Scotland) was filmed in Fort George and saw the Jocks discussing their opinions on nutrition and exercise, before conducting a battlefield exercise with camera crews keenly following. The inevitable shouts of 'cut' and 'could we do that again, but this time...' were certainly different; but everyone seemed to have fun, including the presenter who was efficiently CASEVACed by the Jocks.



CSgt Taylor having his Hollywood moment on "Scotland the Fat".

More recently, the platoon had the honour of forming this year's Guard of Honour at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT). This saw the Jocks enjoying a month in the vibrant city of Edinburgh. With the Edinburgh Festival in full swing and the city buzzing with comedy, theatre and bizarre street acts, the platoon fitted in rather well! Their performance throughout was superb and as ever they worked hard and took great pride in their appearance; they even managed to win a few bottles of champagne off the Director of the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming, Major Stevie Small, which brought great delight!! The international cast was fantastic to work with and I know that all the Jocks enjoyed meeting such a range of talented performers, some more than others!

Back in reconnaissance reality, the Platoon has deployed to support the Rifle Companies in their CT 1 level exercises, completed our own training packages and deployed on Exercise WESSEX THUNDER. All of the exercises and training have varied and we even managed to squeeze in a barbeque on the banks of Loch Glass during one exercise to reward the Jocks for their hard work. We were also very fortunate to complete a specialist Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) exercise along with the Snipers on Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA). The exercise was really well resourced and proved to be a great opportunity to trial new approaches before returning to join the battalion for the main field training exercise (FTX). Once again, the Jocks proved themselves to be professional in their



Recce Pl winning section.

approach and tenacious in their execution; they even managed to enjoy themselves along the way!

Sadly we must say farewell to a number of the Platoon's greatest characters. Sergeant Pow, Lance Corporals Wood and Goldsworthy and Private Legge are all leaving the Army and are heading off to new challenges; we wish them the very best of luck in their new endeavours. The platoon will miss them all as we move forward into the final part of 2013. As we look forward, next on the calendar are the Cambrian Patrol in Wales and the Light Reconnaissance Patrolman's Cadre (LRPC) which will see the platoon deploy for six weeks conducting reconnaissance training and live firing. As the end of the year approaches it appears that the pace of life will continue to increase and it is exciting to think of all the challenges that lie in wait. One thing is for sure, we will have a well trained, experienced and prepared Reconnaissance Platoon to meet these challenges.

SNIPER PLATOON

The Sniper Platoon has remained busy and has undergone some intense training and re-OrBating during this period. We have undertaken some great training with the Platoon being split into two section groups in order to support Rifle Company training before earning our crust during Exercise WESSEX THUNDER.

As part of our support to the Rifle Companies – which also allowed us to gain much valuable training, Corporal Hattan and his section ended up supporting B Company during their deployment to Ben Wyvis where he and his section performed well, working hard in some very challenging weather conditions. It would be fair to say that the exercise proved to be somewhat of a “Man” test for all concerned! Corporal Riddock on the other hand, took his section off to Cape Wrath with D Company which was altogether a much more enjoyable affair, with a week of almost perfect sunshine! Ultimately, the exercises gave the Rifle Company commanders the opportunity to “extend their train sets” a little by having both snipers and recce integrated within their own Company Groups and both sections were able to conduct some good section level training which allowed them to hone their collective skills in preparation for Exercise WESSEX THUNDER.

Having enjoyed the delights of training in the Highlands, the Platoon deployed with the Battalion onto Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) for Exercise WESSEX THUNDER albeit one man down. I am sure you will read many reports about this exercise but it genuinely proved to be an enjoyable experience from the Sniper Platoon perspective, with the initial two weeks focussing solely on “ISTAR group” training in conjunction with the Recce Platoon. The point of this training was to ensure that the two platoons could work together to support the Battle Group plan where necessary and as tasked. Once into the field training exercise (FTX) phase, the Platoon gave a strong display of its abilities throughout. At one stage, due to extremely high casualties within the Companies, the Sniper Platoon became the break in force for the assault onto the penultimate objective, something we rarely get to do as snipers but demonstrated our flexibility and adaptability – key qualities required of a sniper anyway. This did raise some eyebrows from the Directing Staff who unfortunately decided to kill off the majority of the Platoon with their God guns! Overall, the training was invaluable in terms of allowing the platoon a run out and particularly as the more junior members of the platoon could see how the Sniper Platoon fits in as part of a wider BG plan as well as giving excellent opportunities for soldiers to advise senior officers.

Since returning from some very well earned summer leave to some form of normal routine within Fort George, the highlight of the summer has been taking part in the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT). The Platoon was tasked to provide the Arena Party which was a task welcomed by all. This meant that every man was crucial to the smooth running of each performance. After some initial (and inevitable) teething problems which of note involved an angry South Korean and his drum rolling down the esplanade. Whilst it was fortunate for all involved that the language barrier was in place for the sake of international relations, everything ran smoothly after this! The REMT was quite an experience as was the delights of Edinburgh during the festival and so we all returned to the Fort, full of memories but empty in the wallet!

The focus for the Platoon has now switched to preparing and executing the next Sniper Cadre and the subsequent training events in the coming months. Whilst we are a small specialised platoon, we may be able to have a further 2 personnel “badged” off this current Cadre and for the others, it will be setting them up for success in the course booked for October and January at the Sniper School.



Pte Mconnell struggling under LCpl Cruickshanks weight.



Sniper Cadre under indirect fire on the beach at Ardersier.

As always, there is a turnover of personnel and it is with great sadness that leaving the Platoon for pastures new are Sergeant Muncie who is off to explore the civilian world having been successful in his selection for Tranche 3 Redundancy. Lance Corporal Power also leaves us but to take up a post within Delta Company. We wish them well. There are a few new arrivals to the platoon in the shape of Sergeant Gary Dunn and Lance Corporal Gary Blane, both having arrived from 5 SCOTS and who are keen to begin the new challenge of being within the 3 SCOTS Sniper Platoon. We also welcome back Corporal Pete Kane after his two year stint as an instructor at ITC Catterick. Now that we have some top notch chiefs in the Platoon, we look forward to receiving some new indians in the upcoming months from the Rifle Companies in order to continue the tradition of sniping within the Battalion!

PIPES AND DRUMS

After our return from the USA earlier in the year, we were hoping for some peace and quiet and a welcome period of leave on our return gave us a false sense of security. It actually provided the Pipes and Drums with little preparation for what has proven to be an exceptionally varied and busy half of the year – there has been no let up!

As always, we are not only in high demand for our Piping, Drumming and Dancing skills but also for our primary field soldiering too. Consequently, we have often found ourselves receiving last minute and interesting requests or tasks. Pipers have been promoting 3 SCOTS all over the country – and the world – to play at various engagements; Lance Corporal (now Corporal) Muir and Private McDonald found themselves jetsetting off to play for the British Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Whilst the Defence Attache and staff at the Embassy were extremely complimentary of their performances, it is still to this day, a secret as to what went on during that week's trip – but one day the truth will come out! Pte Moir ended up in the more exotic location of Ullapool but for a far more honourable purpose which was to play for the unveiling of The Arctic Star Association monument.

As alluded to, we are not just musicians but also trained soldiers



The drummers as smart as ever.



Pte Craig relaxing before performing at the Tattoo.



Cpls Jose and Pratt showing off their dancing prowess.



The Pipe Major performing in the Tattoo.



Feather Bonnets and Drums.

(currently working as a Fire Support Group (FSG)). In addition to our musical commitments we have also been participating in the full training package which culminated in beat up exercises and deployment for several weeks on Ex WESSEX STORM as part of the FSG – as well as disappearing to conduct Piping and Drumming commitments which led to a balancing act of turning our attention between heavy weapons and bagpipes and drums. For example, within a 24 hour period the platoon went from sitting in an FUP (or assaulting houses if you were with the ever so keen and impatient Drum Major!), to performing a Beating Retreat at the opening of the Black Watch Museum at Balhousie Castle. Yet again the Pipes and Drums demonstrated their professionalism and flexibility.

Before we knew it, a well earned summer leave was gone and the month of August was upon us which meant that it was time to support the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT). Previous Tattoos have been really enjoyable with a relaxed atmosphere but what 2013 had in

store was somewhat tougher. Whilst the remainder of the Battalion were on their summer leave, the Pipes and Drums were in the band block, learning and rehearsing the Tattoo tunes but in addition to our own competing set which we were due to play at a number of Piping competitions which ran throughout the Tattoo period and beyond. The first night of the REMT was amazing. Performing in front of 8,500 people on the esplanade of Edinburgh Castle, there were some lads in the band that had never played at such a large scale and high profile event before, and they all said that the experience was “unreal”.

After 5 long days of rehearsing during the day and performing at the Tattoo in the evenings, it was soon time to step out on the civilian circuit. Driven by the Commanding Officer and supported by the Pipe President, this is really significant as due to recent operational cycles, the last time the Black Watch Pipes and Drums were out competing within the civilian circuit was back in 2000. The band did really well at this time, so not only had we a bit of a reputation to live up to, there was a tremendous amount of hard work to be done and we were also taking a step into the unknown on top of performing in the REMT. It was the first Saturday morning and time for the band’s first competition.

The coach arrived at 0800hrs and we were en route to the Inverkeithing Highland Games. Once we arrived and tuned up, we kept going over and over our competition set for Grade 4 and everyone started to feel slightly nervous. Five minutes before we were due to play, a steward gave the Pipe Major the nod for us to go on. As we marched through the crowd towards the competing circle everyone in the band could feel a mixture of tension, excitement and of course, nerves. We were back amongst the crowd after what felt like an eternity. Everyone played well and seemed really chuffed to have competed. We competed a second time but against harder bands as we stepped up to Grade 3 and put in another solid performance. Because of the Tattoo commitment that evening, we could not hang around for the Massed Bands and prize giving but news soon came through that we had achieved 1st place in Grade 4, and 2nd place in Grade 3! Morale was through the roof as we had not expected to finish so high. Actually winning felt somewhat surreal.

The following day we competed again, this time at Bridge of Allan where we gained another 1st place and won the Best Marching and Discipline prize. Whilst the following weekend was not quite as successful, due to the number of overseas bands participating who had flown over to attend the World Pipe Band Championships for the following week, finishing 4th place at North Berwick, 3rd place at Perth and gaining two more Marching and Discipline trophies, the band were really proud of their own achievements. Entering four competitions in addition to our nightly commitment to the REMT and still walking away with 6 pieces of silverware goes to show that months of practice and hard work do eventually pay off!

As we begin to focus on activity post summer, piping commitments remain varied and frequent and our infantry role is also changing too. Under the Army 2020 (A2020) structure, the Pipes and Drums will be re-rolling from an FSG to a “new” Assault Pioneer Platoon. For many old and bold, this is not a new concept but recent operational requirements saw the infantry lose this capability. It is being reconstituted and we are the chosen Platoon to take on this commitment. All personnel are currently undergoing various training to gain necessary qualifications; the Store is filling up with chainsaws, life jackets and all other manner of specialist equipment and we look forward to undertaking our Infantry Assault Soldier Cadre in late October. As always, there’s plenty to be getting on with!

MORTAR PLATOON

Returning from Whinny Hill Village, Catterick where we had been participating in Operating In Built up Areas (OBUA) training, having achieved our Public Order Collective Training Level 2 (CT2), the “X-men” of the Mortar Platoon were looking forward to the challenges that the Battalion’s assumption of the United Kingdom Contingency Battalion (UKCB) role would offer. In particular, the chance to return to a semblance of normal routine with the focus for us, outside of our Lead Company Group (LCG) rotation, being the support to the Rifle Companies in their individual CTC Level 1 training, whilst continuing to develop our own mortaring skills honed during the previous Cadre.

Having dispatched Corporals Ellis, Kyle and Ross to the Support Weapons School (SWS) earlier in the year in order to attend the Mortar Advanced Non Commissioned Officers Course, their return along with Corporal Watson (who had been attending the Mortar Standard NCO Course) finally provided the Platoon with the ability



Cpl Ellis brings in the rear markers.



Cpl Mortley leads the Platoon up the first hill during Ex Heavy Carry.

to deploy a Mortar Fire Control (MFC) Pair on each of the Company CTC Level 1 exercises. These provided an excellent opportunity for these newly qualified individuals to cut their teeth and integrate themselves within the Company they would subsequently support throughout Exercise WESSEX THUNDER, whilst applying the skills learned on their respective courses. All MFC pairs thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity, although Corporal Kyle was left with more work than most after his MFC B decided the easiest way to stop his descent of Ben Wyvis during the B Company Exercise was with his head!

With the cobwebs blown away during the CTC 1 period, the Mortar Platoon approached Exercise WESSEX THUNDER with a great deal of anticipation. Although the majority of the Platoon was employed in support of the Field Training Group (FTG) operating as Fire Marker teams and Crossing Point parties, there was still the requirement to provide four MFC pairs as well as a Joint Fires Cell (JFC) for Battalion Headquarters and a Mortar Command Post. The Exercise proved a considerable success for the Battalion as a whole, with all elements achieving the required CTC Level 2. The support of the FTG was critical in this, particularly through the mentoring received by the newly formed JFC and inexperienced MFC teams and we pass our sincere thanks to them. Through maximising the opportunities provided by several training serials, we have greatly increased our capability as a Platoon and we are now in a good place to receive the new influx of 11 personnel from the Rifle Companies for this year’s Mortar Cadre; which will again allow us to hone our skills and build upon the experience we have gained to date. We look forward to demonstrating our increased capability next year when the Platoon returns to Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) to support Exercise STEEL SABRE in March 2014 and again for another Exercise WESSEX THUNDER in September 2014.

That said it hasn’t all been Field training and Fire Missions! The wider Company commitment has seen us supporting the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT), with the Platoon deployed to Edinburgh in order to act as the Arena Party and Coach Escorts. Unfortunately (or fortunately for the population of Edinburgh!), the

majority of the Platoon were subsequently recalled to Fort George after only a week in order to support the Battalions' Operation FODIENT commitment. So it is with a quiet sense of achievement that the platoon looks back on the last 6 months.

As ever, there has been a degree of change throughout this reporting period and although manning has remained reasonably steady, we have still said our goodbyes to Corporal Ross who has been attached as an MFC A to 4 SCOTS for Op HERRICK 19, Lance Corporal Shields who left for civilian employment in August and Private Nightingale who has joined the temporary Staff at the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS). We will also lose Sergeant Bright in November as he moves to 15 Platoon. He will be sorely missed having played a significant part in the Platoon's development over the past 2 years. His departure though will see the arrival of a new Platoon 21C and we look forward to welcoming Acting Colour Sergeant Grant, currently a Permanent Staff Instructor at 6 SCOTS, to the Platoon in late October.

DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major J Bailey
Second-in-Command:	Captain P Seligman
Company Sergeant Major:	WO2 P Anderson
Company Quarter Master Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant J-P Barrie
Officer Commanding 13 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant R Crook
13 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant A Bavadra
Officer Commanding 15 Platoon:	Lieutenant C Treasure
15 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant R Hunter
Officer Commanding Machine Gun Platoon:	Second Lieutenant N Coles
Machine Gun Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant D Roy

After successfully navigating through six months as combined Company Commander and Second-in-Command an exhausted and significantly greyer-haired Captain Paul Seligman handed the Company to Major John Bailey, who had freshly arrived from Headquarters, 19 Brigade and was himself returning to the Light Company having been a Platoon Commander and Second-in-Command here in years past. Captain Seligman gratefully re-assumed the duties of Second-in-Command.



Delta Company line up on the grid.



Captain Seligman and Sergeant Bavadra command the Guard of Honour.



Men of Delta Company during Exercise Golden Wrath.



Exercise Golden Wrath was conducted amongst the spectacular scenery of Cape Wrath.

With the Company much reduced in numbers due to re-OrBats and postings, Major Bailey instantly sought ways in which to revive some Company spirit and ethos. Taking some influence from Charlie (FSp) Company, he revived an old Company nickname, *The Golden Don*, and recruits have flocked to this banner in their droves (the Company is now over a third larger than it was at the publication of the last *Red Hackle*). His first task was to command an exercise at the spectacular Cape Wrath Training Area on the North coast. Thanks to much hard work, bags of enthusiasm from the Jocks and a bit of luck with the weather, Exercise GOLDEN WRATH was a great success.

Ex WESSEX THUNDER

A few short weeks later the Company deployed once more with the rest of the battalion, to Salisbury Plain Training Area for Exercise WESSEX THUNDER. This fortnight-long exercise in June was a significant test for the Battalion with the eyes of the Army turned on us. As always in such situations, the Jocks stepped up to the plate and smashed the ball out of the park. In true '3 SCOTS-against-the-grain' fashion, there were a large number of people telling us that we didn't need to conduct a battalion-level test exercise at this stage of our training cycle and an even larger number telling us that we weren't ready and would simply make fools of ourselves. Never ones to resist a challenge we set out to prove that we were more than capable of conducting large scale conventional operations. The whole deployment was further complicated by the fact that we were still the UK Contingency Battalion and therefore had to move the whole vehicle fleet the mere five hundred and fifty miles from Inverness to West Down camp. Easy!

Exercise WESSEX THUNDER began for the Battalion as a two day period in which the Companies were able to put themselves through their paces unsupervised. An intense period of urban, woodland and open ground combat training was undertaken by all the Companies so that the battalion was sharp by 'D-Day'. There followed a six day rotation of complex, Company-level battle exercises in which villages were taken, forests cleared and trenches assaulted with unwavering enthusiasm by all. It was hugely rewarding, in the prevailing HERRICK era, to be able to test the skills and drills learnt at Brecon and Catterick on such a large scale. As Companies and as a Battalion, we were all dirty and tired but cheerful when the time came to assemble for the final two day rotation in which the battalion would conduct a clearance of a significant piece of territory, followed by an assault on Copehill Down village.

At midnight the Reconnaissance Platoon breached the minefield in two places and Bravo and Delta (Light) companies began the two-pronged advance Westwards, with Alpha (Grenadier) Company and a strong Fire Support Group (FSG) close behind. The Battalion cleared a nine kilometre long, three kilometre wide corridor dotted with wood-blocks and clusters of buildings in time to catch a couple of hours sleep before the main assault. The Commanding Officer then gave his confirmatory orders and the Companies moved into position, this time with the FSG leading the break-in, closely followed by Alpha (Grenadier) and Bravo Companies, with Delta (Light) Company in reserve.

From the start, the assault went far better than planned, with platoons bounding forward so quickly that they had to be reined in, lest

they leave none for the rest. Specifically, Alpha (Grenadier) Company, produced a phenomenal performance with the personal highlight of OC A Company being the covert break in to Copehill Down Village during the final Battalion attack, which seized the initiative for the Commanding Officer. With the Sniper Platoon effortlessly picking off anyone foolish enough to approach a window or doorway, the mortars cutting off any possible withdrawal or resupply and the Rifle Companies and FSG storming through buildings with their customary aggression, it was not long before the Field Training Unit (FTU) were forced to admit that all 'enemy' had been 'dead' for some time and ENDEX was called.

Praise for the Battalion's performance was lavish and universal. We had proven that our skills and abilities were of a very high standard and we had achieved a strong pass. The Jocks had put in a ruthlessly professional performance and gained a huge amount of satisfaction from it, as well as respect from FTU and others. As a Battalion, we returned to Fort George in triumph, looking forward to a well earned summer leave, which was just a fortnight away.

Life in the Fort

Focusing back on the Company, either side of the summer break saw Delta (Light) Company play a significant role in two public events: firstly in June, representing the Battalion at the local Armed Forces Day parade in Inverness and secondly in September, providing some muscle to the 3rd Battalion teams in the Regimental Highland Games. Of note, Lance Corporal Clement and Private Piapazi starred in the Caber Toss, Hammer Toss and Stone Put and Sergeants Bavadra and Hunter were members of the victorious Tug of War team. Furthermore the Company was privileged to provide the Ceremonial Guard at Edinburgh Castle on two occasions over the summer.

All work and no play would make a Jock a dull soldier, so the Company has let out some of its aggression on the go-karting track and eaten its weight in burgers at Sergeant Major Wilson's farewell beach barbecue (during which the officers and SNCOs mightily vanquished the company's best in an epic three set match... history is not written by the victors but in this case by the Company Second-in-Command!)

In the last few months, Delta (Light) Company has undergone some restructuring as well as the usual comings and goings. 13 and 15 Platoons have been joined by Delta Company Machine Gun Platoon, initially under the command of Captain Alex Jackson and Company stalwart, Sergeant Davey Roy. Upon Captain Jackson's retirement (he has moved south to dominate the commercial property market in London) command was assumed by Second Lieutenant Nick Coles. Apart from Major Bailey at the helm, the Company has also welcomed Company Sergeant Major Paul Anderson, who has moved across from Alpha (Grenadier) Company to replace Sergeant Major Wilson who has moved to Perth as a Permanent Staff Instructor for 7 SCOTS. Sergeant Major Wilson took the Company to Afghanistan and back and to the Olympics and provided the steadiness and continuity that Delta (Light) Company desperately needed in a time of great change and uncertainty. He is much missed and we thank him for all the time and effort he gave to make the Company successful.

What next for the men of The Golden Don? Our next instalment will be full of pictures from the ranges at Warcop as we are due to deploy on a live firing tactical training camp in a few short weeks. Thereafter the Jocks are hoping for a relaxing Christmas leave with family and relishing the challenges that we will take in our stride in 2014.

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

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

Whilst there have been some fundamental changes happening within the Army, the Battalion and the Company, those at the helm have strived to make life a wee bit easier for the men and women of HQ Company.

We have continued to support and sustain the Battalion during a busy period and we have the manpower, a vast array of stores, equipment and expertise ready to deploy if required.

However, normal business continues with the contingency role continuing in the background and this period has seen the staff prepare and deploy on Exercise WESSEX THUNDER providing a mix of G4 support and Real Life Support (RLS) to the remainder of the Battle Group, whilst the OC and CSM remained in Fort George with the Rear Operations Group (ROG).



WO2 (CSM) Dunn on a good day in the Fort.



Cpl Rana has arrived.



The terrible twosome.



Pte McPhate – I feel like the Quarry!

The latest tranche of redundancies were also announced whilst the Battalion was deployed on exercise and has resulted in Company HQ losing 2 members: Lance Corporal Brown and Private Thomson were both selected for redundancy and will leave the Army in December. Our best wishes go to them both and their families for what will no doubt be a difficult adjustment period onto civvy street. Also moving on, but due to promotion, is Corporal Macgregor (AGC) who finds himself promoted to Sergeant and now is the new SSA with 39 Engineer Regiment based in Kinloss Barracks (not exactly a million miles from here) which should allow him to maintain links with the Battalion. He has been replaced with Corporal Rana who no doubt will continue to provide the level of G1 support required.

The youthful but super keen Private McPhate has joined us from the CIS Platoon and is slowly getting to grips with the accommodation account. Private Tilley came to us via Battalion Headquarters and has proved to be a huge hit on a game called “World of Warcraft” – although this has not yet taught him how to set his alarm clock whether that be virtual or real!

WO2 Alan Dunn continues to pull his hair out especially over the mandatory tests that are required by the Company to complete, although there is always an escape mechanism – just play more golf!

Of particular note is that the PRI has now moved from the dusty,

damp and dodgy location in one of the casements by the Guard Room, to a new shop in the newly refurbished ‘Red Hackle’ Club – and is proving to be fairly popular, although maybe not so popular as the PRI shop NCO, our very own Corporal H Harris who appears to be following Major McInroy around the bazaars.

With the forecast of events filling up for the remainder of the year and into next year the Company will continue to provide support and assistance where and when required.

QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster:	Major Jamie Howe
Quartermaster (Technical):	Captain Glenn Hogg
Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant (Maintenance):	WO2 Allan Cunningham
Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant (Technical):	WO2 Paddy Marshall

The QM’s Department has continued to work hard behind the scenes providing the usual sustainment and G4 support to the Battalion throughout what has come to be another extremely busy period! The main events since the last Red Hackle Magazine submission have seen the Battalion’s deployment on Ex WESSEX THUNDER on Salisbury



The RQMS (T), WO2 Paddy Marshall displays his Glaswegian ways by trying to drink from the microphone and talk into his bottle.



The newly refurbished Red Hackle Club.



Capt Glenn Hogg enjoys his typical morning cuppie.

Plain Training Area (SPTA) as well as covering the United Kingdom Contingency Battalion (UKCB) role, support to the wide ranging Battalion Training Programme, preparation in support of potential industrial action by the Fire Brigade Union, and preparation for a Combined Assurance Week (CAW) which is scheduled to take place over the period 14-18 October 2013.

As part of the Army's transition into A2020, through the 1st Line Optimisation process, the QM's Department has now received manning additions in the form of four logisticians from the Royal Logistic Corps. As with much in life what we gain in one hand, we lose in the other and so as we gain these four, we lose six 3 SCOTS soldiers from our department which is commonly referred to as '4 in 6 out'. So now we have our embedded 4 man Logistic Support Team (LST) from the RLC in the form of Staff Sergeant 'Smudger' Smith, Corporal

'Rebecca' Errington, Lance Corporal 'Ralph' Porter and Private 'Cammy' Cameron. They are all welcome additions to the department as these individuals bring an extensive knowledge of Logistic Support to the Unit and this can only be of benefit to both the QM's and the battalion in general. I can report that they have settled in well, although it may be some time before they adapt to life in a SCOTS battalion, especially coping with the language barrier!

With the pace of life as it is, there is much going on and plenty of opportunity for mistakes to take place. Indeed, various members of the department have committed foolish acts over the period leaving them at the mercy of some relentless banter! Examples which come to mind are: Corporal 'Simmo' Simpson forgetting to bring the TAC Signs with him on the Quartermaster's G4 Advance Party to Ex WESSEX THUNDER; which he lovingly prepared prior to the exercise. As we all know these signs are vital, being used to guide troops into the exercise area. But when it was time to deploy the TAC signs and then when asked where they were, Corporal Simpson replied "I didn't think I would need them until the Battalion arrived Sir"! Corporal 'Sammy' O'Gorman takes some ribbing for his effeminate telephone voice which really has to be heard to be believed as you would not think that this voice could possibly come from a tough SCOTS infantry soldier! And not to forget the bold Corporal Pratt who, when informed by the QM that he was to open his store in order for the QM to conduct a snap check, replied to the QM "bring it on Sir, it is all squared away" – only for the QM to establish equipment missing from the first shelf checked!

This reporting period also saw the refurbishment of the ORs' main welfare hub in the Fort, The Red Hackle Club. A combination of funding streams were pooled which has seen over £100,000 being spent on bringing the club up to date and making it fit for purpose for our soldiers. The grand opening ceremony was held on the first day back from Summer Leave and the ribbon was cut by Lt Gen (Retd) Sir Alistair Irwin, KCB, CBE. The feedback from the Jocks continues to be really positive and the Red Hackle Club is currently more popular than ever, as a result of the much needed upgrade.

As always, there is a turnover of personnel and so we have said farewell to a number of personnel who have gone on to bigger and better things. Our best wishes go to WO2 'Colin' Gibson in his new job as a Health and Safety Advisor in the Oil and Gas Industry, to Sergeants 'Hammy' Hamilton and 'George' Benson who have now left the Army and to Corporal 'H' Harris who now works in the revamped PRI Shop. Whilst not yet gone, it is in anticipation that we also have to say farewell to the QM (T) who is expected to leave at the end of October 2013 to take up his new post as the QM for 6 SCOTS. We wish them all and their families all the best for their future.

CIS PLATOON

Regimental Signals Officer:	Captain N Drapper
Regimental Signals Warrant Officer:	WO2 Tollan
CIS PI CQMS:	Colour Sergeant Shearer
Bowman Systems Manager:	Sergeant Dowdles
Platoon Sergeant:	Corporal Ross

The CIS Platoon has again supported a very varied period for the Battalion, encompassing the ongoing United Kingdom Contingency Battalion (UKCB) task, exercises and Battalion training which has included non-communications related training towards potential industrial action.

Significantly, the Platoon was heavily involved in Ex WESSEX THUNDER, which was a Battalion deployment onto Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) designed to test and qualify the Battalion to collective training competency (CTC) 3 level. This saw all of the build up training (reported in the last edition), finally put into practise and the CIS Platoon were congratulated by the chain of command for their tireless efforts and support throughout. From the success of this exercise, the Platoon then saw a period of 'in house' CIS training for the junior members of the Battalion. It was designed to ensure their upgrading and PJNCO Cadre selections (and of course ensure they were at the correct pay grade as a result!).

After a well earned summer leave, the month of August saw Lance Corporal Murphy and Privates Beats and Seath deploy to Redford Cavalry Barracks with C (FSp) Company in order to support their participation in the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (REMT) as the Tattoo Support Group (TSG). They were pivotal within the operations room of the REMT alongside senior officers from Police Scotland and the REMT; they utilised AIRWAVE in their logging and reporting of



After BGHQ is set up.



CSgt Baird oversees some 'really important JCHAT' in BGHQ.

all coach loads of performers to and from locations as well as supporting the many other diverse communications taskings which were often required at short notice. Private Beats made it to the big time as part of the Guard of Honour and to that end was in No 1 Dress for the duration. They all thoroughly enjoyed this unique task and gained a great deal from it.

Furthermore, the Platoon also had eight individuals deployed to conduct fire fighting training, for twelve days, as part of the contingency training for potential industrial action within England and Wales. During this realistic and arduous training, they were instructed on various fire and smoke situations within buildings and vehicles. Training was also delivered on casualty extraction from road traffic incidents (RTI). This all combined to provide individuals the opportunity to conduct training within a field that they may never have thought possible and again, gained a considerable amount from it.

As always, with the technical communications equipment and the vehicles needed to use it all, there is always a need for drivers and recently there has been a surge on driver training for the Platoon. Congratulations are to be given to Privates MacDonald and Hannah on passing their Cat B licences and WO2 Tollan on passing Cat C+E. Further driver training is planned for those within the Platoon without licences or Cat C, with the driving focus beginning to swing towards 2014 for the conversion to our new Light Protected Mobility (LPM) role.

Captain Drapper has now taken over the CIS Platoon and his feet are now comfortably under the table and he is settling into the job and the numerous additional tasks that come to the RSO. Colour Sergeant Mark Shearer and his storemen have continued to work very hard in preparation for the Combined Assurance Week (CAW) which looms on the horizon and they are to be commended for the hard work so far. All of the Company Detachment Commanders have now "run out" their detachments with their paired companies and Ex WESSEX THUNDER was the perfect example of this, with relationships and working practises ironed (hammered?) out.

As always, there have been changes within the CIS Platoon over the last six months, with three members of the Platoon volunteering for

Tranche 3 Redundancy; namely Colour Sergeant Andy Braid, Sergeant Kev Winton and Private Warren. Privates Ross and Russell have now finished their time with the CIS Platoon and the Army and again, our best wishes are passed to them both. Sergeant Dowdles has returned to the Platoon after a 3 year spell away instructing within the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and our Training Wing. He has jumped straight into the task of the Bowman Systems Manager (BSM) and is also the Battalion's iHub manager. Corporal Hodgkinson and Privates Abiodun and Batidreu have joined the Platoon from 5 SCOTS. Finally, on a more personal note, congratulations must go to Private Seath on his engagement to Rachael we wish them the best of luck for the future.

The world of communications continues to be a fast paced and ever evolving beast. The demands placed upon the Platoon to support the Battalion both in barracks and in the field are heavy but we continue to rise to meet the challenges. One thing remains constant – it is never a dull day within the CIS Platoon!

TRAINING WING

Training Officer: Captain James
 Training WO: WO2 Parker
 Training Sergeant: Colour Sergeant Copeland
 Training Corporal: Corporal Wedgwood

"Don't just train, inspire"

The Battalion Training Wing continues to be the leading light for all training within the Battalion. Our soldiers attending career courses have increasingly lead from the front again, delivering some excellent results and receiving well earned praise from external organisations, proving that the preparation is right. The Training Wing has continued to support Battalion activities, delivering a successful Battalion SAAM and Exercise WESSEX THUNDER saw various roles for the Training Wing with the Training WO and Colour Sergeant Copeland acting as Observer Mentors, keeping the Companies on their toes (and generally being grumpy – something that the Training WO finds quite easy). The fielding of the new General Service Respirator (GSR) and getting 450 personnel converted to it and trained in its use proved a challenge due to the many other tasks and so this will not be completed until November 2013. Upgrading cadres have rightly been re-introduced to the Battalion which is helping to invest in and develop our young soldiers preparing them correctly for their futures. The Training Wing has provided training and support to a whole host of external units and agencies and have found ourselves assisting 3 Commando Brigade in the delivery of Public Order training to Estonians and Latvians - with varying degrees of success. Fundamentally, though we continue to support the Companies but it is also their support to us that make it all possible.

During this period Sergeant Leslie left the Army and we wish him every success in his future. Sergeant Dowdles has also left the Training Wing but for a new roll within the CIS Platoon. To balance these departures, we have seen the arrival of Colour Sergeant Copeland from AFC Harrogate. Sport continues to play a huge part in the life of the Training Wing with the Training WO and Corporal Wedgwood supporting the cross-country and the Training Officer coaching the Battalion rugby team. Significantly, Corporal Wedgwood ran the Edinburgh half marathon raising over £1100 for Poppy Scotland in a very respectable time of 2hrs 46secs (still room for improvement I think).

We look forward to the training challenges that will continue to face us in the latter part of this year particularly as we focus upon what the Battalion may become involved with in 2014. There is plenty of work to be done and we have no time to rest on our laurels – I look forward to reporting on continued success in the next edition of the Red Hackle.

CATERING PLATOON

Regimental Catering Warrant Officer (SQMS): WO2 E Clutton
 I/C Messes: Sergeant D Primrose
 Catering Platoon Sergeant: Sergeant S Taroga

Like every other Department within the battalion, it continues to be a busy working period to date for all members of the platoon as we maintain our professional hard-working team ethos, by assisting the catering contract in the provision of a continual high standard of daily service in the midst of copious and varied commitments both professional and social.

From the beginning of May, the Catering Department has overseen many commitments including a variety of different functions, train-



Sgt Tarroga and her team at AFD Inverness.

ing exercises and other Battalion commitments, which began with the Black Watch Association annual dinner. This event took place in the Officers' Mess with an outstanding meal provided by both Corporal Fraser and Lance Corporal McCombie. The occasion was a complete success and enjoyed by all in attendance. Other responsibilities for May were a deployment of Corporal Fraser on a two week adventure training exercise near Ullapool, a village on the North West coast of Scotland. The highlight of the month came by invitation from 39 Engineer Regiment Catering Platoon, Kinloss, to a friendly chefs' football match and barbeque afternoon. All members of the platoon thoroughly enjoyed the match and hope to return the favour in the foreseeable future.

In June members of the Battalion took part in the annual, 'Armed Forces Day' which was held in the Northern Meeting Park, Inverness. The Catering Platoon was at the heart of the festivities providing sustenance for a multitude of visitors. The team which was run by Sergeant Tarroga

and assisted by Corporal Armstrong and Private Kayiwa, had a very demanding but rewarding day and crucially, raised over £800 for charity.

The first week of July, marked the beginning of a well needed and deserved summer leave. The start of leave allowed the Catering Platoon to bid a fond farewell to Sergeant McKeown, his wife Lyndsay and his four children. As it was block leave, only a small Catering Platoon Rear Operations Group (ROG) was left on site. Despite the period of stand down, the remaining chefs were kept fully occupied, whether catering or assisting with regimental duties. One of the allocated responsibilities came in the form of a RAAT tasking to provide chef support for four weeks in Hereford. Private Walker stepped up to the plate! The Officers' Mess chefs also held a barbeque at the Commanding Officer's residence during summer leave period for those still in the local area. The function was directed by Sergeant Primrose and provided by his team, consisting of Lance Corporal Smith and Private Carter. The perfect summer weather was enhanced by the quality of the food with both being well received!

The close of July saw the much needed commencement of the reconstruction of the roof on the kitchen and dining hall. This has seen some considerable disruption seeing the relocation of the chefs to the rear of the site and essentially cooking under field conditions! This is only temporary as the work should be completed by the end of October – and is a great opportunity for refresher training on the OFCS equipment! Despite the disruption to the facilities, there has been little complaint from the Jocks over the provision or standard of food served.

Overall, this period has been both challenging and rewarding not only in barracks but also in the field. All members of the Catering Platoon have again, proudly lived up to their Motto, 'We Sustain'!

KIRK OF THE BLACK WATCH

Padre's Patter!

Hello there!

Having recently arrived as the "new boy" with the dog collar, I thought it appropriate to make my presence known to the wider readership and fill you in on things up here in the Fort! I arrived in June 2013 as the Chaplain to the Battalion. This is my fifth infantry Battalion and so some soldiers in the Battalion may be saying I've kept the best till last as I retire from the Army in 2016! My famous five are: 1st Battalion The Royal Highland Fusiliers; The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland; 2nd Battalion The Mercians (Worcester



Padre John Duncan walking with the Commanding Officer at the annual Kirkin' o' the Council.

& Sherwood Foresters); 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's) and now the Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland. I can sneak in a sixth infantry battalion as I was the Chaplain to the 2nd Battalion The Royal Welsh in Canada for two months! As I've been the Chaplain to two Scottish Battalions, I've re-introduced myself to a number of "old" faces who know me for good or ill! I do though, have a connection with The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, as in 2009, while Chaplain to 2 MERCIANS serving in Afghanistan, I was the padre to Delta Company.

I originally hail from Dundee and I can hear already everyone from Angus, Fife and Perthshire saying, "Can anything good come from Dundee even a Padre!" However, I've experienced a great welcome to the Battalion even though I'm a Dundee supporter! (NOT United!). I do have a foot in Fife as I was the Parish Minister at Burntisland for 13 years, so the Fifers know me!

I arrived from Warminster where I was the Chaplain to the 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Duke of Wellington's) and in 2012 I accompanied them for a summer tour in Afghanistan. This is my first posting in Scotland and to return to a Scottish infantry battalion was like winning the national lottery!

From a Chaplain's point of view, I have the honour of serving and being part of a great infantry battalion but also to be responsible for the Garrison Kirk at Fort George. The 18th Century Kirk is one of the finest, if not the finest, of our Garrison Churches in the whole of the British Army (I'm biased!). It is of course the Regimental Kirk of the Seaforth Highlanders, Queen's Own Highlanders, and now The Highlanders, 4th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, but since we are the resident battalion, and will be for the foreseeable future, the plan is to make the Kirk our own. We are currently in conversations with Historic Scotland and The Highlanders Association.

I've already conducted my first wedding (marriage of Lance Corporal Kallum Scott to Miss Nicole Walker on 29th June 2013) and baptism (John Alastair, son of Captain Robert and Mrs Shuna Colquhoun on 15th September 2013) at the Garrison Kirk and now I eagerly await my first Kirk Muster.

In the wider community, in August I attended along with Major Colin McInroy and Captain Pete Marshall the Dedication Service of the Memorial to the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders at the Old High Kirk, Inverness. In September, I returned to the Old High Kirk, with the Commanding Officer and other members of the Battalion, for the annual Kirkin' o' the Council of Highland Council which went very well indeed.

I am very much looking forward to getting stuck into many of the other activities that we have in our forecast of events and getting round to see the troops during some worthwhile training in November. Please do feel free to contact me!

With every blessing,
Padre J C Duncan CF (CS)
Major
Chaplain

MT PLATOON

Transport Officer: Captain S McKenzie
Motor Transport Sergeant: Sergeant Wells

It was very tempting to start these notes with the sentence "It has been another busy period for the MT Platoon" however this would be an old cliché and due to the current tempo of training and exercises it would be applicable to the whole Battalion. However, the biggest headache for the MT platoon was in June and saw the MT Platoon heavily involved in Ex WESSEX THUNDER – the first conundrum for us was how we got the Battalion's entire vehicle fleet from Inverness to Salisbury Plain (as we were also covering the United Kingdom Contingency Battalion role) but doing it in one piece! So the 8th of June saw a two day road move commence from Fort George to Halton Training Camp, refuelled at Weeton Barracks and then onto SPTA. Some would say it would be a small miracle to do that kind of journey without incident. Thanks to the LAD that's exactly what happened! From an MT's perspective, the exercise proved to be a great success with the MT initially supporting the Company's movement between the Battle Exercises and then deploying out as A1 Echelon for the final training exercise – the biggest shock for some members of the Platoon was having to wear cam cream and PRR headsets however, any resistance was short lived and those that deployed thoroughly enjoyed themselves (apart that is from Corporal Thomson who managed to last 18 hours on exercise before



The MTO pretending to listen to OC C Coy.

getting himself on a course in Bristol staying in a 4 star hotel as there was no suitable accommodation in the area!)

The return journey from the exercise was to be more eventful however and, having reached Warcop Training Camp with all vehicles intact for the designated refuelling and overnight stop, information was received that any vehicles with a certain type of tyre had to be replaced immediately. On inspection, this affected five vehicles! In these sorts of situation, this is where the LAD come into their own as within a matter of hours, they had linked in with local units and swapped and replaced any suspect tyres to ensure all vehicles returned to Fort George in good order.

After some well earned summer leave, the focus for the Platoon changed to supporting the requirements for OP FODIENT with Corporal Blair and Privates Fountain and Tullis deploying to the Fire Service College in Gloucester with Corporal Blair and Private Fountain learning the art of fire fighting and Private Tullis training to operate the Moffat forklift. All three enjoyed themselves immensely (which I am sure had nothing to do with the fact that they had en-suite rooms, swimming pool, WiFi and additional allowances!)

As ever, the dynamic of the Platoon is continually changing with the following new arrivals: Sergeant Wells (MT Sergeant), Corporal Bain (JAMES custodian), Corporal Stevenson (Servicing Bay), Corporal MacInnes (Details), Lance Corporal Vinibobo (G1098 store), Privates Robertson and Fountain (Servicing Bay). It is with great delight that Lance Corporal Thomson is now Corporal Thomson, however it is with great sadness that we will see the departure of Sergeant Ramsay, Private Finlayson and Private Anderson on their successful application for redundancy. The MT department wish them all the very best for the future. Corporal Cruickshanks leaves the department to take up post as B Company Tech Sergeant and Private Turner returns to B Company after an interesting period with the Platoon.

The future is bright within the MT Platoon. Succession plans and additional qualifications have been implemented and bid for with Cat C, D and D1 being the next set of licences that are being tackled in order that the Company's are self sufficient for future tasks.

RAO'S DEPARTMENT – LETTERS TO HOME!

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

As ever in support of a busy and dynamic organisation such as 3 SCOTS, our team which spans from Battalion Headquarters down to the Combat Human Resource Specialists (CHRS) embedded within



AGC Corporals' Mess members host the RAWO.



Help for Heroes fundraising in Inverness, Cpl Milan Rana, Cpl Prem Tamang, LCpl Bob Hope, WO2 Sharon Young and Pte Ben Tilley.

each Company (better known as Company Clerks!) have all been working particularly hard to ensure that each individual is served to the best possible standards; whether that is through the resolution of pay issues, personal records being kept up to date, tracking and moving individuals or ensuring key documentation is to the right person in the right timeframe we must be on the right track as the SPS teams from Headquarters 4 Mechanized Brigade seem to feel we are doing a good job. In preparing our submission for the Red Hackle Magazine, I came across a letter one of my new CHRS wrote which I feel captures the last six months well!

Dear Dad,

It has been some six months since I last wrote and I can tell you that a great deal has been happening within the Detachment during this period. Where do I start?

Well, firstly we have had the good news that Lance Corporal Kimberley Murray has had a new addition to her family with the arrival of baby Eve. Through the support of the detachment and her Company (as well as her own hard work), she has also been selected for promotion to Corporal which is really great news as she has worked tirelessly with Corporal Prem Tamang in Charlie (Fire Support) Company getting them ready for our annual Staff and Personnel Support Inspection (SPSI) in October 2013. With Lance Corporal Murray away on maternity leave, she has been replaced by Private Ben Whittall, who has arrived straight from his Service Initial Personnel Administration Course (SIPAC) which is our Phase 2 training. In fact, we have recently had an influx of new blood into the detachment with the arrival of Privates Ben Tilley and Katie Taylor. Private Tilley has just turned 18 but he is still the baby of the Detachment! Private Taylor was quickly selected to represent the battalion in the steeplechase in the Highland Games where she did well. Incidentally, I was selected for a throwing event – which I won!

Talking about new arrivals, we also have a new Assistant RAO in Captain Steve Lewis although we haven't seen much of him as he arrived and then quickly disappeared having been selected (or "spammed" as people seem to say) in order to assist with 3 (UK) Div

Mission Specific Training (MST). With arrivals come departures and we have lost a number of personnel on assignment: Lance Corporal Saarwar Matin, has gone to PJHQ to be a Staff Clerk. Lance Corporal Bob Hope (who bears no resemblance to the real Bob Hope) has left us for Germany. Last week saw the departure of Corporal Craig MacGregor, who has now been promoted to Sergeant.

All the arrivals and departures have meant that the RAO has had to juggle clerks around but thankfully myself and Lance Corporal David Balshaw have remained with the Golden Don. He has been involved with some contingency training as the Battalion has been warned off to cover possible firefighters strikes. Lance Corporal John Buchan promoted to Corporal and is the new G3 Clerk in Battalion Headquarters having moved from Bravo Company. Sergeant Jamie Penman has just taken over as the Regimental Accountant (and is pulling his hair out getting to grips with accounts!) from Sergeant Mark Hughes who himself has taken over as the SSA from Sergeant Jane Cunningham. We have a new Financial Systems Administrator (FSA) in Staff Sergeant Les Downie who arrived from a recruiting post in Aberdeen and he is happy as his family are now in a quarter in Inverness. Finally, I almost forgot to mention Corporal Mark McCrosson and Lance Corporal Jack Bull in Alpha Company. Corporal McCrosson has just completed his CLM and Systems Coordination course and I have recently completed the Basic Bookkeeper course. Jack Bull still has aspirations of doing the PTI course. Our old Staff Support Assistant (SSA), Sergeant Jane Patterson has had a number of things happen to her in the last 6 months. Firstly she has changed her name to Sergeant Cunningham, having finally managed to get Allan to do the right thing and marry her and having completed her Regimental Accountants course she has now left for Germany, ready for her new job.

But it hasn't all been work – we've been trying to get involved in the local community and the detachment has taken part in some notable charity events recently. WO2 (SQMS) Sharon Young, Corporal Prem Tamang and Corporal Milan Rana, Lance Corporal Bob Hope and Private Ben Tilley raised over £1700 for "Help for Heroes" just by standing outside shops in Inverness. Private Hope appeared to attract the most people but that could be because of the crutches he was on at the time! Corporal Anthea Whalley will shortly be undertaking her sponsored cycle for SSAFA and I was involved in organising the Corporals' Mess Summer Ball this year with Lance Corporal David Balshaw doing the deejaying. The RAO who is my boss, keeps encouraging us to add value and I think we are achieving this. Talking about the RAO, Major Drew Dunford was awarded the MBE in the recent Birthday honours list. I think he had done some good work at his last unit but I don't recall the Battalion making much fuss of it!

So as you can see, life up here in Fort George has been pretty busy and hectic. We have completed numerous MCCPs as we continue through our United Kingdom Contingency Battalion task and we are preparing for our annual inspection which comes in October and we have been helping out with the Combined Assurance Week (CAW) which is taking some significant preparation. That's it for this missive – I hope all is well back home. By the way, the RAO has been hammering DOMCOL within the Battalion but I can confirm that I am still eligible for my 45 days in two years time!

Say hi to everyone at home.

UNIT WELFARE OFFICE

UWO: Captain Pete Marshall
 AUWO & WIS Manager: Sergeant Peter Trickovic
 Community Centre Manager: Corporal Dougie Ferguson

Over the past few months, the Welfare Office along with Army Welfare Services (AWS) joined forces with the Highland Council and took the opportunity to deliver some "Public Protection Training". This training is based around three real areas of concern for the Armed Forces, namely: mental health, drug and alcohol awareness and risk taking behaviour and for those of you familiar with our current mandatory tests, can only be described as MATT 6 on steroids! Significantly though, this training is the first of this sort to be delivered in Scotland – and so far has been a real success, opening our eyes to current opinion and reality outside and within our Battalion. This aside, good working relationships have continued to be maintained or strengthened with all the support agencies there are here in Inverness and the Highlands, all of which aim to provide the right support at the right time, for the right time for those personnel who need it.

On the home front, we organised a much needed “patch cleanup” which saw the majority of the rank ranged married personnel, supporting an up-gunned spring clean! The aim was to not only clear an accumulation of detritus of various sorts but also to raise awareness of our collective responsibilities to ensure we live in a clean and well maintained community. Despite the pouring rain it was a great success. We were fortunate enough to have had a fairly quiet summer as most families managed to have a summer holiday together; of note, this is the first summer leave period which many people have had together in over 3 years due largely to our recent operational commitments. To celebrate, we had a fantastic summer BBQ which thanks to the generosity of Colour Sergeant Larry Mair’s family, saw a miniature steam railway involved and this antique steam engine and antique steam organ provided rides and entertainment for all!

Much like every other department, there has been a change in personalities in the Welfare Office. We have now lost Colour Sergeant Larry Mair as he moves onto pastures new after 3 years in the Welfare Office. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all the work he has done on behalf of this office and for the families of 3 SCOTS. We all wish him well. Sergeant Trickovic has stepped up to take on the role as the Assistant Unit Welfare Officer and Corporal Ferguson has taken on the role of Welfare JNCO as well as Community Centre Manager. Finally, with the changes taking place to 5 SCOTS we have had an influx of families joining us from Canterbury and we would like to welcome all of them into our community.

We continue our work to support our community and personnel and I look forward to reporting further events and developments in the next issue.

RUGBY TEAM

Club President: Lieutenant Colonel A Reilly
 OIC Rugby: Lieutenant I Walker
 Secretary: Captain M A Dobson
 Head Coach: Captain M James
 Captain: Lance Corporal Tawayaga

The battalion continue to field a strong team which has seen us participate in a good number of events. After a slow burning fifteens season which saw a large number of inter unit games abandoned due to the opposition’s inability to field a team, it was with a large degree of anticipation that the Battalion Rugby Club approached the summer season. The early part of the summer was focused on increasing our interaction within the Highlands rugby community and Inverness’ Highlands Rugby Club, through entry into a number of local 7’s tournaments. This also allowed a large number of the extended squad to get a run out prior to the Battalion rugby tour. A tight packed schedule saw the Battalion perform really well, winning the cup competition at the Inverurie 7’s before the second team took the Bowl at Highland RFC’s

event within Inverness. At both competitions though, it was the skill and determination of the Battalion’s players that drew the plaudits of supporters and opposing teams alike, with many commenting on the excellent spirit with which we approached the games.

These early 7’s forays proved a useful build up to the main summer season and although it was a depleted squad that struggled at the Dreghorn 7’s, it soon bounced back finishing second to the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) at the UK Northern Unit’s 10’s competition. Throughout the tournament, the team performed to an exceptionally high standard, defeating both 1 Scots Guards and 5 Regiment Royal Artillery in the preliminary stages, before a demonstration of sheer speed and raw power saw the team demolish a combined UOTC team by 42 points to 0 in the semi final! The final was as expected, a much closer affair and it is unfortunate that the Battalion lost by only a conversion, to the ITC.

The highlight of the summer however, had to be the annual Rugby Tour which again returned to the Flanders International 10’s, held in Dendermonde, Belgium. The growing popularity of the sport in the Battalion saw us able to enter two teams into this competition, with participants no doubt swayed to attend by the prospect of the overnight ferry trip between Newcastle and Amsterdam – a particularly costly affair for Lieutenant Walker! Having entered the tournament previously, we looked forward to reacquainting ourselves with some old adversaries and the first game provided the perfect opportunity; with a return of last years quarterfinal line up against Les Arsouilles, which proved to be a hard fought game, both teams pushed to the limit in a 10-10 draw. Even more impressive was the commitment of the second team who worked hard against the RAF Service Team, although they eventually lost 21-7 in an intensely physical affair. Overall, the tournament was a huge success again for both teams and against considerably stiffer opposition than the previous year. The teams finished 7th and 14th respectively out of 44 senior teams – not a bad showing.

So, having had a good summer of competitive rugby, it is with confidence that we approach the 2013/14 Season. This will see us compete in the Army’s Second Tier Championship competition and I hope we will be reporting on greater success in the next edition.

BATTALION FOOTBALL TEAM

Football Officer: Captain McRobbie
 Football Manager: WO2 Beaton
 Kit Man: Sergeant Currie

Despite the many other Battalion commitments, within the football team we have managed to maintain a considerable amount of continuity thanks to considerable effort on the parts of individuals and an understanding chain of command! Consequently, there has been a lot going on lately within the team. Of note, there has been the appointment of a new Football Officer in the guise of Captain McRobbie who kindly “volunteered” to take over the role that was made available and



The 7s Team celebrating their trophy win.



The final game between the 3rd and 5th Battalions of the Royal Regiment of Scotland held at Fort George in June 2013.

left vacant for some time by the departure of Captain Hood. Much time has been spent on equipment husbandry and as part of our ongoing team development programme, we were also the recipients of a generous donation from the Commanding Officer for much needed training equipment and new strips; this has all gone down well with the players.

We have managed to play a few matches recently and importantly, won them all convincingly even though due to the pace of life within the Battalion, we have not been able to field the same team twice in a row! That said, this should give some indication as to the size and strength of the squad which we have at the moment. Of note, we played 5 SCOTS in what was to be their last game before they reformed as Balaklava Company and won a well contested match 5-1. It was great to be involved in such a historic match as it will never be played again between both teams.

Furthermore, we played two games against 1 SCOTS in the space of a week. The first game was played at Redford Cavalry Barracks with players fielded exclusively from C (FSp Coy) who were participating in the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo; and won the game 5-1, with Cpl Pete Kane scoring an impressive hat-trick. Fiercely contested by both teams, we were asked afterwards for a rematch the following week. Seizing the opportunity to reinforce the team with Battalion players from the Fort to ensure we fielded the strongest team possible, we ended up 2 players short of our first XI. Despite going 1 down inside the first fifteen minutes, we ended up with a convincing 7-1 win.

It is not only military teams that we have sought to compete against. We have been developing our community relations and are actively seeking to get involved with as many local teams as we can. We have

taken a crack at a local team from Culloden who fancied their chances as they play together week in, week out. However, they again were soundly beaten by an astonishing 9 goals to 1 in what was probably the best display I have witnessed since becoming the manager over a year ago! We hope they come back!

Whilst the team have achieved a great deal recently, we continue to look to future events to keep the team focused and so we have entered both the Infantry and Army Cups this year and I really believe that if we can field our first XI, we have a great chance of winning at least one of them. Perhaps we will be playing against Inverness Caledonian Thistle before too long!

GOLF SOCIETY

Golf Officer: Major J Howe
 Match Secretary: Warrant Officer 2 Tollan
 Handicap Captain: Colour Sergeant Shearer

Since May, the Battalion Golf Society has gone from strength to strength despite the sustained busy period and is now approaching 45 members, which is excellent. The popularity of the sport continues to grow and this has been a successful first season for the Society.

Nairn Dunbar Golf Club offered the Battalion significantly reduced rates to play at their course for which we are extremely grateful and this course has now been adopted as the Golf Society's home course. The majority of the competitions will take place on this excellent and demanding course. The numbers participating in the competitions held to date has been outstanding, considering the pace of life in the



Competitors in the Golf Society Monthly Medal.

Battalion and the honours have been shared across the members; although some of the handicaps will need close scrutiny.

We had planned a golf tour within Angus during the month of August which was postponed due to various operational commitments but the intent is that this will take place towards the end of 2013 or early in 2014. The spirit and the camaraderie in the Society is excellent and there are many ongoing “battles” between the members most notably those between the Quartermaster and the Quartermaster (Technical) versus various members of the CIS Platoon (WO2 Robbie Tollan, CSgt Mark Shearer, Sgt Kev Winton and Cpl Paul Stewart in particular) with the honours even – at this time!

Members of the Society have participated in high profile golfing events during the season including; Infantry Championships, Army Open, Army Match Play and the Army Golf Association Match Play and all participants have been congratulated on their efforts, both individually and as teams. In addition, a team was fielded for the MSIS Charity Quaich in which the 3 SCOTS team retained the Quaich – for the third year running – and over £3500 was raised for the Army Benevolent Fund The Soldiers’ Charity and MacMillan Nurses.

Finally the Ahluwalia Cup is on the horizon but a date has not yet been set as the forecast of events is very hectic. This competition will be played before the end of the season and results will be published in the next edition.

JOCKS IN ZANZIBAR!

By Colour Sergeant Copeland

On a passing visit to BHQ I was approached by the Ops Officer, Captain Phillips MC and asked if I would like to go to Kenya as part of a Short Term Training Team (STTT) in order to assist the Kenyan Army with some UK Training, Tactics and Procedures (TTPs) ahead of their future deployment to Somalia. With some hesitation I said ‘ok’ little knowing quite what to expect. From there, emails began to ping to and fro, Fragmentary Orders (FragO’s) were read and packing lists produced in some haste. Whilst the original STTT was meant to be 2 SNCOs and 3 JNCOs but this was eventually reduced to simply 2 SNCOs (Sergeant Pratt and myself); along with being told it was no longer Kenya but Tanzania instead!

The first part of our African adventure began with a week spent in Bourlon Barracks, Catterick undertaking a PDT package with our other STTT colleagues from the Scots Guards (SG): Lieutenant Edwards, Lance Sergeant Ross and Lance Corporal Farmer. This included briefings on such interesting subjects as country orientation, religious breakdown, tribal coverage and divisions, active lis-



CSgt Copeland and Sgt Pratt clearly missing Inverness.

tening skills, Values Based Leadership (VBL) and Operational Law. We paid particular attention when we were told that IF we got into any sort of bother in Tanzania we could end up in a nice Tanzanian jail – Sgt “Hinges” Pratt did NOT like that part of the Op Law brief!

With the PDT week concluded we drove from Catterick to London Heathrow for our onward flights to Kenya to tie in with both the OC and CQMS STTT. After a seven and a half hour flight we landed at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi and were met by the CQMS (CSgt Robinson) for the British Peace Support Team (BPST), Kenya. After a short journey through Nairobi we arrived at HQ BPST and met the OC, Major Clarke, who then gave us a brief on our ever changing task – which was now taking place in Zanzibar rather than Tanzania! After a night of getting to know everyone (primarily through the medium of food and beer) we travelled back to Jomo Kenyatta International Airport for our onward flight to Zanzibar. It was only a short hour and a half flight but it took us past a spectacular view of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Finally, after all the travelling, we landed at Abeid Amani Karume International Airport in Zanzibar. We were met by the British High Commissioner for Zanzibar who took us to our hotel which was 10 minutes from the airport and incredibly, situated right on the beach overlooking the Indian Ocean! Sergeant Pratt and I knew that this



Sgt Pratt with an eager group of soldiers.

was going to be a graft! With the Zanzibar Beach Resort Hotel as our base location we quickly settled in, unpacked, met by the bar and came up with a plan of attack on how to utilise the 48 hours before we had to start the SNCO's Cadre. The plan was to receive areas for teaching, practical demonstrations, practical teaching/practice the following day and confirm the lesson breakdown of who would be teaching what.

During the following day, we had a short ten minute drive to Chukwani Training Area (CTA), where the SNCO's Cadre was to take place. The facilities were basic to say the least but the training area that was to be used to carry out demonstrations and practice was good. We also met with a couple of the Tanzanian People's Defence Force (TPDF) Officers who were going to act as interpreters for us. The Officers told us that a JNCOs course had run a few months before with the Royal Irish instructing on it with the OC being none other than Captain "Titch" Robb! After a successful recce, we got back to utilising our 48 hrs wisely. After a weekend of sightseeing in Stone Town, an RTA with a local thinking he was Lewis Hamilton and some hardcore sunbathing, Monday rolled around too quickly!

The Monday began with the OC having a meeting with the Commandant of Chukwani Training Centre, who then informed the OC that not all the students had made their way from the mainland yet and that the course would have to begin the following day – happy days! So, on Tuesday, the course was opened by the Commandant and teaching began in earnest – or so we thought. Due to the ending of Ramadan, we were told the course would have to be put on hold for the remainder of the week as the TPDF would be taking this as a holiday to celebrate the end of Ramadan – clearly we were all devastated by this news! Consequently, plans were hastily put in place to re-write the training programme with 'nice to know' being deleted and 'need to know' given the priority for teaching. The rest of the week was spent exploring the island of Zanzibar from West coast to Northern tip, down the East coast to the Southern tip so that by the end of the week we had a truly once in a lifetime experience.

Work beckoned though and the following week we started the course pucker! The students we had were Sgt/SSgt level from all three services (Army, Navy, Air Force) and ranged in age from 28-40 with varying degrees of good to bad English. Straight away though, we noticed how keen they were to learn, not just the students, but the Demonstration troops, officers and generally anyone watching our lessons. We also noticed that most things were officer led with no-one wanting to do anything without officer authority; so trying to teach Mission Command was a bit of a challenge.

Both weeks of training culminated on the final day, Thursday 23rd August, with a visit from Commander Land Forces, Tanzania (a two star General), the High Commissioner for Tanzania and the Defence Attaché for East Africa, Brigadier Fratterini. One of the students on the SNCO's course gave the CSS considerations for an upcoming operation (an ambush), they then conducted rehearsals for it and then executed it. The visit concluded with the General and the Brigadier giving out certificates and a closing address to the course. With the closing address done and dusted, it only remained for the STTT to take loads of photographs with the students, which in Africa is the custom, then pack our bags for the trip home and the impending cold!

We felt very privileged to have been a part of this training team and the experience as a whole. If there is another chance to teach any African Forces on a STTT anywhere in-country my advice would be to jump at the chance – you could be lucky and it could turn into a Zanzibar!

THE BAXTER'S 10K CORPORATE CHALLENGE

In 2012 some interest was generated within the Battalion in entering teams for the "Baxter's 10K Corporate Challenge" which is a race within a race and all part of the "Baxter's Festival of Running" taking place in Inverness annually in September. Teams can enter between 4 and 6 runners, with results accumulated from the fastest 4 finishers. Each Mess identified capable runners and Colour Sergeant McBride was tasked with ensuring each team registered to run the event. All 3 teams came in around the same time and we were pleasantly surprised that the Sergeants' Mess team achieved second place, being beaten only by a very strong, hand-picked team from Baxter's.

In 2013, and this time with enhanced knowledge of the competition and higher levels of fitness, along with a desire to better our

second place, the Battalion duly entered 2 mixed teams. However as with everything else, due to ongoing and emerging Battalion commitments, the original team line ups were somewhat depleted, so a few travelling reserves and replacements were swiftly stood too – some with precious little prep time!

On race day, the "ALPHA" team was somewhat 'loaded' in order to chase the coveted first team award and the "BRAVO" team was hoping for a strong performance. As all runners congregated at the start point, last minute battle prep was conducted with iPods and shoelaces being the main areas of concern. With the sun shining brightly and the temperature much warmer than anticipated, the starting gun was fired and the race was on. After a cheeky uphill gradient in the first 50 meters, it was steadily downhill towards the finish line, with plenty of support along the route driving everyone on in the hope of achieving a personal best. On finishing and after collecting the obligatory medal and finishers t-shirt, the teams caught up with each other to compare timings and war stories from the route.

With the last minute changes to the teams and our estimates of accumulated times not being the best, our hopes of a podium place were diminishing rapidly. However we remained positive and lots of "it's the taking part that counts" was heard! The prize giving was not a standard affair however. The results and timings were announced in the customary reverse order and we heard the 3rd and 2nd positions going to civilian teams (with accumulated times on par with the 2012 times) and so we held little hope and were all fully expecting the next team announced to be a Baxter's team. How wrong we were and it was announced that 1st place had been awarded to our ALPHA team, catching us all by complete surprise! With a number of us lost for words and with the presentation from CEO of Baxter's Group, it was handshakes and photographs all round. However, it has come to light at the time of writing that there may have been a timing chip malfunction and so what we thought were the definitive results may now not be! Consequently, we may actually be in 2nd place which is a little disappointing having taken the spoils but at least if this is the case, that we are no worse off than last year. We hope this is resolved soon.

Either way our award, along with the 1st and 2nd places in the Baxter's 5km Team Attack earlier in the year, keeps the Battalion's name on the tips of the running community's tongues in these parts as we continue to prove to be the team to try and beat! None of this would have been possible if not for two things: the efforts of Colour Sergeant McBride in registering and assembling two capable teams, despite a number of last minute amendments, and those who took part in the event. We look forward to defending/taking back our title next year!



The winning team (L to R) SSgt Carpenter, Maj Richards, Maj Reid, CSgt McBride, CSgt Taylor and WO1 Shaw.



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If you're a member of the Armed Forces, or the husband, wife or civil partner of someone in the Armed Forces, you can register to vote either as a Service Voter or as an ordinary voter. The way you choose to register to vote is up to you and will depend on your personal circumstances.

If you're based overseas, or expect to be posted abroad in the next year, it makes sense to register as a Service Voter. This allows you to be registered at a fixed address in the UK even if you move around. A Service Voter registration also lasts for five years, so once you're registered, you shouldn't have to worry about it while you're busy overseas.

If you're based in the UK and are unlikely to change address or be posted overseas in the next year, you can register as an ordinary voter. This is the type of registration where you'll receive an annual canvass registration form through the post. This form will be delivered to your home between October 2013 and March 2014. Ordinary voters need to re-register every year (annually). You don't need to wait for the annual canvass if you want to register as a Service Voter.

Remember, 16 & 17 year olds can register but cannot vote until they are 18 except in the Scottish Independence Referendum on 18 September 2014.

For information on registering to vote:

Phone the Freephone Helpline on **0800 393783**

e-mail: **ero@highland.gov.uk**

or write to the Electoral Registration Officer, Moray House,
16-18 Bank Street, Inverness IV1 1QY

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

Battalion Headquarters

CO:	Lt Col PM Little OBE
RSM:	WO Class 1 (RSM) JJ Dickson
2IC:	Maj RJ Barker
Trg Maj:	Maj ARW Watson
Trg Maj (V):	Maj JC MacLellan
QM:	Maj K Wood
RQS:	WO Class 2 (RQMS) S Lawrence
Adt:	Capt CM Grant
Operations Officer:	Capt A Cameron
RAO:	Capt PJ Ward
ROSO:	Capt A McEwen
ROSWO:	WO Class 2 L McDowall
RCMO:	Capt BS Baxter

Headquarter Company

OC:	Maj JS Langdale
CSM:	WO Class 2 R Bustard
Motorised Transport	
WO:	WO Class 2 D Swash
RSO:	Capt I Bunce
Signals Permanent Staff Instructor:	Sgt Duncan

BATTALION OVERVIEW

Since last writing in spring this year, the Battalion has had a busy time both at home in the UK and overseas. 2013 has also seen the announcement of enormous changes in the Reserves, not least in the name, with the Territorial Army now re-launched as the Army Reserve; I have included a specific section later on, outlining how this will affect us in the coming years. And while I have attempted to capture only the 'wave tops' of our activity over the last 6 months, I have included some of the detail from A Company to add additional flavour.

Operations

Afghanistan. March-October 2013 saw the deployment of 14 personnel in support of Operation HERRICK 18, predominantly as part of 2 SCOTS in the Police Mentoring and Advisory Group (PMAG) in Helmand but also in posts in the Headquarters of Task Force Helmand (based on 1 Mechanised Brigade) and the Equipment Support Group. The 6 month tour has seen major change in Helmand with all but a handful of bases now handed over to the Afghans, who now firmly have the security lead in Helmand. Sadly Private Bobby Hetherington (A Company, 7 SCOTS), was Killed In Action after the MASTIFF Heavy Protected Mobility vehicle that he was travelling in struck an IED on 30 April 2013 in the Nahr-e Saraj District of Helmand Province; two members of 2 SCOTS were also killed in the tragic incident.

Cyprus. March-October 2013 also saw the deployment of 4 personnel from the Battalion in support of 17 Port and Maritime Regiment (RLC) on Operation TOSCA 18 on the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Nicosia. UNFICYP was set up in 1964 to curb the fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and became increasingly more important following hostilities in 1974. Whilst it represents a very different type of operation in terms of nature and violence from that of Afghanistan, it does demand a high degree of responsibility and maturity from every individual deployed to continue to manage the delicate situation between the communities.

Overseas Training. The Battalion has been fortunate again in 2013 to have the opportunity to train overseas, this time on exercises in Cyprus and the USA. We deployed to Cyprus during the period 20 April-4 May 2013 with Battalion Headquarters, an Echelon slice and an Infantry Company Group. While the group was predominantly 7 SCOTS, the incorporation of 16 personnel from 2 SCOTS provided an early insight into future regular and reserve pairing mechanisms at the same time as reciprocating the simultaneous operational link that we had for Op HERRICK 18 with our soldiers deployed in Helmand with 2 SCOTS. Small detachments from 7 RIFLES, the Royal Artillery and the Royal Military Police (all Reservists) added wider cap-badge diversity and represented an aspiration to conduct more Combined Arms integration

in the future. Even though the exercise was pitched in the late spring/early summer, the temperatures were still peaking in the mid 90s which made for arduous and challenging training. The use of the landing craft for a beach assault and the occasional use of the light utility helicopter for troop movement added an extra dimension to the exercise that is rarely afforded in the UK, unless training for operations. The continued fostering of relations with our Reserve counterparts in Canada (in this case the 48th Highlanders) and the USA (48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) – Georgia National Guard) paid dividends with the opportunity to conduct training at Fort Stewart, Savannah, Georgia during the period 7-20 September 2013. A 32-man Platoon took part in the exercise that started to see us focus our training back towards the broader spectrum of war-fighting skills as we begin the return to a contingency footing in the British Army. The platoon shared its time between operating as a collective platoon and also dispersing at section level and below across the Companies of the 1-121st Infantry to maximise the learning and sharing of both military and cultural practices; the value in these exchange exercises is enormous, both from a Unit and Individual perspective, and we continue to seek opportunities for overseas training. The A Company notes include a more detailed account of these exercises.

Training in Scotland. While the higher profile training events have been pitched overseas this year, our training in Scotland continues to provide the back bone of our routine readiness and development training. Mandated training to achieve the minimum required efficiency levels is the 'bread and butter' of the Companies on weekly training nights and monthly training weekends. Approximately every 6 weeks the Battalion will group together for a weekend, mainly to deliver greater mass at training events but also to focus on more expansive objectives. On the weekend of 16-18 August we held a Patrols Competition on the Atholl Estates north of Dunkeld. The challenging 40km cross-county circuit of basic military skills stands provided a stern test of our junior commanders and riflemen; the 'Bayonet' was keenly competed for by sections from all Companies with B Company coming out on top, nudging out A Company for the prize. It is our firm intention to compete annually for the trophy and it will constitute one of our signature events; in keeping with the profile of the event we were privileged to host both the General Officer Commanding Scotland (Major General Nick Eeles) and Commander 51 (Scottish) Brigade (Brigadier Paul Harkness) amidst their busy Edinburgh Tattoo schedules. We were also very fortunate to host His Royal Highness the Duke of Rothesay at Barry Budden Ranges on 28 September 2013 at the culmination of a shooting weekend; not only was he kind enough to start the final of the falling plate competition but also award the decommissioned crome SLR to the winning Fire Team – this year from D Company; as always it was a pleasure to see him and he took every opportunity to converse with as many soldiers as possible.

Highland Band and Pipes and Drums. 7 SCOTS continues to retain a strong Military Band numbering 26 musicians and a full Pipes and Drums of 24. Both are keenly sought after for events across Scotland and around the world! The Highland Band deployed in July to conduct its Annual Training Deployment to Gibraltar where it assisted with training of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment Band and delivered a number of musical performances in the picturesque Mediterranean setting. The Pipes and Drums have been also travelled widely with participation in both the Basel Tattoo, Switzerland in July and the Spasskaya Tower Music Festival, Moscow in September; the latter event, as spectacular as one could possibly imagine, was staged on the Red Square in the shadow of St Basil's Cathedral and the Wall of the Kremlin, and will live long in the memory of those who participated in the 75-strong Massed Pipes and Drums. At home, both Bands continue to support military events including the Royal Gun Salutes, Armed Forces Days and Remembrance Parades, and as many engagements with the Community across Scotland as possible; the combined Bands were extremely well received at the Crieff Highland Games in August and Armed Forces Day in Dundee, and 7 SCOTS will continue to identify opportunities to raise awareness of the Battalion (and Royal Regiment of Scotland in general) at a wider range of events in 2014.

Recruiting and Retention

In order to deliver the Army Reserve 2020, a national operation (Op FORTIFY) is now taking place to recruit the additional 11,000 personnel required to meet the 30,000 strong force, trained and deployable, by April 2018. The 7 SCOTS' part in that is significant; the Battalion is currently manned at approximately 45% of the required level in terms of active and effective personnel and will need to grow accordingly. The 7 SCOTS recruiting target of 300 additional Soldiers in the next 30 months will see us at full manning by April 2016, with all personnel trained and integrated by April 2018. Not surprisingly, it constitutes the bulk of our effort and while training and readiness for operations remains our core task, our regular weekly activity is focused at recruiting hard. Indeed, we have a team of Regular augmentees from the other Battalions from the Royal Regiment of Scotland to assist us. The situation will not change overnight but with sustained and focused effort, combined with targeted engagement of employers and local communities, the next 6-12 months should bring tangible improvements in the manning levels.

ALPHA COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Captain JA Valentine
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 T Parker
Permanent Staff	
Administration Officer:	Captain R Reid
Platoon Commander:	Captain H Cannon
Platoon Commander:	2nd Lieutenant R Walker
Platoon Commander:	2nd Lieutenant C Duncan
Senior Permanent	
Staff Instructor:	Warrant Officer Class 2 G Woolley
Permanent Staff Instructor:	Sergeant W Rankin
Permanent Staff Instructor:	Sergeant C Williamson

A Company continues to be at the core of the Battalion's activity and always at the business end! Most prominent of all events during the summer was the Battalion Annual Training Deployment to Cyprus. The Company produced a strong turnout and the soldiers performed well enjoying a challenging but rewarding two weeks. The exercise started with two days on the ranges which gave the soldiers the opportunity to zero their weapons and complete the Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (ACMT) before tackling Live Firing Tactical Training (LFTT). This package also included helicopter and landing craft familiarisation training in preparation for the final exercise. However, this did not always go according to plan, due mainly to the presence on the island of the Red Arrows who were conducting their 'pre-season training' in the sunny skies where flying is almost guaranteed on a daily basis; needless to say, they routinely took priority over their poor foot-slogging cousins and most of their acrobatic circuits overlapped with the range danger area. So, for the best part of two days the soldiers spent as much time watching the Red Arrows as they did firing in the gaps between displays! An adjustment to the programme was needed so the exercising Company moved onto PYLA Ranges to conduct LFTT. This provided the soldiers the opportunity to conduct live firing section attacks over the next three days whilst living in the field. By this time we had acclimatized to the heat and were ready to move onto the dry tactical phase of the exercise. This involved the Company Group deploying to a Forward Operating Base (FOB), to exercise in a conventional scenario

in all aspects of platoon and company tactics. The final attack involved a beach landing and helicopter insertion and a two kilometre uphill assault on withdrawing enemy forces. The final enemy position was assaulted and all enemy were destroyed by Corporal McNiven and his section. Exercise LION STAR 3 finished with a two day R&R package involving adventure training and a beach day. This allowed the soldiers to undertake activities such as: scuba diving, parachuting, mountain biking, water skiing, sea kayaking, followed by a night out in Pathos.

Following Annual Camp the Company continued with the theme of infantry training for the next three months culminating in the Inter Section Patrols Competition on the Atholl Estate. The sections completed a series of stands testing Leadership, Physical Endurance and Military Knowledge. The A Company Section was commanded by Lance Corporal Mellish and was narrowly pipped at the post by the winning Section from B Company. It was a great effort by his Section to finish ahead of more experienced teams and shows that we should not just rely on experience alone and continually practice our skills.

Towards the end of last year the Battalion hosted the 48th Highlanders of Canada and 48 Infantry Brigade Combat Team (48 IBCT) on EXERCISE HIGHLAND SPIRIT. Both of these units, like ourselves, are Reserves and this gave us the chance to share our Reserve experiences. Following this very successful exercise 7 SCOTS were invited to take part in 48 IBCT's pre-deployment exercise, Exercise SOUTHERN BEAR long with 48th Highlanders of Canada. This two week exercise in September was held at Fort Stewart, Georgia with 13 soldiers from A Company forming a large part of the deployed platoon of 32. Fort Stewart is the largest Army installation east of the Mississippi River. It covers 280,000 acres and is approximately 41 miles southwest of the city of Savannah. The value of the training was exceptional with all A Company soldiers performing to the highest standards expected. The climate and training area were very demanding and never previously experienced. Private McNicol performed exceptionally well as a Section 2IC, putting in to practice what he learned from the Section 2IC's Course he attended during the summer. For their hard work and endeavor, Private Gemmil was presented a Battalion Gerber knife from Lieutenant Colonel Hutnick, Commanding Officer of 1/121 Bn, 48 IBCT, and Lance Corporal Keers was presented with a CO's Coin. All soldiers were presented with a Certificate of Appreciation. Private Fleming, having avoided the dangers that the training area presented (which included rattlesnakes and alligators) demonstrated why he did not join the Parachute Regiment when he took to freefalling from his bunk bed, whilst sleeping, at a cost of six surgical staples to the head! Private Christie was in great demand for his piping prowess and performed immaculately during the 9/11 Service of Remembrance. Colour Sergeant Penrice was also on hand to get the G4 chain functioning as part of the first class service provided by our American allies and built some key enabling relationships.

The recently announced basing changes as part of Army Reserve 2020 will see the structure of A Company changing over the next two years. Sadly, Kirkcaldy TAC will close and the Stirling Platoon will resubordinate to D Company but at the same time A Company will expand to take in Aberdeen as B Company is removed from the Order of Battle. The final structure, still to be confirmed, will likely be a Mortar Platoon, Rifle Platoon and Company HQ based in Dundee, and the Javelin Anti-Tank Platoon and a Rifle Platoon based in Aberdeen. As we prepare to implement these changes over the next



LCpl Keers receiving a CO's Coin.



Pte Christie playing at the 9-11 Service of Remembrance.



Ex LION STAR beach landing for the final attack.

few years, we will take our full part in recruiting the Battalion to full strength. We also very much look forward to working more closely with 3 SCOTS as our formally paired Regular Battalion.

We welcome back all but one of our A Company soldiers from deployment on OP HERRICK and OP TOSCA and very much look forward to meeting up with them again. And we will always remember, with great pride, Private Bobby Hetherington, who was Killed In Action in Helmand on 30th April 2013.

We have said farewell to Colour Sergeant Robertson who has been with the company for as long as anyone can remember, having completed his basic training in 1981! He was the backbone of the Recruiting and a stalwart of the Mortar Platoon. He will be sorely missed for his hard work and professionalism over many years. We wish him all the best for the future and his new Recruiting post in Aberdeen, where we hope to continue to keep him linked in to A Company in our future expanded footprint.

Looking forward, the Mortar's have started training for the next live shoot in March 2014 where we hope to integrate with the 3 SCOTS Mortar Platoon. With recruiting and training to the fore, we have a busy winter programme ahead, but the incentive during the cold and dark winter months will be the Annual Training Deployment planned for July 2014 – this time in Spain!



Ex LION STAR 3 Cpl McNiven acts as the helicopter marshall.



Ex LION STAR 3 LCpl Mellish.



The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada

NEW TEAM – SAME TRADITIONS

The Black Watch (RHR) of Canada has been serving Canada for more than 150 years in peace and in war. Throughout this period the regiment has succeeded in adapting to constant changes in society, technology, and doctrine, while maintaining many of the customs and traditions that make this regiment special.

Our soldiers continue to wear the traditional Black Watch uniform including the Red Hackle while on parade, and wear modern combat uniforms while training for operations. Our regimental home has recently been declared a national historic site, but it also has the modern upgrades that are now necessary to operate and train, including a small arms simulator and all of the networking capability necessary to operate in the modern world.

Combining these modern requirements with our historical roots has been a challenge that the Canadian Black Watch has been successfully balancing for the several decades. One of the highlights of this balance was seen this past June during a small unit exchange with the 1-111th Infantry Regiment of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. This past summer being the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Bushy Run, the Canadian Black Watch continued to build on strong relationships with this American regiment due in no small part to their historical link to the Black Watch (RHR). To this day, the 111th Infantry Regiment still holds a place at every mess dinner for a member of the Black Watch (RHR) in remembrance of the battle.



BW soldiers in joint live fire range with 1-111th Infantry Regt US Army.



Change of Command march past.



Change of Command from Lt Col Bruno Plourde to Lt Col Chris Phare.

Part of the maintenance of these links includes taking opportunities to conduct training with our American cousins whenever possible. This year included a 3-week training event, during which a platoon of Black Watch soldiers were incorporated into the 1-111th Scout Platoon to conduct live fire and urban operations training. This was followed by cultural and battlefield tours surrounding the Battle of Bushy Run and historical tours of Philadelphia, (that included a few 'historical' drinking establishments). It was an outstanding event that we will try to maintain in the coming years.

In May, the Regiment conducted the annual Church Parade, when the Regiment marches through the streets of Montreal to the Regimental Church. This was immediately followed by a Change of Command, and a Change of RSM ceremony. It was a spectacular day that saw the Regiment fully turned out in our ceremonial uniform, with the Pipes and Drums and the rest of the regimental family present.

The new command team is committed to maintaining the traditions and pride of the Black Watch name in everything we do. On parade, during training, and on operations, our soldiers and leaders will continue to adapt to the changing realities of the profession of arms, while maintaining the traditions of a proud and distinguished Regiment. Our serving members are proud to be part of this important lineage, while serving their country to the best of their abilities as citizen soldiers in Canada.



Change of Command parade.

meth'od (mthd) *n.*

1. A means or manner of procedure, especially a regular and systematic way of accomplishing something: a simple, uncomplicated but professional method for creating a publication; the method of solving problems.
2. Orderly arrangement of parts or steps to accomplish a publication; random efforts lack Method.
3. The procedures and techniques characteristic of a particular discipline or field of knowledge; printing and publishing methods.

[Middle English, from Latin methodus, publishers to the Ministry of Defence since 1964, publications include: Service Community Official Guides in the United Kingdom and Germany, Regimental Journals, Corps Prospectuses, Garrison Magazines, Envoy, Housing Matters, Homeport, Mascot and many others.]



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Artefacts from The Black Watch of Canada Collection

Editors Note: This is the first instalment of a new series. A similar series has been introduced in the Canada's Red Hackle which will feature artefacts from The Black Watch Museum collection. New instalments will be featured in both Regimental Magazines on a regular basis.

PAINTING, BATTLE OF TICONDEROGA, 1758

In this original watercolour, the 42nd (Highland) Regiment of Foot (Black Watch) is shown storming the breastworks at Fort Carillon (today's Fort Ticonderoga) on Saturday, 8 July 1758. The controversial frontal assault of the French defenses on the Ticonderoga peninsula in upstate New York, approximately 241 km due south of Montreal, was ordered by British General, James Abercromby. Outnumbering the French by four to one, the capture of the strategically located fort seemed all but assured and once in British hands, the road would be open to invade Canada, capture Montreal and Quebec, and put an end to the French and Indian War (1756-1763). The attack, however, would go horribly wrong and result in nearly 2,000 British casualties, the single bloodiest day of the entire war. When at last persuaded to break off the attack, more than half of the men and two-thirds of the officers of the *Gallant Forty-Two* had been killed or wounded. Shortly after the battle, Lieutenant William Grant, a subaltern in the Regiment, wrote: "The affair at Fontenoy was nothing to it, I saw both. I have seen men behave with courage and resolution before now, but so much determined bravery can hardly be equalled. Their ardour was such, that it was difficult to bring them off. When shall we have so fine a Regiment again?" Measuring 54 by 30 cm, the watercolour is signed "C.C.P. Lawson & R.T. Cooper." Cecil Constant Philip Lawson (1880-1967) was principally an illustrator of military uniforms; his magnum opus was *A History of the Uniforms of the British Army*, a multi-volume work published between 1940 and 1967. Richard Tennant Cooper (1884-1957) did poster work for railways, shipping/cruise lines, etc. as well as illustrations for various books. Lawson did accept some special commissions, and this scene of the 42nd at Ticonderoga is likely one of these commissions, although as a collaboration with Cooper, it is



Ticonderoga.

believed to be unique. The watercolour was presented to Canada's Black Watch by Lieutenant Colonel Keith I.D. Stewart in 1949. In 1912, Keith's father, Captain John Stewart, visited Montreal to assist the Canadian Regiment (then designated the Royal Highlanders of Canada) during the presentation of new Colours, and never forgot the friendliness and hospitality which he received while in Canada. John later commanded the Regiment in Scotland, and over his career, amassed a considerable collection of Black Watch artifacts which Keith subsequently increased. When Keith decided to retire to the West Indies in 1948, he divided his collection between the Black Watch Museum in Perth, and the Canadian Regiment's museum in Montreal. [Earl John Chapman, *Canada's Black Watch, 1862-2012: Legacies of Gallantry & Service* (RHC, Montreal, 2012).]

HMS MONTROSE

"THE MOST SCOTTISH SHIP IN THE FLEET"

After sailing from Plymouth in mid-August, and travelling through the Mediterranean, Red and Arabian Seas, MONTROSE transited the Strait of Hormuz in mid-September, ready for almost 6 months of operations in this strategically vital area of the world. For most of her time, MONTROSE will be operating as a part of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), a 29 nation strong partnership that provides ships, submarines and aircraft across the region. CMF warships patrol the waters from the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea, including the Somali Basin and the Persian Gulf, and work together to disrupt and deter the illegal use of the sea whilst reassuring and working with those mariners who are plying their legitimate trade. This is however jumping ahead of where we left off in our last article.

On a glorious Summer's day in August, HMS MONTROSE put to sea for a deployment known as Operation KIPION.

As is traditional, families and friends of the sailors on board turned out in huge numbers to wave the Ship off from Devil's Point and Plymouth Hoe, and, whilst the families waved banners and tearful handkerchiefs, their sailors waved back from the upper deck as they lined the gunwhales in best uniform with their cap tallies, buttons and medals sparkling. As the most Scottish ship in the Fleet, MONTROSE also embarked a bagpiper for the journey down the Tamar, who played appropriately Caledonian tunes as the ship made her way to the open ocean.

In the build up to entering the Op KIPION theatre, MONTROSE spent the three weeks after setting sail preparing crew and equipment for a challenging deployment in the Gulf region. During this period she completed a testing week of Operational Capability Confidence Checks on weapons and sensor systems at Souda Bay, Crete. On completion the ship was proven ready and able to transit the Suez Canal and begin its tasking within the area.

The Gulf region holds a particular importance to the UK and the Royal Navy's presence in the region reassures our allies and deters those who may threaten the security and stability of the region. To ensure that the country can respond to any evolving situation, the Royal Navy has numerous ships and other units in the area throughout the year and HMS MONTROSE is taking her turn.

On the way to theatre, HMS MONTROSE was also part of this year's Response Force Task Group (RFTG) deployment, known as "COUGAR 13".

The RFTG is the UK's scaleable, very high readiness maritime force capable of responding, with a range of capabilities, to crises and world events. One of the main aims of the RFTG and COUGAR 13 is to promote interaction with our allied forces in the region, and as such HMS MONTROSE seized the opportunity to collaborate, in spectacular style, with the Hellenic Navy, in the form of one of their frigates, the HNS KANARIS.

The exercise serials started in the dead of night with both ships attempting to 'hunt' the other using their respective passive detection systems, a cat and mouse scenario that lasted throughout the night proving that each ship was as hard to find as the other. Shortly before the end of the serial both ships located their opponent and, using their sophisticated on board anti surface weapons, engaged in a simulated missile firing. This simulated kinetic interaction was followed by a number of complex and involved communications serials, ranging from flashing lights, through tactical voice procedures, up to electronic warfare.

As the sun was rising on the second day MONTROSE and KANARIS started a set of Officer Of the Watch Manoeuvres, designed to ensure that the ship's bridge teams were prepared for the upcoming gunnery serial. These manoeuvres ensure that the ships are able to work in the same water space at close quarters and high speeds, whilst always main-



Replenishment at sea with RFA Fort Austin was carried out and included the resupply of 4.5 inch rounds.

taining safe distances and, most importantly, not fouling each others weapon arcs.

Once both ships were ready, both ships proceeded to conduct a Mass Fires exercise, which consisted of a simultaneous indirect bombardment on the Karavia NGS range, situated on the islands East of Greece.

The bombardment was ‘called in’ using CLAYMORE (our Lynx Mk 8 helicopter) as an aerial spotting platform, embarked in her were members of 148 Battery from 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery, who passed accuracy reports and firing corrections to the ships. Using her Oto Malara 3 inch gun, KANARIS was first on the range and demonstrated superb accuracy and rate of fire, completing her missions without fault. MONTROSE then put her reliable 4.5 inch Mod 1 turret into action. After 60 rounds of high explosives all missions were complete and all simulated targets had been destroyed.

The ability to fire live rounds in realistic scenarios on a deployment such as this is a crucial part of keeping the tactics and procedures of a ship such as MONTROSE fully up to date, and having conducted a very successful live firing, there was a need to top up the magazine with 4.5inch shells, to replace the ones fired off by the ship’s Medium Range Gun (nicknamed incidentally, as “Stella”).

Normally, re-stocking a warship with high explosive ammunition is a complex but well-practised affair, that takes place in one of the secure “Defence Munitions” sites around the UK, and is subject to stringent safety rules to minimise any possible risk to the surrounding populace or countryside. At sea, thousands of miles from home, the problems are more apparent, as there are few places outside of a select few British Overseas Territories that have the correct combination of permissions from the authorities, stocks of compatible ammunition, and the appropriate explosive safety regulations that can replenish a Royal Navy frigate in need of some ammunition. This is where the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) comes in. One of the vessels in the COUGAR 13 is the RFA FORT AUSTIN, a Fleet “Solid Support Ship” that, although 35 years old and a Falklands War veteran, has recently emerged from a multimillion pound refit, and – amongst many other stores items she has on board for transfer to ships in the Fleet – is specifically able to

transfer ammunition to warships while underway at sea. This activity (termed a “Replenishment at Sea (Ammunition)”, or RAS(A) in the acronymistic vernacular of the RN) is comparatively rarely exercised but is an essential tool in a Commander’s armoury to ensure that warships such as MONTROSE remain topped up with a full outfit of explosive stores, so that she can react to any emergent activity.

As such, in the glistening blue seas north of Crete, the two ships met up for the first RAS(A) conducted by either vessel for many years. Over three hours, the ships steamed alongside each other in inch-perfect formation, connected up by a series of jackstays, telephone lines and other ropework, and FORT AUSTIN successfully transferred several loads of 4.5in shells over to MONTROSE (and took the “empties” back at the same time) under the beating Mediterranean sun. The warship also took the opportunity to receive a top up of the unglamorous, but distinctly important, consumable items such as toilet paper, dishcloths and cleaning products, before carefully and methodically disconnecting, and proceeding on her way for her next rendezvous – Souda Bay.

The next week saw MONTROSE operating out of the naval base in Crete, putting her weapon and sensor equipment through a rigorous programme of tests and trials to ensure that we have confidence in their capability and performance.

Surrounded by the glittering blue Mediterranean Sea and towering mountains of the island of Crete is one of NATO’s Forces Weapon and Sensor Accuracy Check Sites (FORACS). There are several of them around the North Atlantic, and the one hosted by Greece is regularly used by the RN to prove its ships’ capabilities for a final time whilst en route to operational areas in the Persian Gulf and beyond.

FORACS’ extremely capable sensors are used to assess the accuracy and real time performance of ships’, submarines’ and aircraft’s radars, sonars, weapon systems and other electronic equipment. Initially the Ship spent the first day alongside in order to baseline its equipment in a static environment after which, 3 days were spent at sea on the ranges trialling and putting the various sensors through their paces in a much more dynamic and strenuous environment.

With the extra trials staff on board, as well as dozens of the Ship’s Company closed up to monitor and record equipment performance,

MONTROSE was a very busy ship during the testing periods. The days required extreme concentration from the crew to ensure that measurements were accurately recorded at intervals measured, in most cases, in seconds, usually on the prompt of “Standby, Mark”, a phrase that will live with many for a long time! Thankfully, each evening MONTROSE was alongside which allowed the Ship’s Company time off to relax and enjoy the island whilst preparing for the following day.

With another firm ‘tick in the box’ to prove yet again that she is fully ready for her operational deployment, MONTROSE put to sea to continue on her way through the Mediterranean Sea.

Whilst the ship was conducting these tests, the combined Royal Marine and Royal Navy Boarding Teams spent 4 days, operating out of the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operations Training Centre (NMIOTC) at Souda Bay, Crete. They put their Standard Operating Procedures through a rigorous programme of tests and instructional periods to ensure that team members can be confident in their capability and performance.

MONTROSE chose to utilise a bespoke training package that allowed the Royal Marine and Royal Navy elements to focus on their individual tasks, with Royal Marines completing numerous clearance serials whilst Naval personnel focused on search techniques. There were also some shared modules including a particularly interesting insight into Crew Psychology. Despite the intense training and high temperatures an opportunity for down time most evenings still existed with the exception of the RM elements who utilised the dark hours to continue their Tactical training.

Training came together in a Final Test Exercise on the last morning, a simulated Level 2 boarding on a non-compliant vessel with Royal Marine elements completing a clearance of the target vessel which allowed the Royal Navy search team to conduct an exploitation. The scenario was designed to maximise the training benefit to both elements by utilising the full range of skills and drills and was well received all round.

After this short period of checks and training, MONTROSE transited towards Egypt and the Suez Canal. The passage through the iconic Suez Canal, represented a significant milestone in our deployment as it represents the ship’s entrance into the KIPION theatre of operations.

The present Suez Canal was first opened to shipping in 17 November 1869. It is 85 nautical miles in length and joins the Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf of Aden at the northernmost tip of the Red Sea. The canal was cut from Egyptian sands and the remaining length dredged from three lakes, the Timsah, Great Bitter and Little Bitter. The canal is a major shipping route for all types of freight between Europe and Asia, and Egypt earns around £2.5 bn annually for its use.

MONTROSE started the 15 hour transit at 0300 on 2 September. The maximum speed changed at several places throughout the Canal with the narrowest, most dangerous point limiting our speed to just five knots. Onboard throughout the transit were three Suez Canal pilots who each advised on the correct speed and bearing for different parts of the Canal. During the entirety of the passage 50% of the Ship’s Company were closed up to their defence watch positions, which ensured there was someone available to alert the bridge and



HMS Montrose carried out training whilst at Souda Bay, in Crete. It was in this bay in 1941 that the 2nd Battalion The Black Watch landed in Crete.

repair any piece of equipment in the unlikely event that something should go wrong. Defence watches also meant there was increased security around the ship, our ships protection force and embarked Royal Marines kept a constant look out over the North African sands. GPMGs and Miniguns were deployed and ready at a moments’ notice should anyone decide to attack the ship.

Over three million barrels of oil pass through the Bab al-Mandeb Straits alone each day, and the Royal Navy performs a vital role in securing this and other waterways in the region to safeguard supplies of energy to the British economy.

After sailing through the Red and Arabian Seas, MONTROSE transited the Strait of Hormuz in mid-September, ready for almost 6 months of operations in this strategically vital area of the world.

Over the deployment, there will be numerous operations and exercises but the main effort will be to support the UK’s Maritime Component Commander, based in the Kingdom of Bahrain but who works directly for the Chief of Joint Operations in Northwood. The Commodore and his staff command the year-round presence of high-readiness Royal Navy warships, submarines and helicopters that provide HM Government with a choice of options in the event of a humanitarian crisis or deterioration in regional security.

MONTROSE is at sea and working with other RN and CMF warships in the Persian Gulf, fighting through the heat to maintain the UK’s presence alongside our enduring partners to ensure that the world’s shipping can safely ply their trade in the vital sea lanes of the region.

So, when you are having a wee dram this Christmas, take a moment to think of the Officers, Sailors and Marines of the ‘most Scottish ship in the Fleet’ who will still be deployed overseas on operations, for many more months to come.



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Angus and Dundee Battalion Army Cadet Force

OVERVIEW

Angus and Dundee Battalion have yet again had a very busy year. We have sent Adults and Cadets to Cyprus, to America for Devil Pups and have attended the various sporting events that are annually on the calendar. The Hockey Competition was one of our proudest moments as we have scored a hat trick by winning the girls hockey for the 3rd year running. Prior to Annual Camp, our Commandant Colonel Cassidy received an OBE for his service and commitment to the ACF after being in the organisation for 47 years.



Adult Enrolment Sergeants Natalie Small and Dionne Milne with Deputy Commandant Scott Dunn.

Earlier this year an enrolment ceremony took place at Barry Buddon with 2 PI's receiving their Sergeant stripes from our new Deputy Commandant, Lieutenant Colonel Scott Dunn. After declaring their allegiance and support to the Cadet movement, Natalie Small and Dionne Milne were presented with their rank slides.

Another change in the Battalion this year is the retirement of our Honorary Colonel, Colonel Kenneth Simpson TD MBE. Colonel Simpson has been a keen supporter for many years being Commandant



Outgoing Commandant Colonel Cassidy saying farewell to Honorary Colonel Kenny Simpson at Altcar.

first then being elected to become our Honorary Colonel. He was dined out at the Officers' Mess Regimental Dinner held at Altcar and was given a framed copy of a pipe tune, composed by Major George Smith.



Incoming Commandant Colonel Passmore at his first event with swimmers from Angus and Dundee Battalion.

It was interesting trying to get a Battalion Swimming team together this year. E-mails seem to be a thing of the past as Facebook has become the way to find volunteers. Within a week, a team of 19 Cadets had shown interest in taking part in the competition. Trials did not take place due to various other events and commitments however, the team did not disappoint as 8 Cadets won individual medals and the junior girls took a silver medal in the relay team. This was the first event that our new Commandant, Colonel Passmore was on hand to see.



Angus Outreach Programme led by Major Craig Methven.

Major Craig Methven organised an Outreach Programme for 12 young people from Angus. Development workers Gus Robb, Hazel Coutts and Tracy Morgan from the Local Multi Agency Team (LMART), part of Angus Council worked in conjunction with Major Methven to co-ordinate some military training. It was held at Barry Buddon during September and October to show the boys some of the activities that the ACF do. Major Methven was supported by 5 other Battalion staff, 2Lt Daryl Barr, UO Sarah Ironside, SMI Pauline O'Donahue, SSI Brian Smith and Sergerant Ann Fordyce. Also helping out were two senior Black Watch Cadets, CSM Glenn Burnett and RSM Dale Petrie who were only too willing to help. This was the last Outreach Programme to be held in Scotland this year.

CSM Stephanie Barr from Carnoustie Detachment, along with Stephanie's parents were invited to attend the Lord Lieutenant's home at Balmadies near Forfar to receive her Lord Lieutenant's Badge and Certificate earlier this year. Stephanie went through a very tough selection process to be selected as this year's Lord Lieutenant's Cadet of Angus. The Lord Lieutenant herself suggested that the photo should be taken outside in her front garden amongst the daffodils. Stephanie is a very worthy recipient of the award.

Cadet RSM Dale Petrie, also from Carnoustie BW Detachment was another worthy recipient of awards this year. Firstly, he was promoted to Cadet RSM, the first from Angus for many years and secondly, Dale



Cadet CSM Stephanie Barr receiving her Lord Lieutenant's Badge and Certificate from Lord Lieutenant of Angus Mrs Georgiana Osborne.



Cadet CSM Joe McKinney receiving the Top Cadet award from Colonel Cassidy.



Cadet RSM Dale Petrie receiving his Master Cadet Badge from Colonel Passmore.



The Best Detachment Trophy was awarded to Grove Detachment and was received by Cadet Jasmine Gray.

was recently presented with his Master Cadet Badge by Colonel Martin Passmore.

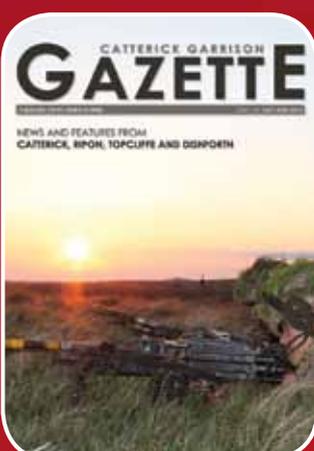
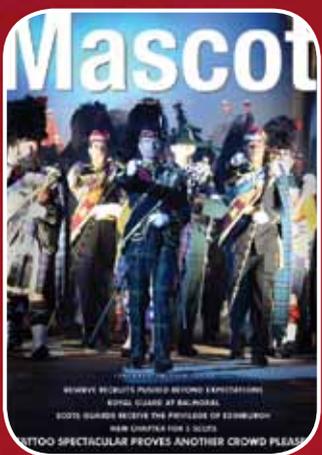
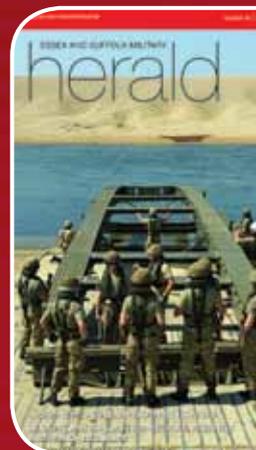
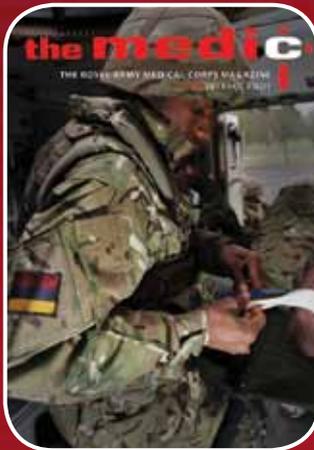
Cadet CSM Joe McKinney from Kirriemuir BW Detachment was presented with a trophy as the top Battalion Cadet at the end of Annual Camp at Altcar. Again, there was a rigorous selection process that had to be gone through before he was selected. Joe was a previous Devil Pup who excelled so much that he was invited back to be an instructor. Joe was therefore a worthy winner of the Top Cadet Award.

Grove BW Detachment, based in Broughty Ferry has also had a very good year being presented with the Best Detachment Trophy. Carnoustie BW Detachment and the Engineers Detachment were joint runners up this year. The trophy was received by Cadet Jasmine Gray.

Annual Camp was as usual, a busy time. The first week saw the Star Boards being carried out by enthusiastic and committed adults and promotions and awards galore, much to the delight of the Cadets. The second week was the time that everyone could relax and take part in the organised Adventure Training. The Cadets were divided into 4 groups with a round robin of 4 activities over a 4 day period. This consisted of Aerial Extreme, Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Water Sports and In Camp Activities. It also involved a Drill Competition, a Pace Stick and Banner Drill Competition and a Church Parade which is definitely a highlight of the camp. To see nearly 400 cadets and Adults marching through Formby was very impressive. The locals enjoyed the spectacle too. The church service itself was enjoyable.

At present we are all aware that there are due to be a few changes under the new Commandant so we will all wait with eager anticipation as to what exactly will happen. At the moment, everything is looking very good.

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Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force

It does not seem six months since the last Red Hackle was produced but on reviewing the time it is amazing what has been fitted into the intervening period. While these notes cover the main events, there are numerous other activities which the cadets have enjoyed but which space precludes from being mentioned.

SPRING CAMP

The first major Battalion activity of the year was Spring Camp. In the week leading up to this year's camp the weather was atrocious- very cold with heavy snow showers throughout the country. As a result those responsible for the plans revisited them just before camp to ensure all eventualities were covered. Once again the three hundred and eighty four cadets and ninety four adults of the Battalion were joined by cadets from the Durham and Northumberland Wing Air Training Organisation and a number of Sea Cadets from throughout the country. The main focus of the training was on the Star Board training and testing which kept everyone busy from morning to night. Throughout the week there was a constant buzz which was a reflection of the energy and effort everyone put into what they were doing and some of the activities they did were certainly quite challenging. Additionally, during the camp RSMI Smith ran a well received two day course for potential Adult Instructors and a First Aid Course was also held. There are many advantages to having a Military Band as part of the establishment. This year they were joined by musicians from both the Sea Cadets and the Air Cadet Organisation and, as well as practising their musical skills, each day they played various bugle calls. Perhaps the most memorable one was Retreat when the Battalion flag was lowered at 6 pm accompanied by the sound of The Last Post being played.

On the final day of camp, the Battalion welcomed a number of visitors including The Lord Lieutenant of Fife and Mr Dean, Brigadier Harkness, Assistant Chief Constable Penman, Wing Commander Harris and Lieutenant Commander Stewart. As well as seeing and talking to the cadets they also attended the final parade and prize-giving. The prizes given out included a brooch to Staff Sergeant Sammy Mackenzie



Cadet Staff Sergeant Megan Campbell represented the Black Watch Battalion ACF at Westminster Abbey for HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Service.

for achieving her Duke of Edinburgh's Gold award. It was not possible to pick a best cadet from the recruit cadre and so it went to them all with Cadet Low picking it up on their behalf. The Champion Company trophy was presented by Brigadier Harkness to Ypres Company. Spring Camp was also the last camp for the Commandant, Colonel Martin Passmore who, after fourteen years with the Battalion, six of which were as Commandant, has left to be Commandant of the Angus and Dundee Battalion. He will be much missed and the Battalion owes him a huge debt for all he has done. He handed over on 1 May to Colonel Jamie Erskine. He was replaced as Deputy Commandant by Lieutenant Colonel Craig Hubbock who came from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Battalion.

BETWEEN CAMPS

There was no respite between Spring and Summer camps. Apart from the normal activities, it was a time for various competitions. On 12 April Second Lieutenant Jenni Gerrard organised teams to take part in the ACFA Scotland Tug of War and Football competitions. The boys' tug of war team came second while the girls' hockey team came third out of six teams. Unfortunately the ACFA Sports Day had to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. This was a shame because the Sports Officer, Sergeant Taylor, had managed to encourage more cadets than ever before to represent the Battalion. It is hoped the same enthusiasm will exist next year. The Brigade First Aid competition took place at MOD Caledonia at the beginning of June. The Cadet team came a very creditable third, a position the Young Adult team equalled.

Two other events worth noting took place in June. Brigadier Jameson, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, arranged for Cadet Staff Sergeant Megan Campbell to attend the Service that was held in Westminster Abbey to mark the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty The Queen's Coronation. On 24 June a number of cadets from Alma and Korea Companies paraded at Balhousie Castle when it was officially reopened by The Lord Lieutenant following its rebuild.

SUMMER CAMP

And so to Summer Camp. "Are we going to have to send all the cadets home as soon as they arrive?" That was not the first decision the new Commandant expected to have to make on the first day of his first camp. Nevertheless that was the one with which he was faced. Someone in their infinite wisdom had turned off the camp's water supply on the preceding day and no one could be found to turn it back on. The camp was literally dry. However, after twelve hours of phoning various people and the odd veiled threat, the water was turned on with about thirty minutes to spare before the first cadets arrived. All was well.

This year's Summer Camp was spent at Ripon which, although looking rather tired, suited the Battalion's needs well. As well as the Companies, the Military Band and a few members of the Pipes and Drums came to camp and once again, the Durham and Northumberland Wing Air Training Organisation joined in. Their cadets were fully integrated within the Companies and, in return, they arranged for a number of the Black Watch Battalion cadets to go gliding.

The Companies rotated round four main activities. Each Company ran a forty eight hour exercise on the local training area; the Deputy Commandant arranged a day of command tasks and other activities; a day was spent on various ranges and a day was spent at the local theme park enjoying the delights of big dippers and roller coasters.

On the last day there were drill and sports competitions before the final parade and prize giving. This year Major Jim Macintosh, late GORDONS, whose forty second (what a good number) and last camp this was, presented the prizes before the cadets marched past him as the bands played 'Cock O' The North'. The prizes were mainly for the sporting events with Alma Company winning the Junior Football and Male Tug of War competitions, Burma winning the Female Junior Football competition and Ypres winning the Female Tug of War competition. The Sea Cadets did well in the cross country matches, although Cadet Lance Corporals Gray and Thomas (both Korea), Watson (Alma) and Boyle (Korea) each won their respective events. Korea Company won the shooting competitions although the best shot was Cadet Coutts from Ypres Company. Blairgowrie detachment won the Colonel of the Regiment's Inter Detachment competition.



Commander 51 Brigade, Brig Harkness presents the Best Recruit trophy to Cadet Low who collected it on behalf of all the recruits.

POST CAMP ACTIVITIES

While the Detachments continued to meet during July and August, they all had some time off as they are generally the quieter months of the year. However, Captain Sue Truscott did run some Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions. This year the warm weather made them very testing but then so they should be. The Band was honoured to be invited to play at the dedication service for the renovated Korean War Memorial in West Lothian and then went to Belgium to take part in the Loreley Tattoo. In addition, Under Officer Barnes and Cadet Corporal Marion Mackenzie (Stanley) spent the summer in Canada on Exercise Connaught. The last major event in this period was the ACFA Scotland Swimming Championships in September when thirteen cadets represented the Battalion. Although there were no individual winners they all acquitted themselves very well and deserved a lot of credit for their efforts.

CHANGES

There have been a number of changes of personnel within the Battalion since the last notes were written. Some have been mentioned above but the selection of the Training Officer, Major Ewan Marshall, to be Deputy Commandant of the Lothian and Borders Battalion resulted in a reshuffle of a number of appointments including three Company Commanders. In addition, a new Padre, The Reverend David Logan, joined the Battalion in the Spring and did not take long to find his feet.

Of those who have left, Major Douglas Pover retired from the Army Cadet Force after over thirty years with it. During that time he held a variety of posts but it is probably for the OUTREACH project he ran that he will be best remembered; a project of which he was justifiably very proud. By the time these notes are published Major Jim Macintosh will have handed over the appointment of Cadet Executive Officer.



Colonel Jamie Erskine Commandant of The Black Watch Battalion ACF presents Colonel Passmore with a photographic record of his time as Commandant.

'Jim Mac' as he was affectionately known, did twenty one years in the job and there was little he did not know about the cadets. He was an excellent sounding board, a mine of information, a source of wise advice, fun to be with but above all someone who had the best interests of the cadets at heart. He has truly earned his retirement.

The changes have not just been confined to personnel. The Blairgowrie Detachment has moved into a fantastic new building and by the end of the year Crieff Detachment, temporarily accommodated in Morrison's Academy will also have new premises.

LOOKING AHEAD

As the new academic year starts and these notes are being written, the momentum once again begins to build within the Battalion for the autumn. There is much to look forward to in the coming months and years but the priority must be to attract new cadets. This will be the immediate focus for everyone.

Association News

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

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

Welfare Committee:
Lieutenant Colonel R I Rose, TD – Chairman
Major R J W Proctor, MBE – Secretary
Mr J Baird
Mr J Devlin
Mr H Dunn
Major G Grant, MBE, MM
Major R C B Ritchie, MBE
Mr R Scott, JP
Mrs I Shivas
Mr G Ross

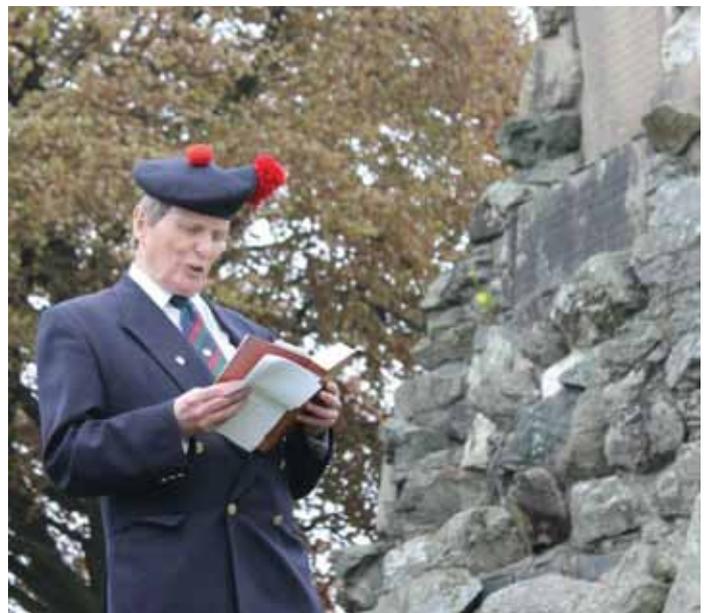


ABERFELDY MUSTER

The fourth Aberfeldy Muster held since the Regiment was removed from the Order of Battle took place on a sunny 19th of May 2013. It celebrated the 273rd anniversary of the first muster of the Regiment in May 1740 and the open air Kirk Service was conducted by The Reverend Canon Peter Allen who served in the 1st Battalion from 1955-1957.

About 140 people attended the Service including Lieutenant Colonel Adrian Reilly the current Commanding Officer of 3 SCOTS, Major John Bailey who commands the Golden Don and Major Jim Reid who commands B Company. RSM Shaw who started his career in The Black Watch and 8 soldiers also joined the congregation and were welcomed to the lunch in the Kenmore Hotel after the Service.

The next Muster will be held in 2015 and will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Battles of Quatre Bras (16 June 1815) and Waterloo (18 June 1815).



REGIMENTAL REUNION 2013







Angus Branch members and guests at the Old Parish Church Service on 15 September 2013 (with credit to DC Thomson).

ANGUS BRANCH

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

We congratulate the latest additions to our octogenarian members namely Jock Paton and Bill Tindal who have reached the age of four score years and look remarkably healthy and fit, both regularly attend Branch meetings and events and long may they continue to do so. Another two members who are catching up fast will be mentioned in the next edition of these notes.

Our monthly meetings and events continue to be well attended and we thank the committee and staff of the Royal British Legion Forfar which incidentally is reputed to be the oldest RBLs Club in Scotland for their generosity and support. Mr John Henderson who is our oldest member aged 92 drove into Forfar from Gourdon in North Angus to attend one of our last meetings; he was completely on his own and stayed for a bit of crack after the business and then drove himself home. I think it must be the sea air or water in the area which allows him to be so spry and fit.

The Aberfeldy muster was well attend by members and was enjoyed by all who were present. Unfortunately our chairman Major Ronnie Proctor had a short vacation in Ninewells Hospital and our Branch President, Lieutenant Colonel Fred Beattie stood in and carried out his duties as both lesson reader and marshal during the outdoor service at the memorial.

George Myles managed a trip to Westminster Abbey along with 11 other Black Watch Korean War veterans to attend the 60th anniversary of the signing of the truce Memorial Service. The veterans formed up at Horse Guards Parade and then marched to Westminster Abbey to take part in what was a most memorable service.

All those who attended the annual Regimental Reunion enjoyed the event despite the downpour of rain which interrupted the prize draw towards the end of the day. Again the Branch was well represented and our Branch Standard was on parade with those of the other Scottish Branches of the Association.

Our annual Branch Standard rededication Service took place on the 15th of September in Glens and Kirriemuir Old Parish Church in the centre of the town. The service was attended by some 46 members and the guests of honour were Mrs Georgiana Osborne the Lord Lieutenant of the County Of Angus and Deputy President of The Black Watch Association and her husband James, Councillor Helen Oswald the Provost of Angus and her husband Ed and Colonel Alex and Mrs Ina Murdoch the Association Chairman. Lord Airlie who is a Patron of the Project Balhousie Appeal was also present.

The Reverend Malcolm Rooney conducted the service and summed up the ethos of the Regimental Association very well in his excellent and thought provoking sermon. Lessons were read by Vice Chairman Peter Tindal and Secretary Tom McLuskey and the Standard Bearer Party consisted of Standard Bearer John Glen with Jock Paton and Bob Mutch as escorts. Pipe Major Peter Snaddon our Branch Piper piped

the Standard in and out of the church and played before and after the service to the enjoyment of the congregation. The event finished at the RBLs Clubrooms, Forfar with a three course lunch which was enjoyed by all.

John Glen our Branch Standard bearer has been in popular demand as he attended the Angus Armed Forces day parade in Arbroath on the 29th June along with the Chairman who was on the Saluting Dais and a good number of the Branch who marched through the town led by the Vice Chairman. He also attended the Dedication of the refurbished Korean War Memorial near Bathgate which was attended by the Chairman and Black Watch Korean War veterans on the 27th of July.

The preparations for the unveiling of the Great War Black Watch Corner memorial continue apace with the Chairman and Secretary being actively involved in the project and both recently having returned from separate visits to the site.

Our next major function is our annual El Alamein dinner which will take place on the 19th of October with guests from The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland, Colonel Alex Murdoch the Association Chairman and the Association President and Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross, Brigadier Mel Jameson. We hope it will be as enjoyable and successful event as it has been in previous years.

Our Vice President Major David McMicking has been ill for quite some time and has been fighting back against a major illness. He is making good progress towards a full recovery and we wish him every good wish and hope to see him back in the fold before too long, we also extend our congratulations to both David and Janetta on becoming grandparents once again.

Lastly we report the sad passing of Willie Longmuir, George Law and Dennis Cruickshanks who were all Arbroath men and regimental characters who contributed much to the Regiment during their service. Our sympathies and condolences go to their families.

R J W Proctor

DUNDEE BRANCH

Lieutenant Colonel Roland Rose, Majors Jim Conners and Ritchie and Messrs Willie Barr and John McNiven attended the Association AGM and enjoyed the meeting, a good lunch and even better conversation. Our ex Branch President, Colonel Alex Murdoch, was re-elected as the Association Chairman.

The Branch then attended the Regimental Muster that was held on 19th May in Aberfeldy. The Dundee contingent missed the beginning of the proceedings due to heavy traffic but soon caught up with all our old friends. This was followed by the Regimental Reunion at Balhousie Castle, on 22nd June, and many old friendships were renewed. A week later, the Branch turnout for Dundee's Armed Forces Day on 29th June was very good and the veterans contingent was commanded by Major Dave Ritchie.

The Dundee Branch repeated the Church Service to commemorate the Battle of Loos, which began on 25 September, 1915. This battle is very important to Dundonians as most households in the City suffered loss from this battle, the majority of these losses being Black Watch. The Service took place on Sunday 22nd September this year and we still aim to make it an annual gathering, with the aim of building up to the centenary in 2015.

We bid a sad farewell to George "Dod" Barr who died recently; he was an ex member of 1st Battalion Pipes and Drums, a CSM with 1/51 Highland and a long standing member of the Branch.

The Branch continues to hold its monthly meetings in the Black Watch Club in Artherstone Terrace on the last Sunday of each month at 12.00 noon. All serving or ex members of the Regiment are welcome to attend and all members would be glad to see you. Finally, the Red Hackle Dinner will be held on 31 January 2014.

D M Ritchie

FIFE BRANCH

It only feels like yesterday since I sat down and wrote our Branch Report; maybe time does fly past faster as you get older. We start off in May and at our AGM lots of business was discussed and debated and a great deal of sense voiced but one of the highlights of the meeting, was a donation of £200 from Bill Watson on behalf of the Archie Peacock Appeal. Two days later we were off to Aberfeldy for the biennial Service and lunch to commemorate the forming of our Regiment. It was well attended by the Branch Members and it is always a good excuse to meet others we have not seen for a while.

It was then on to our Regimental Reunion and I have only heard good reports about the new build. Members are pleased that the extension had been kept in the style of the castle. Staying in the month of June, members travelled to Cupar for the raising of the Armed Forces Day Flag. The Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Margaret Dean a good friend of the Regiment and Fife's Provost Jim Leishman (the brother of our Dod) was also in attendance. Fife Council then invited us to the town chambers for refreshments.

We had a regular meeting a few days after the parade and it was during this meeting our Pipe Banner was displayed to the members attending. The members also gave me the authority to go ahead and purchase the Black Watch watches advertised in the last copy of the Red Hackle and we are now awaiting their arrival with great expectation. We had a bit of a quiet period due to holidays but on the 15th September we met with our Ladies for our annual 'Alma' Lunch. 52 sat down to lunch and



Alma Lunch.

as is our custom, we extended an invite to Val Elder and Brenda Gow as widows of past members. It was good to see everyone enjoy their lunch and have a table made up of Atkinson's or "Ag the bags" as we know them. We have also had our more unfortunate duties to attend when Regimental Family members die, but I would like to thank the Branch members for their support on these occasions. I know it is always appreciated by the families.

The funeral of Tom Cameron was well attended and I am sure knowing Tom he would have wondered what all the fuss was about. Lastly, a few months ago the statue of a Soldier on top of the East Wemyss War Memorial was stolen but fortunately the thieves must have panicked and discarded it in a local Cemetery. It was recovered and placed back on its plinth and we were invited to a Rededication Service in East Wemyss. It has been a busy 6 months.

R Scott



The East Wemyss War Memorial.



Mrs Margaret Dean and Mr Rob Scott at the service to re-dedicate the East Wemyss Memorial.



The Fife Branch Standard on parade at Cupar and carried by Bill Gunning.



Some of the Fife Branch on parade.



Fife Branch visit to the Battalion at Fort George.



Members of the Fife Branch visited the Battalion and were briefed on new weapons systems during their visit to Fort George.

HIGHLAND BRANCH

Chairman: John Stevenson
Vice Chairman: Joe Barbour
Secretary: Gordon Kennedy

Like most Branches our aim is to maintain and increase our membership where possible and we would like to welcome our latest members to the Highland Branch. They are Sergeant Eddie Nicoll, Shaun Scroggie and Mark Rankin. Eddie like the Chairman hails from Dundee but supports different colours as they remind each other frequently. We have also made contact with Jim Mathew a veteran who served with the Battalion from 1953-55. Jim was born and bred in Aberfeldy but now enjoys his pace of life on the Black Isle north of Inverness. He celebrates his 80th birthday in October.

Our main event for the year was the Aberfeldy ladies dinner and with kind permission of RSM Shaw it was held in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess in Fort George. We had the great pleasure of having the Association Chairman, Colonel Alex Murdoch and his wife Ina as our main guests along with Lieutenant Colonel Roland Rose and Maureen. The normal suspects were in attendance: Barrs, Dryburghs, McMillans and the Chairman's mother and father, just to name a few.

It is a real privilege to take the Branch to such a venue and to give our outside guests and our own members that never made it into the Mess the opportunity to enjoy the ambiance and history of the building. Colonel Alex addressed the Branch with a positive overview of all matters relating to our Branches and the on going work that is being carried out on our behalf. A fantastic venue and dinner was enjoyed by all.

Also in this period we had Branch members marching behind John Anderson the Branch Standard Bearer, when he paraded the Branch Standard at the Armed Forces Day in Inverness. The Branch are now preparing for the November Remembrance Parade and the trip to Black Watch Corner.

Monthly Meetings

10th December 2013

14th January 2014

11th February 2014

March 2014 – Aberfeldy Dinner tbc (brought forward from May due to Belgium trip)



John Stevenson and Alec Brown enjoy a dram.



"Old and bold" – Alec Brown, Paddy Marshall, Davy Roy and Alec Wilson at the Aberfeldy Dinner.

LONDON BRANCH

The poets may regard this as a time of 'mellow fruitfulness' but as I sit down – belatedly I'm afraid – to write the London Branch notes, I find that my head is bereft of thought, an infertile plain: more a time of 'hollow emptiness'! So, as they used to say in a part remembered and long gone American TV show, "just give them the facts man".

In June some 13 Branch members enjoyed the spectacle and ceremony of Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, where the Reviewing Officer this year was HRH The Duchess of Cornwall. It was a pleasant, sunny day and the occasion was greatly enjoyed by those attending. This was followed up in July by the next highlight of our summer calendar, the Not Forgotten Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, attended by 18 Branch members. It was a warm but overcast day, with the threat of rain throughout. Happily the rain



Tam and Trudy Drummond at the Palace.



Ian and Dot Elphick mingle with the crowd.



Dot and Trudy allow the Yeoman of the Guard to win the best hat contest.



Ian Elphick, Geoff and Ann Glover and Bill Parr.

stayed away until almost the end of the afternoon, so the guests and HRH The Princess Royal and Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence stayed dry but the Band of the Life Guards unfortunately got a little wet on the march off.

It is well known that members of the London Branch tend to be a versatile and cosmopolitan bunch, to be found in various parts of the globe. Chic Mackie, formerly the Tower of London Piper, fits easily into this category and I was delighted to receive an update from him earlier in the summer. Since January 2013 he has been in Doha Qatar as the piping instructor to the Qatar Military, where he trains and advises four pipe bands and a camel band. He says that the standard of piping is very high and the Arabic music is truly fascinating to play and listen to. The following is a précis from his letter:

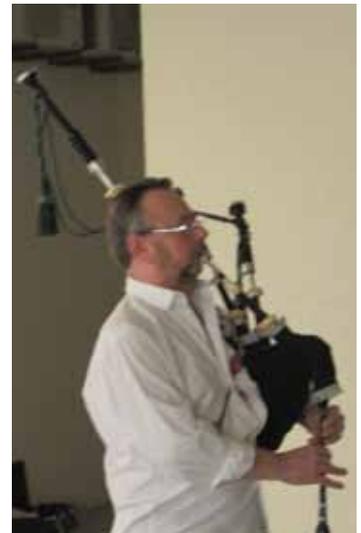
“The first tune I heard the bands play was Highland Laddie, so I gave them a lecture on why this is so important to a Black Watch man. My copy of the new BW Pipe Tune book was snatched from my firm

grasp and much discussion took place about it in Arabic. Of necessity I am learning Arabic very quickly, while my pipers are learning the finer points and nuances of the Scottish language equally quickly!

To my shock and horror I was told that I had to be able to play the pipes whilst on a camel. The first time I sat on the camel I immediately fell off – first lesson in the use of fine Scottish language! – but much to the Camel Major’s delight, despite being bruised and embarrassed and in true Black Watch fashion, immediately climbed back on again. For this the pipers rewarded me with a round of sincere applause. Lesson 1. When you fall from a camel you must hold the pipes up and away from you. The first question asked is always “are the pipes okay?”

Great stuff Chic. It is good to know that the Red Hackle is now instantly recognised in Doha Qatar and we hope to see you and your bands at The Edinburgh Tattoo at some time in the future.

The Branch summer events ended on a high with a very successful lunch, organised by Joe Hubble and held at ‘The Albert’, a favourite Branch watering hole in London. Numbers were slightly down as a result of illness on the day but it was good to see some ‘fresh faces’ attending. We now move into a busy time for the



Chic has a quiet blow (dismounted!).



The camels are coming.

London Branch with the various Remembrance events and our annual dinner in November.

We were sorry to learn of the death of Dennis Hall on 29 May 2013. Dennis was an ex 7th Battalion man we met at the Buckingham Palace Garden Party in the summer of 2012. He was living at the Dunkirk Memorial House in Taunton, where he was a popular resident. Readers who save their Red Hackle magazines might like to refer to edition No. 052 of November 2005 in which Dennis had two articles published about his time in the Black Watch.

Jim Keating

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE BRANCH

A number of our more intrepid members took to the road for Aberfeldy in May. You may think that this was no great undertaking, however, when I explain that one of our comrades was seen, fleetingly, between rain squalls, as he searched for the bus outside Newcastle central station and despite sending out rescue parties it still took about twenty minutes to locate and rescue the person concerned, I think you may have an idea of the conditions prevailing. As we left the station and headed out of the City, the driver decided that the Scotswood Road would provide the best exit. Within ten minutes, we were up to the axles in flood water and making a considerable bow-wave as we navigated our way around stranded vehicles. Eventually we climbed out of the river valley only to be engulfed by the low cloud. "The forecast said there would be showers" came the cheerful cry from our Burma Star voyager, which drew inevitable retorts about monsoons etc.

We settled down for the long haul and eventually stopped, for a mug of tea and a bread roll, on a bleak and blasted moor. I half expected to see three old crones boiling a kettle over an open fire but I was assured that a hostelry was nearby, somewhere in the mist. "Just spread out and luk" said the driver but infantry training came to the rescue and I insisted that no one "spread out". We had had enough bother finding Jimmy at the station. Listening with great care, well, those of us who can still hear, we detected the rattle of crockery and accoutrements from a nearby cloud bank.

The inner man being satisfied, we prepared to resume our journey. "Where did you leave the bus, Colin" I asked. The abuse with which this very reasonable enquiry was met cannot be reported in the pages of this respectable publication, sufficient to say that I was fortunate indeed to be allowed on the bus,... when we finally found it. As we passed Berwick, the weather relented and improved to a torrential downpour, driven by a force nine north easterly gale. The ring road around Edinburgh was safely negotiated and we approached the Forth Road Bridge. By now, the wind had eased to a more reasonable level and we were allowed to cross. We reached Perth safely and hastened to get our accommodation allocated. The castle was not open so, whilst everyone debated a plan of action, I headed for the nearest public house. I didn't see hide nor hair of any of our travellers until the next morning at breakfast.

One of our company was in some distress, as a result of an on-going problem with his hip and knee joints. This was a concern to us all. None the less, he was ready to leave at departure time and we took the road north once again. Conditions were now much improved, with only a light drizzle from time to time. A sports car rally was in progress and as they were all open touring vehicles, the occupants must have been quite damp as they leap frogged past us.

Eventually arriving at the riverside assembly point, we met with old friends and chatted to the representatives of the Battalion prior to the start of the service. The occasion is always tinged with nostalgia and somehow reinforces the values that we still live by and the reason that we all stay loyal to the Hackle.

The journey back was uneventful until we reached Berwick, where we were waylaid by two persons of the female variety. These ladies were determined to find out who we were and where we were going, or had been. Both were Canadians and members of the Canadian Legion. They were great fun and we enjoyed a welcome break from the pleasures of travelling whilst replenishing our fluid levels which had been sadly neglected.

In June, we travelled north once more for the Annual Reunion. Having missed the gathering in 2012, a determined effort ensured our attendance in 2013. The trip was uneventful although, our Chairman was unable to make the journey by coach however, he made the trip by train just to ensure his presence.

There were mixed feelings about the results of the refurbishment of the Castle, some thinking that the new wing was at the wrong side of



The late John Murray of the Tyneside Scottish and Black Watch.

the building. Everyone agreed that the facilities were much improved and that the museum was enhanced by the revised displays.

The re-enactment group did well, given the conditions and seemed impressed with the reception that they received. All in all, apart from the raffle in which we were purchasers of non-participating tickets, it was a good day out. Travelling back on the Sunday, we stopped in Edinburgh for lunch and for the ladies to spend the remaining funds in their husbands' pockets.

We were sorry to read, in the last issue of the Hackle, that our friend and Branch Member, John Murray had died. John visited France with members of the Branch and some of the Tyneside Scottish lads. Whilst there, he gave a talk in the local church about the Battle of Rauray in which he had been wounded. We enclose a photograph of John in happier times.

Malcolm Dunn

PERTH BRANCH

President: Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Roddy Riddell
Chairman: Captain Alan McEwen
Treasurer: Winky Greer
Secretary: Jim Sandilands

Back into September already. The Branch has been very active these past four months since I wrote in the May edition.

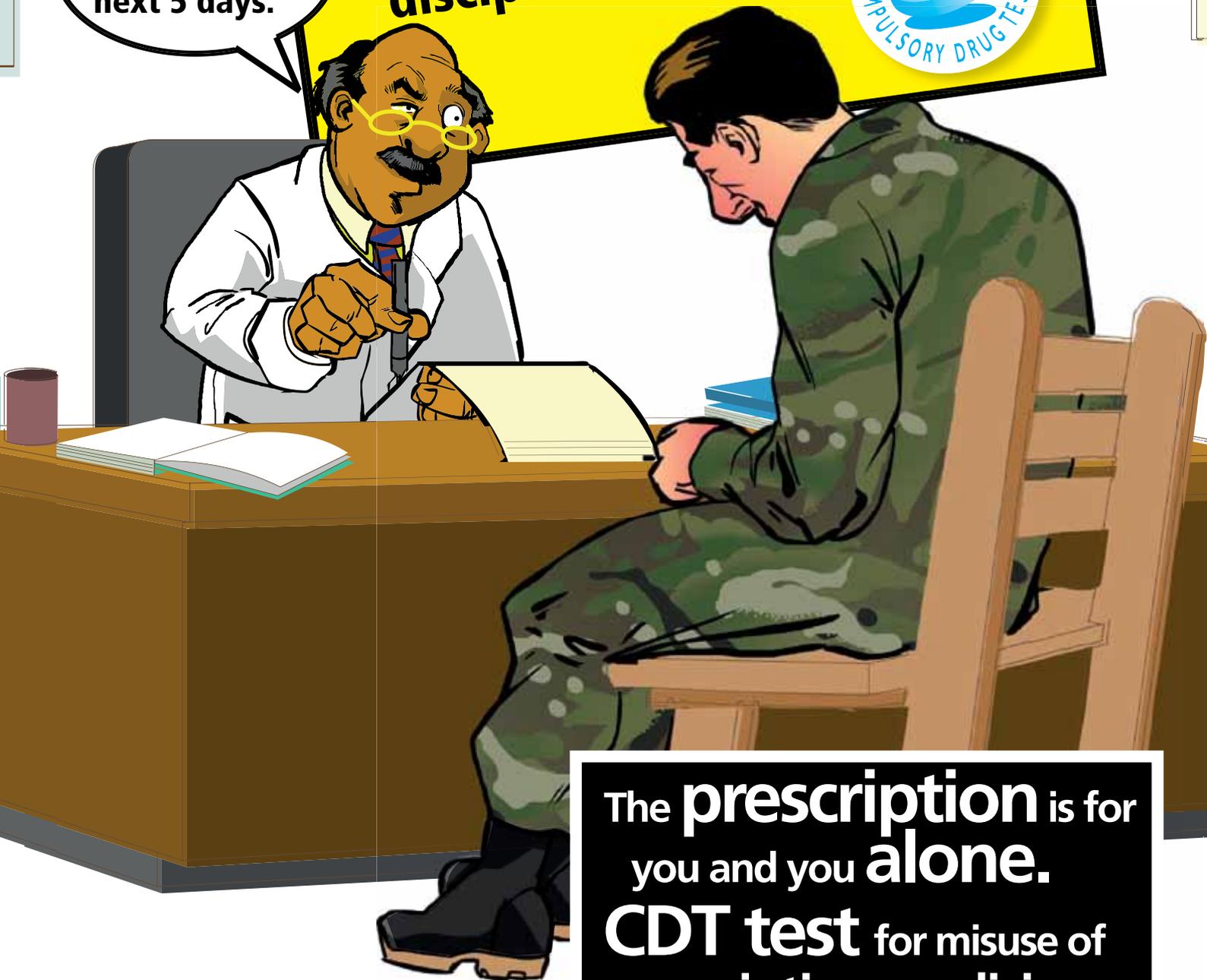
We were well represented at Aberfeldy. The Reunion in June seemed to have a larger crowd than usual, perhaps the new extension and museum outlook had a part to play. Then there was a good gathering at the opening day of the new museum itself. It was good to see old friends there and the Black Watch Battalion Pipes and Drums did us proud as usual. We will have held our Croix de Guerre Dinner (11th October) by the time the magazine is published but the Branch also look forward to seeing as many of our friends for the Perth Branch Burns Supper which will be on the 8th February 2014. We are also looking forward to going to Black Watch Corner in Belgium where we are taking some 40 members and partners.

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