

No. 203

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November 2022

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*



Drum Major Allan Campbell leads the Massed Pipes and Drums for the funeral of Her Majesty The Queen (courtesy of Cpl Robb Kane and the MoD Media).



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Published for The Black Watch



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Editorial

There is a time for everything, you may have heard the Byrds sing back in the day, and a season for every activity under the heavens you may have read of or listened to from Ecclesiastes, a time to be born and a time to die. We are in that time of change, writing in October.

On our various Burns' Night celebrations held by the branches across the country we did not imagine that we would have war in Europe in February, the unprovoked invasion of a neighbour by a permanent member of the UN Security Council. We would not have foreseen the involvement of members of 3 SCOTS in training the Ukrainian armed forces for war. Who would have guessed at the time of celebrating the Platinum Jubilee of 70 years of Queen Elizabeth's reign that relatively few weeks later we would be witnessing another aspect of that change across the length and breadth of our nation, the death of Queen Elizabeth. This was followed by the accession, the proclamation and the progression into the future, the future as we choose to make it, ourselves and across the whole kingdom. God save the King.

Over the decades Operations LONDON BRIDGE and UNICORN had been honed to perfection on paper in earmarking resources and revising procedures, but on the day when the planning came into reality it was no longer the paper exercise. It became a superbly coordinated and executed demonstration of coordinated will-power, resource management and commitment to the cause. It presented us, the general public of the United Kingdom and the world's population, with a witness of respect and mourning, with a spectacle of colour and pageantry, of music and light. Under the media's admirable commentary that planning enabled the funeral cortège coming from Balmoral, the coffin loaded by the keepers - with whose forebears successions of us had worked during Royal Guards and who were still working with the Guard this year provided by The Royal Regiment of Scotland, to link communities watching it from vantage points as it passed across much of our regimental recruiting area en route to the reality of change. Many of us were able to show our respects while the body of The late Queen lay in Rest in Saint Giles Cathedral or later in State in Westminster Hall; others from amongst us, in the Royal Company of Archers, escorted the coffin or members of the Royal Family while still others were amongst those who mounted vigil. No one can have remained ignorant of the events nor been untouched by the change we in one way or another, even passively, observed.

As the Association, we too have moved forward over this same period. Progressing from the decision taken on 30th October 2021 to merge The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) Association with the Castle and Museum of The Black Watch; we have reunified what was back into what now is. The Black Watch Regimental Trust has come to fruition and is flourishing. Do read the article by our Trust Chairman, David Noble.

The Black Watch Association forms part of the Trust and continues to deliver, to provide a link and a continuity between those who served in the Regiment, or are related to those who served, and their heritage, their access to welfare, comradeship and memorial. Throughout this edition of the Red Hackle are articles and reports reflecting the diversity of these themes.

As we head into November and Remembrance, we are commemorating those of us who died in the service of the nation and those who are left behind, the injured, the survivors and the families. We are reminded of that panoply of support that is there for all needing it and of our roles in it. Similarly, we are actively incorporating, across the skills and aptitudes of the Regimental Trust, support for our veterans and their families. Differences between former soldiers will always exist, but these are the strengths from which the support is built. Equally, those who have served more recently on operations continue with their own lives and are also able to call on the evolving plans being laid.

Finally, across Balhousie and beyond there is a vibrancy. Change is a fact of our lives, we either embrace it or we succumb to it. The universal reassurance is that the golden thread remains, the standard of respect for oneself and for others means that there always will be 'a time for war and a time for peace' and hence Forward the Forty Two.

The Black Watch Regimental Trust

Chairman's Introduction

The Black Watch Regimental Trust – The Last Piece of the Jigsaw

On 28th March 2006 the Regiment's long and distinguished history came to an end. It was formally removed from the order of battle as a stand-alone regiment of the British Army and the 1st Battalion was subsumed into the new Royal Regiment of Scotland, becoming its 3rd Battalion. This change would have a significant impact on the way the Regiment managed its affairs, looked after its men and their dependants and preserved its legacy for current and future generations. The Regiment needed to change how it did its business.

The formation of The Black Watch Regimental Trust in April 2022 has been the final step in this process and therefore now would seem to be a good moment to record the events that led up to it.

For many years, Regimental affairs were delivered by four trusts: The Regimental Association, the Regimental Trust, The Museum Trust and the Wavell Appeal. At the time they were formed, each of these charities answered contemporary challenges: the Regimental Association following the horrors of the 1st World War, the Regimental Trust following the reduction in the number of battalions of the Regiment, the Museum Trust as the number and quality of the artefacts and archive increased and the Wavell Appeal to provide premises and support for the Museum, Archive and pictures and for the offices of the Association. It was now time, once again, to respond to a new situation. The first step was to secure Balhousie Castle as the home of the Association, the Museum and the Archive by its purchase from the Ministry of Defence. This was achieved in 2008 and the re-development of the building was completed in 2013, following a fundraising appeal. Now that Balhousie was owned by the Regiment, and in a climate of declining government financial support, the second step required the reorganisation of the four regimental charities so that these new financial responsibilities could be managed as effectively as possible.

The first reorganisation, which took place in 2016, involved the Regimental Trust becoming part of the Association and the Wavell Appeal Fund becoming part of the Museum Trust.

The Association, in addition to its traditional responsibilities for welfare, comradeship and memorials, added the former Regimental Trust's responsibilities which included support to the army, principally through supporting the Black Watch Battalion of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, as well as certain other responsibilities. The Museum acquired

the capital of the Wavell Appeal which provided an endowment and income in support of its charitable activities, principally providing and maintaining the building, maintaining and enhancing the collection and archive, and providing education and outreach.

Options for further rationalisation were formally discussed by the trustees of the two charities in 2018. These options were examined in more detail in studies carried out by Peter Burnet and David Noble between 2019 and 2020. Following these reviews, the two trustee boards decided to negotiate a merger and a joint Working Group recommended the principles of this merger in 2021. These were accepted by both trustee boards and ratified by a Special General Meeting of the Association on 30th October 2021. As a result, a new single charity, to be called The Black Watch Regimental Trust, was formed on 1st April 2022.

The Regimental Trust incorporates the charitable objects of both the antecedent charities and the Regimental Association continues as a membership organisation, with its own constitution, as part of the new Trust. The Association's key former charitable activities, the delivery of welfare, comradeship and the care of memorials, are the first named charitable objects of the Trust. The Branches of the Association, which have always been separate entities, continue as before.

Once the two antecedent boards had agreed to the principles of the merger, there was much to do and Major John Monteith, the Regimental Secretary, was in the thick of it. The plans agreed by the Working Group had to be explained and circulated to all members of the Regiment before they decided whether or not to support the merger. Once the merger had been agreed, together with a new constitution which included the adoption of a universal franchise voting system for future chairmen and Regimental trustees, a voting register had to be built from scratch and the vote arranged. The merger itself then required significant work, including all the necessary legal procedures and administration. He and his staff are to be warmly congratulated in the way this was achieved.

Since April, John Monteith has decided to retire and a new Regimental Secretary, Major Tim Carmichael, has been appointed. The Trust has a new Board of Trustees, with four sub-committees overseeing its principal activities. The Trustees are as follows: Lord Kinnoull, Stephen Carter, Mr Graham Halstead, Brigadier Ben Wrench, Major Colin Gray, Mrs Elizabeth Roads, Lieutenant Colonel Julian McElhinney and Major Alastair Watson LVO.



The Regimental Trustees – from left to right – Mr Stephen Carter, Mrs Elizabeth Roads, Major Tim Carmichael (Regimental Secretary), Major Colin Gray, Major David Noble, Brigadier Ben Wrench, Mr Graham Halstead and Major Alastair Watson

The Senior Executives of the Trust are: Mrs Anne Kinnes, Ms Linda Campbell, Mrs Fiona Connah, Mrs Lorna Tunstall, Mrs Debbie Owens, Major Tim Carmichael and Chef, Michael Wells



CONGRATULATIONS HONOURS AND AWARDS THE QUEEN'S NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST 2022

To Brigadier R R E Lindsay MA on the award of the CBE.

EDITOR AND BATTALION SUB EDITOR

The Editor of the magazine is Major Tim Carmichael. The Battalion Sub Editor is Captain Tom Thorpe.



Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell attended an Investiture at the Palace of Holyrood house on Wednesday 19 January 2022 to be awarded his OBE. The Princess Royal represented Her Majesty The Queen (copyright of photo: Palace Photos)



Mr Philip Horwood received his MBE for services to the Scottish Parliament at the same Investiture (copyright of photo: Palace Photos)

CHRISTMAS CARD – 2022

The Regimental Christmas card for 2022 is entitled "Soldier's Return". This painting by the artist John Faed, portrays Robert Burns in conversation with a Black Watch soldier. Each card will cost 95p



CHRISTMAS CARD 2022

Regimental News

FORECAST OF EVENTS 2023

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
5 January	Fife Branch Red Hackle Day Breakfast	Fife
Tbc January	Curling Match v 7 SCOTS	TBC
10 February	Dundee Branch Red Hackle Dinner	Black Watch Club, Dundee
25 February	Dundee Branch Annual General Meeting	Dundee
14 January	Edinburgh, Lothians' and Borders' Branch Red Hackle Night	TBC
24 January	Association Committee Meeting	Zoom
27 January	Regimental Trust Meeting	Balhousesie Castle, Perth
28 January	Angus Branch Burns Supper	RBL Forfar
11 February	Perth Branch Burns Supper	Perth
9 March	Curling Match v Highlanders	Perth
24 March	Fife Branch Rhine Crossing Dinner	Kirkcaldy
30 March	Highland and Lowland Brigades Curling Club Bonspiel	Perth
3 April	Angus Branch Annual General Meeting	RBL Forfar
22 April	Warrant Officers' and Sergeants Dining Club Dinner	Salutation Hotel, Perth
23 April	Edinburgh, Lothians' and Borders' Branch Al Basrah Lunch	TBC
28 April	Regimental Trust Meeting	Balhousesie Castle, Perth
TBC May	Not Forgotten Garden Association Garden Party	London
8 June	Royal Hospital Chelsea Founders Day	Chelsea
13 June	Officers' and Ladies' Lunch	Caledonian Club, London
16 June	Black Watch Regimental Golf	Balbirnie
28 July	Regimental Trust Meeting	Balhousesie Castle, Perth
5 August	Inter Branch Games Day	Ex Servicemen's Club, Perth
17 September	Alma Ladies Lunch	Kirkcaldy
24 September	Angus Branch Standard Rededication	TBC
30 September	Perth Branch Croix de Guerre Dinner	Perth
1 October	Dundee Branch Battle of Loos Commemoration Church Service	RBL Forfar
21 October	Angus Branch El Alamein Dinner	City Churches Dundee
4 November	Dundee Branch Laying of Crosses	Dundee
9 November	Dundee Branch Mains Parish Memorial Service	Caird Park Dundee
9 November	Field of Remembrance, Westminster, Abbey	London
10 November	Balhousesie Castle Remembrance Service	Balhousesie Castle, Perth
11 November	Dundee Branch Remembrance Service	City Square Dundee
12 November	Dundee Branch Remembrance Service	Powrie Brae Dundee
18 November	Warrant Officers' and Sergeants Dining Club Dinner	Salutation Hotel, Perth

CURLING REPORT

By Major (Retd) J M K Erskine MBE

Match v Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders

After a year without any meaningful curling it was hoped the 2021-2022 season would be different. It started off slowly, but the Dewars Ice Rink in Perth opened up in time for the match against the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders on 4 November. The Ice rink was not working at full capacity and there were certain restrictions in place because the Indoor Bowling arena, next to the Ice rink, was being used as a COVID Vaccination centre. Nevertheless, it was excellent to be on the ice again. The Regiment held the Macrae Cup before this match, for which each side entered two rinks, but sadly was beaten on this occasion by 19 shots to 9, although the 'B' Rink peeled their game 6-6. There were no catering facilities on site and so lunch was held at Balhousie Castle which was well received and was a great opportunity to show off the castle to those Argylls who had never been there.

The Black Watch rinks were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink
James Duncan Millar	Will Henderson
Hugh Rose	Alan McEwen
Mike Riddell - Webster	Tim Carmichael
Ramsay MacDonald	Peter Burnet

Match v Lowlanders

The next match was on 17 February, against the Lowlanders, also at Dewars Ice Rink. This was the same day that the GB men's curlers beat the USA to gain a place in the finals of the Olympics and the women's team won a place in the semi-finals. It is not clear whether the GB curlers inspired the Black Watch curlers or vice versa but suffice to say The Black Watch won their match 18-11. Each rink played 4 ends against each of the Lowlanders' rinks and the final result was helped by the 'A' Rink winning their first four ends against the Lowlanders 'A' Rink 9-0.

The teams were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink
Jamie Montgomery	James Duncan Millar
Will Henderson	Hugh Rose
Mike Riddell - Webster	Alan McEwen
Tim Carmichael	Malcolm Innes

This was also the same day that the Argylls took on the Highlanders at Dewars Ice Rink. All four teams subsequently had lunch at Balhousie, which made the whole day feel like a dress rehearsal for the Bonspiel.

Match v Highlanders

The third inter-Regimental match was against the Highlanders on 10 March. It followed the same format as the match against the Lowlanders. While Jamie Montgomery's rink won their games against each of the Highlanders rinks, the other rink, skipped by James Duncan Millar, did not fare so well. The final score was 17-12 to the Highlanders.

The teams were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink
Jamie Montgomery	James Duncan Millar
Hugh Rose	Will Henderson
Alan McEwen	Mike Riddell-Webster
Tim Carmichael	(non-attender-name withheld!)

Highland and Lowland Brigades Curling Club Bonspiel

And so, to the Highland and Lowland Brigades Curling Club Bonspiel which took place on 31 March. The Regiment fielded two rinks. They were:

'A' Rink	'B' Rink
Jamie Montgomery (1st match)	James Duncan Millar
Will Henderson	Hugh Rose
Alan McEwen	Mike Riddell- Webster
Tim Carmichael	Malcolm Innes

Bruce Osborne (2nd and 3rd matches)

The 'A' Rink played the Royal Scots in the first game and won a close game 5-3 while the 'B' rink lost to the Highlanders 'B' by 2-7. In the second match the 'A' rink beat the Lowlanders 5-2 while the 'B' rink beat the Highlanders 'A' rink by 10-4. As a result, both rinks were in with a shout to be the overall winners of the Bonspiel. However, in the third session the 'A' rink was beaten 7-3 by the overall winners, the Royal Highland Fusiliers and the 'B' rink lost 7-1 to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 'B' rink, who came second overall. It was a great gathering of the Club and a good chance to catch up with many friends from other regiments.

2022-23 Season

Looking ahead, the following matches are planned for the 2022-23 season

3 November 2022- Match v A & SH

Tbc January 2023 – Match v 7 SCOTS

Tbc - Match v Lowlanders

9 March 2023 – Match v Highlanders

30 March 2023 (tbc) – HLBCC Bonspiel

The curlers would also like to thank the Association for the generous support it gives to the sport. It really is much appreciated. Finally, if there are any curlers or even budding curlers who fancy taking up the sport, they are asked to contact Jamie Erskine. It really is a sport for all ages, and you do not need to have played it before you curl for the Regiment. It is a case of learning as one goes.

BLACK WATCH ASSOCIATION GOLF

Balbirnie Park 17 June 2022

SPONSORED BY SIDEY LTD AND RED HACKLE SECURITY

By Major (Retd) A M Stewart BEM

We are delighted to report on another hugely successful Annual Golf Day at Balbirnie Park held on 17 June 2022. A record turnout this year and we were very pleased to welcome several serving soldiers from The Black Watch Battalion including the current Pipe Major, James Muir, and his brother, Peter Muir, who is now the Drum Major! For the first time we were also glad to welcome along a representative from our affiliate ship, HMS MONTROSE, and hopefully Petty Officer David McGrath enjoyed his day as well.

On a day of mixed weather with rain in the morning, the day brightened up nicely, and some very impressive scoring was shown by several golfers. Best gross on the day was won by Kev Wann with 78 and best net was won by John Jack with 68. William (Beab) Laing won the Stableford competition with 39 points. Full results were:

Gross competition	Net competition	Stableford competition
1st John Jack	1st Kev Wann	1st Beab Laing
2nd Dave Smith	2nd Jimmy Grover	2nd Steve Rougvie
3rd Billy Johnston	3rd Alec Merritt	3rd Rory McIntyre

Mrs Pat Sawers, Vice President of the Black Watch Association, came along to present the prizes, but also managed to play an active part in the competition. Sadly, no prize for Pat this year!

In the afternoon, the usual 9-hole Texas Scramble was held. This is an extremely popular competition which is always keenly contested but great fun. The winning team was led by Corporal Barrie Fraser and full results were:

1st Corporal Barrie Fraser	2nd Petty Officer David McGrath
Gordon Kennedy	Dave Smith
Michael Snape	William Lyons
Rab Penman	John Jack

Former Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Arthur Keith was on hand to present these prizes as a co-sponsor representing Red Hackle Security. We are, as always, extremely grateful to our sponsors, Red Hackle Security and Sidey Ltd, who provide all the funding for the excellent prizes. We simply could not do it without them!

There are always a couple of novelty prizes to be won with Nearest the Pin won by Pipe Major James Muir. He was especially grateful to Pete Proudfoot who donated a bottle of Malt Whisky as the prize! Steve Rougvie won the longest drive. Our thanks to Gordon Kennedy who also provided additional novelty prizes for the winning teams in the Texas Scramble. Of course, someone has to come last and this year the dubious honour went to John Husband. Better luck next year Hubby!

Following the prize giving, Kev Wann auctioned a voucher for a 4 Ball at Lytham St Annes which was bought by Rory McIntyre and the proceeds were passed on to the Regimental Association who, as ever, subsidised this event. Again, we are very grateful for the continued support of the Association.

So, to next year. The date is set for 16 June 2023 which, as usual, is the day before the Regimental Reunion. It will again be held at Balbirnie Park who have provided excellent service and first class catering to us all over the past two years. Anyone who would like to take part in next year's event, who is not already signed up to our website, should contact Alex Stewart on alexstewart8608@gmail.com. There is a limit on the number of players, but a reserve list will be kept in case of any cancellations.



The winner of the best net, John Jack, receiving the Alan Mutch Memorial Trophy



Stableford Winner, William Beab Laing receives his trophy



The winner of the best gross and Champion Golfer of the day Kev Wann receives his trophy from Pat Sawers



Arthur Keith from Red Hackle Security receives a memento from the BW Association Golf handed over by Dave Bruce



Second place in the Texas Scramble from the left; John Jack, Petty Officer David McGrath HMS Montrose, David Lyons and Dave Smith. Arthur Keith (centre) from Red Hackle Security presented the prizes



Texas Scramble winning team: Michael Snape, Gordon (Killer) Kennedy, Rab Penman and Corporal Barrie Fraser, 3 SCOTS



Nearest the Pin, Pipe Major James Muir



John Jack, Kev Wann and Beab Laing who were the three trophy winners on the day

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE PERTH

The Association Remembrance Service was held at Balhousie Castle on Friday 12 November 2021 conducted by the Reverend John Duncan MBE. Families of those commemorated in the Memorial Garden were invited to attend.



Left to right – Mr Robert Balfour, Lord-Lieutenant of Fife, Mrs Pat Sawers, Lord-Lieutenant of Angus and President of the Association, Major Ronnie Proctor, Provost of Angus, Mr Dennis Melloy, Provost of Perth, Lord Kinnoull and Pipe Major Alistair Duthie



The Rev John Duncan accompanied by a contingent from The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

TOBRUK SERVICE

A commemorative service was held on Sunday 21 November 2021, the 80th anniversary, to recognise the sacrifice and bravery of the Officers and Soldiers of 2nd Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) who fought in the Breakout Battle of Tobruk on 21 November 1941. Our Association Chaplain, the Reverend John Duncan MBE, officiated at the service which was well supported by members of the Association and Branch Standard bearers. The Roll of Honour was read out of those Killed in Action.



Left to right – Gordon Williamson, Dundee, Captain Alan McEwen, Perth, Major John Monteith, Regimental Secretary, Major Ronnie Proctor, Association Secretary, Rab Young, Fife and George Eaton, Angus



Left to right – Major Torquil MacLeod, Mrs Alice Soper, daughter of Pipe Major Roy, Piper of Tobruk, Major Ronnie Proctor, Reverend John Duncan, Major John Monteith, Mr Billy Whytock, Major Hugh Rose and Mr George Eaton in the background



Branch Members attend the Service



Xandra Eaton, George Eaton, Neil Hobson and Kevin Murphy

THE QUEEN'S CORTEGE



Lieutenant Colonel Roddy Riddell (left), Katie Duthie, Pipe Major Alistair Duthie and Lieutenant Colonel Tim Coles met on the Dron bridge south of Bridge of Earn as they waited for the cortege carrying Her Majesty The Queen's coffin from Balmoral Castle to Edinburgh. Pipe Major Duthie played the piobaireachd Queen Elizabeth II's Salute



The police outrider and hearse driving south on the M90, south of Bridge of Earn. Over three hundred people gathered on the bridge to watch the convoy and to say farewell to Her Majesty The Queen

THE 2022 ANNIVERSARY OF MONTE SCALARI



Elio Ghelli, Italian Piper, played the pipes at the Anniversary of Monte Scalari

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

Platinum Jubilee Celebrations at the Castle

This year, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II became the first British monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee after 70 years of service and dedication. This unique milestone created an opportunity for friends, families, and communities to come together across the UK and Commonwealth countries to mark the occasion.

The team at Balhousie Castle created a programme of events for all ages to join in the celebrations. Our first event on Thursday 2nd June was the Platinum Jubilee Dinner and Ceremonial Beacon Lighting which began with a pre-dinner drinks reception in the Courtyard followed by dinner in the Queen Mother Room. Throughout dinner we shared archive readings, and music whilst reflecting on the movements of The Black Watch from ascension to the coronation, we then returned outside for the official jubilee celebrations as we paid tribute to the Queen and her service. A huge thank you to Pipe Sergeant Alistair MacIntosh who played 'Diu Regnare', to Lee Fitzpatrick who sounded the bugle call, 'Majesty' and to Perth Choral Society who performed a 'Song for the Commonwealth.'



CEO, Chairman and John Sweeney at the Jubilee Dinner



Jubilee Dinner Preparations



Pipe Major Alistair MacIntosh and Lee Fitzpatrick

On Friday 3rd June we hosted a Platinum Jubilee Street Party where visitors young and old gathered for food, live music and family activities. We welcomed the Shetland pony military mascot of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, Cpl Cruachan IV, and invited the community to paint pebbles for our commemorative platinum pebble path which was laid in the Castle grounds.



Jubilee Street Party



McAndrews Sisters

Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th June was our Jubilee Picnic Weekend where visitors brought along their garden rugs, enjoyed a picnic, and relaxed in the Castle grounds.

The Queen's Green Canopy

Created to mark her Jubilee, The Queen's Green Canopy invited individuals and groups to 'plant a tree for the Jubilee'. The initiative aims to enhance our natural environment by planting trees around the UK. The gardening team at Balhousie Castle planted 70 Yew saplings which we hope will grow strong and become a lasting symbol of The Queen's 70 years of service to the nation.

Words of War Book Festival

Our second 'Words of War' book festival held on Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd of October was a huge success. We hosted 8 talks over 2 days and welcomed an eclectic mix of authors; from Lt General Sir Alistair Irwin who spoke about his great uncle, Lt Lewis Cumming, to Stephen Paul Stewart award-winning journalist turned Black Watch soldier. A huge thank you to the organisers, Major General and Mrs Mike Riddell-Webster and their volunteer helpers, all the authors for their interesting and insightful discussions, to Perth Waterstones for hosting our book shop, and to all of those who attended.

MUSEUM NEWS

By Mrs Fiona Connah, Curator

It has been a busy year for the museum and archive team. Having had to ask our collections and archive volunteers to stay away during the Covid pandemic, we were delighted to welcome them back this Spring. Their help is invaluable in assisting with research enquiries, archival work and collections care. We have also been pleased to see the return of both visiting groups and schools.

This year, we were grateful to receive into the collection the medals of General Sir Duncan Alexander Cameron who became Colonel of the Regiment in 1854. Immortalised in oils, his portrait once resided in the Officer's Mess, his magnificent sideburns inspiring the nickname 'Chops'. This painting, in which you can clearly see his medals, can now be seen in our Empire Gallery.



From left to right: Major John Monteith, Mrs Fiona Connah, Brigadier Duncan Cameron, Mrs Anne Kinnes and Major David Noble

Our Project Archivists have continued their excellent work in cataloguing the Archive. Since the beginning of the project in 2018, they have now completed over 150 catalogues. This amounts to over 5000 items, including photos, diaries, letters and many other records and includes one collection with 756 individual items. At this moment, one of our archivists is working on a collection relating to General Sir Neil Methuen Ritchie which currently sits at 1600 records and is likely to reach over 2000. This project has been of great benefit to the Museum. As well as improving standards and widening public access to the archive, it has also increased the knowledge and awareness of the Museum staff, making it easier for us to identify relevant items when working on new exhibitions, events and to answer research questions.

Our special exhibition this year was inspired by our Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. Focussing on the recipients of the 1953 Coronation Medal, the exhibition highlighted some of the individual stories of those soldiers awarded the medal and the events leading up to the Coronation in June 1953. This included the story of Major Peter Hitchman who, having served with the Regiment in India and Sudan in the 1930s, became the Secretary of The Black Watch Association in 1946, a role he would dedicate 23 years of his life to. His sword and medals can be seen on display, along with a beautiful embroidery of The Black Watch badge.



Curator, Fiona Connah makes final adjustments to the exhibition

FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH Castle & Museum

FRIENDS OF THE BLACK WATCH

By Sarah Riddell-Webster

At last, a more normal year for the Friends; Museum fully open, lecture programme finally restarted and a lovely summer cocktail party. The covid nightmare is beginning to feel like a bad memory.

In April Dr Mike Taylor was finally able to give his lecture on *The Paris Peace Conference and the Making of a New World Order*. This talk was originally programmed for April 2020 as the final lecture in our First World War series but became the first event to be hit by the covid shut down. However, it was worth the wait as Mike gave a most interesting and enjoyable lecture on a very complex subject that few people were familiar with and that took longer than the war itself (the making of the New World Order, not the lecture!).

This final lecture on the First World War should have led into a series of lectures to mark 80 years from the start of the Second World War. We had planned a programme of lectures much as our First World War series, stretching over several years and looking at key battles and other aspects of the war. That will happen in due course but for this year we felt we needed to remain 'fleet of foot' as we adapt to the uncertainties of post covid times.

This way of working has given us the opportunity to look more broadly for lecture subjects and so on 10th May Victoria Schofield visited Balhousie and gave a wonderful lecture on *Wavell: Soldier and Statesman*. What was particularly interesting about this lecture was that Victoria focused on Wavell's time as Viceroy of India rather than the aspects of his career with which we are all more familiar. As the author of the book of that title, Victoria is a master of the subject and so interesting about the political and personal aspects of Wavell's time in India. One audience member on departing said to me that he had not known that Wavell had been Viceroy of India; he had had a particularly informative evening.

The June lecture was also focused on Asia as Lt Col (Retd) Andy Middlemiss gave us an overview of the Burma campaign entitled, *"Defeat into Victory" - The Burma Campaign 1942-1945* with particular focus on General Slim's influence. An incredibly difficult theatre of war to look at in only an hour such was the extent of the British involvement there. Andy brought the campaign to life by inviting different members of the audience to read out diary and journal entries to illustrate events on the ground at the time. This is a subject we will return to as we didn't even touch on The Black Watch involvement in the 1944 Chindit campaign and, judging by the size of the audience, there is a great deal of interest.

Over the years we have had an awful lot of lectures, but they have always been speakers talking about what other people did in theatres of war in past times. This year is the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War and so we were delighted that Maj Gen (Retd) Adrian Freer came and talked about *The Falklands War: The Front Line with 3 Para* and his time as a Company 2IC in the South Atlantic. Adrian told us of all aspects of their deployment: leaving on the Canberra, circuit training on the decks, machine gun training on the helipad that was built over the swimming pool and the stopover in the Ascension Islands. He then described the chaos of going ashore, the discomfort and cold exacerbated by the inadequacies of their kit, the barren and unforgiving Falklands landscape and their 'tab' across East Falkland to 3 Para's assault onto Mount Longdon. Adrian's first-hand experience brought a new level to the lecture which the audience greatly appreciated. It was a spell binding hour.

Full details of each month's lecture and how to book can be found on the Museum website at www.theblackwatch.co.uk Although the Friends events committee organise and host the monthly lectures all proceeds go directly to The Black Watch Regimental Trust. The Friends' income continues to come just from our memberships, so thank you to all our members for their continued support. So far this year we have donated nearly £7,000 to the Museum to support the funding of a Museum and Collections assistant to the Curator and help further the core work of the Museum. Our fund is there to help and support the Museum when need arises, we have a broad remit and so can help in a variety of different ways.

Obituaries

MAJOR GENERAL A L WATSON CB

General Andy (as he liked to be called) Watson was born in Meerut near New Delhi in India on 9th April 1927. His father was an officer in the Indian Medical Service and his mother had been a nurse during the First World War. His first school was in Abbottabad (now in Pakistan), to which he rode every day on a pony with a solar topee on his head. He kept a mongoose as a pet. He then went to a prep school at Lambrook in England then on to Wellington College. As it was wartime and there were German bombing raids, the boys often slept in bomb shelters. During one bombing raid the Headmaster of Wellington was killed.

Although he was successful in being awarded a place at Clare College Cambridge to study medicine he never took it up and in 1945, just before the end of World War Two, he enlisted in the Coldstream Guards. Officer training followed and he joined 1st Battalion The Black Watch, based in Duisburg, Germany, with an Emergency Commission in February 1946. He was awarded a Regular Commission in The Black Watch on 9th April 1948. He always said he found the Regiment to be a clan, with the comradeship and standards that matched his aspirations.

He met his wife in Germany. Mary Elizabeth (Ginty) Rigby, a former Wren, was working for the British Control Commission in Germany and they were married in 1952. They had three children, Alastair, Patrick and Shane.

Twice he was involved with Field Marshal Earl Wavell, first as his ADC when Wavell visited Berlin by air in 1949 during the Berlin Airlift of food and fuel. He flew in sitting on flour sacks and was white from head to foot on arrival. In 1950 he was in charge of overseeing Wavell's lying in state in the Tower of London, escorting his coffin down the River Thames to Westminster and then in charge of the bearer party at Wavell's state funeral.

In 1953 he became Adjutant of 2nd Battalion The Black Watch serving in Germany. That same year he carried the 2nd Battalion's Queen's Colour at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. It poured with rain all day and the Colour became saturated and eventually the strap supporting it broke and he had to carry the full weight. The Battalion moved to British Guiana in 1954, returning to Scotland in 1956 to be disbanded.

The next job before Staff College in 1958 was a year in Germany as a staff officer. After Staff College he became Brigade Major of 153 (Highland) Brigade in Dundee, returning to 1st Battalion The Black Watch as a company commander first in Alexander Barracks, Dhakelias, Cyprus, where there was an earthquake, then in Warminster as part of the Demonstration Battalion of The School of Infantry. He then moved to Larkhill where he taught infantry matters to artillery officers and other ranks. Next, back as 21C to 1st Battalion The Black Watch in Germany and a tour with United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus where he had to wear a UN blue beret without a Red Hackle.

Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel he became Chief of Staff HQ 17 Gurkha Division in Malaya in May 1967, returning to command 1st Battalion The Black Watch in Ritchie Camp, Kirknewton near Edinburgh on 1st March 1969.



While based in Ritchie Camp 1BW spent much of the time away on unaccompanied training and tours. In early 1969 there was a jungle training exercise in Malaysia for four months followed by an unaccompanied "operational" tour in Gibraltar after Franco closed the border with Spain, threatening to invade. For six months 1BW, based in RAF Gibraltar, manned the border. During this tour he encouraged all ranks to allow their wives to visit, which highlights his care and consideration for those under his command. Franco never invaded and 1BW returned to Ritchie Camp in 1970 hoping for a quiet summer.

Then on a Friday evening, he was telephoned by the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) saying that he was to deploy the Battalion to Northern Ireland in 48 hours having had no earlier warning or training. He made it clear that this was impossible as most of the Battalion had gone home to the regimental area for the weekend. The Battalion doctor and a team were told to tour the pubs in the regimental area encouraging those they found from 1BW to return to Ritchie Camp. Another 48 hours later 1BW embarked on a ferry at Ardrrossan with orders to go to Belfast. While on the ferry, 1BW was told to go to Londonderry, but this was then cancelled, and the ferry docked in Belfast.

There was instant deployment to the Falls area of Belfast with instructions to prevent clashes between Protestants and Roman Catholics, but soon there was sniper fire and 1BW mounted a cordon and search. After three weeks 1BW returned to Scotland, but days later were told to deploy to Londonderry to assist in preventing violence resulting from the banning of the Apprentice Boys march on 12 August. Initially they were based at RAF Ballykelly.

The RAF having refused to allow the Battalion to use their Officers or Sergeants Messes he arranged to move 1BW to HMS Sea Eagle in Londonderry, where all ranks were welcomed. While there the Orange Order tried to march across the Craigavon Bridge into the Catholic Bogside. A company was deployed on the upper level of the bridge and successfully prevented the crossings, but when the Derry Boys tried to cross using the lower level, with only one section deployed, they had to use tear gas, but failing to notify those above, resulted in a few Jocks learning what it was like to inhale tear gas. They returned to Scotland later in the month, in time to take part on 2nd September 1970 in the long planned parade to mark the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Regiment, during which the Provost of Aberfeldy presented the Freedom scroll to Brigadier Sir Bernard Fergusson (later Lord Ballantrae), then Colonel of the Regiment.

Six months later in 1971 1BW was deployed to Armagh to monitor the border with the Republic of Ireland. During the five month deployment the Battalion conducted patrols and surveillance operations, monitored civil rights marches and manned road blocks. At the end of the tour he received a letter from a Catholic family thanking him for the 'courtesy of his Jocks whose humanity never conflicted with toughness' A real complement to his outstanding leadership as CO 1BW.

He was then promoted to Brigadier and commanded 19 Airportable Brigade in Colchester before attending the Royal College of Defence Studies in London. His next job from 1975-1977 was Commander British Army Staff and Military Attaché in Washington where he was responsible for arranging the State visit in 1976, commemorating the bicentenary of the American Declaration of Independence. He refused to allow a request from the US Government for British soldiers to wear 1776 uniform during these bicentennial celebrations. Other activities included visiting all those Army officers on exchange or in liaison jobs with the US Army in the USA, often accompanied by Ginty.

One achievement was to arrange that his second son, Patrick, then on an Army Scholarship had a month's attachment at West Point Military Academy. Patrick organised the raising of the Union Jack on the parade ground on 4th July 1976. At the base of the flagstaff was a note saying "the Brits are back". On first parade, the cadets were horrified to see the Union Flag hoisted over the fort. It is not clear whether Andy was involved in this or not.

Leaving Washington he was promoted to Major General and assumed command of Eastern District, whose HQ was in Colchester, overseeing military aid to civil organisations during the difficult years of the Callaghan administration which culminated in the "winter of discontent". During the Fireman's strike, when the military Green

Goddess Fire Engines were deployed with army drivers and crew, he visited their bases many times and on one occasion visited Norwich by helicopter to meet the Mayor and Senior Fire Officer with East Anglia TV present. Seeing a strange look on the faces of the film crew he looked round to see that his ADC leaving the helicopter with the rotors still turning had his kilt over his head. He was not impressed. Several days a week he made visits to military units, including cadets. On one occasion seeing cadets failing to manage a river crossing in a boat, he said he would show them what to do but did no better, nearly capsizing the boat and soaking himself and his uniform. He also ran the Colchester Military Tattoo, once in the pouring rain where he told his ADC to look after his principal guests whose vehicle had become bogged.

His final appointment from 1980-1982 was Chief of Staff for Allied Forces North (AFNorth) in Norway. This was a tri-service NATO job with responsibility for managing the northern flank of the alliance. The HQ was in Kolsås, near Oslo, in the middle of a mountain so when on exercise all ranks had to wear a chemical suit for the duration of the exercise. When not on military business another duty was to entertain many Norwegians and others from NATO countries. He was never happy being entertained by Norwegians in saunas accompanied by his naked female hostess. In the New Years Honours in 1981 he was awarded the CB and retired in 1982.

In September 1981, he became Colonel of The Regiment, selecting potential officers and giving excellent advice to Commanding Officers and many of those working in Balhousie. During his time as Colonel of The Regiment the Army Board made plans to amalgamate Regiments. He decided that he must consult all ranks about their preferences and as there was universal preference for no change and having made this clear to the Army Board, the Regiment survived, while others amalgamated. He was frequently in contact with Our Colonel in Chief, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, whose brother, Fergus had been killed at the Battle of Loos in 1915 while serving in The Black Watch. He retired as Colonel of the Regiment in 1992.

Having retired from active service at the age of 60 he was involved in many other military activities and charities and then in 1984 he was appointed Lieutenant Governor of The Royal Hospital Chelsea, a position he held until 1992.

He then moved, with Ginty, to Hogarth Way in South West London. He took a great interest in all things Regimental and all his friends he had made over the years, making frequent telephone calls keeping up to date with their activities and health but never mentioning any problems of his own. In 1999 he contributed to the success of the film, *Aftermath*, briefing the actor, Jason Clarke who starred in the film, and Jack Arbuthnott, the producer, son of Major James Arbuthnott, on what it was like to be a junior officer in Germany immediately after WW2. He said he felt real pity for the German population at that time.

Andy Watson was a very special person, much admired and respected by all ranks of The Black Watch and his many friends. He was always relaxed and helpful to those less able, in many cases almost treating them as part of his family. He was well known for the twinkle in his eye and laughing at his own jokes. On learning that he was to be promoted to Brigadier he said "They must have the wrong man" - an example of his modesty.

Andy Watson died on 12 July 2022 and is survived by his wife, Ginty, along with their two sons and a daughter. Alastair and Patrick both served in The Black Watch. Alastair then served in the Royal Household, Patrick setting up his own company in public affairs and Shane is an author and newspaper columnist.

A moving Thanksgiving Service for his life was held in The Wren Chapel at the Royal Hospital Chelsea on 6th October 2022. This service was very well attended with about 40 Black Watch officers and Other Ranks, officers from other regiments and about 20 wives, widows and daughters of the Regiment, together with a very large number of friends and family.

Brigadier G C Barnett

Major General Andrew Linton Watson CB: A Personal Reflection for Memorial Service at Royal Hospital Chelsea 6th October 2022

I feel very privileged to have been invited by the family to speak this afternoon about Andy Watson the soldier. Knowing that on occasions like this people are inclined to talk forever, Alastair, Paddy and Shane have given me clear orders to keep it short. Therefore, all that I can do is to offer just a glimpse of a very special man through the window of some personal reflections. A detailed account of Andy Watson's very

distinguished army career would take too long in the telling and, in any event, perhaps this is the time to say things that do not necessarily appear in obituaries, records of service or even regimental histories.

I first met Andy Watson in Cyprus when I was still at prep school and he was a company commander in the 1st Battalion The Black Watch. I sneaked up behind him and pushed him into the sea from a raft anchored just offshore from the officers' club in Dhekelia. He was not at all pleased, not I think because of the ducking but because, unknown to me, his back was badly burned by the sun and I had caused him considerable pain. I was always grateful that he did not report me to the commanding officer, my father.

This was not the most auspicious beginning to a personal and military relationship that extended from then until now. Ten or so years later I reported to him as the latest second lieutenant to join the 1st Battalion of which Andy was already half-way through his time in command. If he remembered my outrageous behaviour in Cyprus he gave no sign of it and gave me the warmest of welcomes.

But perhaps it was in the spirit of getting his own back that early on he taught me an invaluable lesson at a formal dinner in the mess one night. The ladies had withdrawn and I found myself sitting beside the commanding officer. It was of course the strict rule that none of the men could leave the table before the boss did. I must have been wriggling around in my seat because Andy turned to me and asked: "Do you want to go and spend a penny, Alistair?". "Yes, Sir", I replied. "Well, you know you can't, don't you? The best thing", he said after a pause, "is not to think of anything to do with water!" Another pause and then: "Alistair, what do you know about the Amazon?" And finally with a mischievous grin and a shining twinkle in his eye he proceeded to pour the water from his Indian silver finger bowl into mine and then vice versa, by which time of course I was seriously bursting. This was among the first of so many important things that I learned from him and, typically for him, it was a lesson taught in the most entertaining of ways - at least in retrospect!

His time in command was enormously varied and busy, with an arduous training exercise in Malaysia followed by operational tours in Gibraltar, when the Spaniards were rattling their sabres, and in Northern Ireland in the early days of the Troubles. He was rewarded not only with promotion straight to brigadier but also with the command of a front-line quick response brigade in Colchester. As he bade farewell to the battalion he declared, again so typically of him, that it was because of all of us that he had achieved this double distinction. We all knew better: if we were any good it was entirely because of Andy Watson and his remarkable qualities as a leader and a professional soldier. It was the commanding jock (as COs were wont to be called in The Black Watch) who made us, not the other way round.

In exercising those qualities, he seemed to divide us all into Herberts and Chums with, if my own experience was anything to go by, a fairly fluid existence moving between both camps, sometimes even on the same day. The Herberts were those of us who had let the side down in one way or another: Chums were everyone else, until found out of course. It was the mark of the man that Herberts and Chums were entirely united in our respect for a man for whom we were all willing to go the extra mile and then another one after that.

Andy took particular pleasure in recounting the unwitting witticisms that so often sprang from the lips of Herberts and Chums alike. His delighted audiences often included Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother who unsurprisingly counted him as one of her favourites. She was especially delighted with the oft-repeated story of Private Watt in my platoon in Pomeroy police station in Co Tyrone. In front of the CO and me, Watt was asked by a visiting brigadier "You comfy here?" Private Watt replied, "No sir, come fae Dundee". Andy never tired of relating such tales of which there were very many. And he always did so with great affection and empathy for the men for whom he felt such a father-like responsibility.

And so Andy left regimental duty and proceeded to a much admired and, by him, a greatly relished senior career that took him to Washington as the Military Attaché, to Colchester again as GOC Eastern District and to Norway as Chief Staff of NATO's Allied Forces North. Finally, in a sort of semi-military retirement, he came here to the Royal Hospital where he was to prove a much loved and greatly respected lieutenant governor. I know this from all sorts of sources but chiefly and most significantly because whenever I came to see him here in Chelsea and said to the men on the gate that I had come to see General Watson, their faces lit up with genuine and enthusiastic pleasure, an entirely unforced response that said it all.

And it was here of course that his adored and adoring granddaughter Sophie, when a little girl, took one look at her grandfather dressed in all his finery, including his cocked hat, and asked in a loud voice why he had a duck on his head. The undoubted pomp of the occasion did not of course stop Andy from greatly enjoying the moment, rather more so perhaps than Sophie's embarrassed parents! And in doing so he showed, as he so often did, that importance of position and a sense of fun, far from being incompatible, are indeed the very best of companions.

The official reason for those visits of mine was that by now Andy was Colonel of The Black Watch, a post that brought him right back into the daily business of the regiment. He took enormous pride in this. During his many eagerly awaited and much enjoyed visits to the 1st Battalion, to the Black Watch territorials, as they were then, and to the association branches he demonstrated all over again just how it was that he managed to get the best from everyone; how it was that, from commanding officer to most recently joined jock, whoever it was that he was speaking to knew that he was genuinely interested. And it was rare indeed for a conversation not to end with at least a mutual smile and usually with companionable laughter.

As Colonel he fought a hard and successful battle to save the regiment during one of the all too frequent assaults from the centre. The assaults resumed when I myself was the Colonel. Andy, dismayed though he was by decisions that seemed to turn his victory into defeat, could not have been more steadfast in his sympathy and in the moral support that he gave to me personally. His generosity of spirit, his instinct always to look forward rather than backward and his actual and metaphorical arm round the shoulder did more than I could ever possibly tell him to sustain me during a time that, however inevitable it may have been, was painful and unhappy. I shall always be more than grateful to him for that and for all the other words of wisdom, encouragement and friendship that came from him to me over so very many years.

In this sentiment I know that there are many others who in their own circumstances were also able to benefit in the same wonderful way. And never far below the surface, and usually on it, was that sense of humour and fun that never failed to lift the spirits whether in the mess or on a dark, wet night on patrol in Northern Ireland. He set a standard of professional and personal conduct that, whether they knew it or not, profoundly influenced for the better all those who ever served with him.

If I were to finish these inadequate words right now, I know I would once again be accused by Andy of being not just a Herbert but a very big one, for he would be dismayed if I were not to mention his beloved Ginty. Those of us who are lucky enough to have had that experience know how important the love and support of a spouse are as we go about our duties. In this respect Andy was a very lucky man as are indeed so many of the rest of us. He knew that and he never forgot the support that Ginty so wonderfully gave him over 40 years of military married life, not to mention the grand total of 72 that ended only a few weeks ago.

I am painfully aware that I have not done proper justice to a man to whom I personally owe so much as a comrade, a mentor and as a friend. But if we close our eyes we can all see a soldier and a man full of life and humour, genuinely interested in everyone else, constantly but never boringly on the telephone to get the latest news from all his friends. We are all going to miss him hugely but we will also be more than grateful for having had the chance to know, and serve with, a very special Black Watch Commanding Jock.

Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DUNCAN BEAT OBE ARMC

Duncan died in October 2022, he was a former Band Master of the Regimental Band. He qualified as a Bandmaster at Kneller Hall and joined the 1st Battalion as Bandmaster in 1957. He was the Musical Director for the Regimental Band and Pipes and Drums tour of North America in 1963 when President Kennedy was assassinated. He was later posted to the Scottish Infantry Depot Bridge of Don, Aberdeen as Director of Music and latterly was Director of Music with the Scots Guards prior to taking up the appointment as Chief Instructor of the Army School of Music Kneller Hall from where he retired.

Duncan continued to be involved in military music with former military musicians who were in-pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

R J W Proctor

HUGH BLAKENEY

Hugh Blakeney died on 16th February in Granttown-on-Spey aged 88. He wrote a small book entitled 'Gap Years in the Nation's Service - in Highland Regiments Korea and Kenya 1952-1954'. He was called up for National Service in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in February 1952 and in due course went for officer training at Eaton Hall and was commissioned into the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in 1952 and reported to the 1st Battalion in Redford Barracks. Then, in response to a request from Col David Rose for two Argyll and Sutherland Highlander subalterns to reinforce 1BW in Korea, Hugh and one other officer (Mike Crowe - later Major Mike Crowe MC), were nominated. They sailed for Japan and then Korea in January 1953 and joined 1BW in time for the big battles on The Hook. Hugh was in my father's company. (Incidentally, he says on page 31 of his book: "I should explain that the battalion (1BW) was made up of soldiers from many Highland Regiments" - something that perhaps we allow ourselves to forget.)

After Korea Hugh went with 1BW to Kenya. In December 1953 David Rose wrote to the Colonel of the Regiment, General Neil McMicking, saying: "Some of our platoon commanders are outstanding as patrol leaders, particularly Hugh Blakeney. I am sure it is not all good luck. I do wish that he would become a regular, but he is going to learn factor's work at Blair." And so he did. His National Service came to an end in 1954. There will be a few Black Watch men who remember him from those days in the early fifties and his book is a very good read.

Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin

Mervyn Blakeney, his brother, adds: After some ten years as assistant factor at Blair Atholl Estates Hugh then moved further north as factor to the Countess of Seafield of the Strathspey Estates at Granttown-on-Spey where he developed all aspects of this sporting property, being himself a first-class shot and notable fisherman. This led to his involvement with several other estates in the area and with the Spey Fishing Trust to which he was Secretary. On retirement he set up an Agency to promote the sporting side of Scottish life.

A funeral service was held in Granttown-on-Spey at the War Memorial attended by some Black Watch Officers following which Hugh was returned to Argyll and interred in the family burial ground in Appin.

MAJOR COLIN IAN ALEXANDER GRANT 30TH DECEMBER 1938 – 4TH MARCH 2022

The Black Watch was Colin's second love after his first love, his family, Ros and his three girls, Fiona, Catriona and Emma. Colin's father and grandfather had served in the Indian Army - so his parents were stationed in India before returning to Jersey before the war, where Colin was born and grew up. 'Colin Grant, conceived in India, born in Jersey' - was how he liked to introduce himself, with an air of fun. He was also immensely proud of his Scottish heritage and was known to many as Shewglie.

He was educated at Wellington College and at just seventeen Colin was accepted for Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst - Intake 23 and he was proud to be the youngest cadet in his intake. He earned his spurs and became the Senior Under Officer of Gaza Company which in his year was the best company at Sandhurst (the Sovereign's Company) - which he liked to remind his brother officers of!



From Sandhurst he joined the Black Watch in 1959, progressing through the ranks to Captain. From Fiona's (eldest daughter) tribute to her father she spoke of how he was known affectionately as 'Bambi' on account of his athleticism and agility. Fiona also told of how his years in the army took him to many places, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Libya, Malta, Germany, Ireland and Canada from which sprang many stories of 'dare and do'.

One of my favourite stories was from his time in Germany. Whilst on exercise in the Rhine area and preparing to cross the River Weser in his Armoured Personnel Carrier, unbeknownst to Colin, his driver had taken the draining plug out of the floor of the vehicle. After a few metres instead of the vehicle floating across, water poured in and it sank gracefully into the river. Nobody to this day knows how much it cost 'the Major'. It was recovered by the Light Aid Detachment sometime later. Apparently six East German operatives were observing this from East Germany as they ate their picnic. The report back to Moscow must have been interesting!

The stories of Colin and his various expeditions were often mixed with a cocktail of drama and uncertainty. He was the first to admit he was not a natural 'hunter-killer' and by no means a conventional soldier, but The Black Watch was a foundation stone in his life. Having lost his parents at a young age, and becoming an only child, losing his half-brother Peter during the Second World War – The Black Watch was his second family.

Colin retired as an honorary 'Major' in 1973 after fifteen years of service. He always knew he would have to return to his family business in Jersey which by then, needed new vitality and direction. This was aided by the fact he met his true love – Ros – Ros Carson who he married in October 1974. Together they quickly took control of the family business – the Ommaroo Hotel, expanding the business to seven 'Seabird Hotels'. Les Pres became their wonderful new home – the family grew with the arrival of Fiona, Catriona and Emma. Ros ran the family and the 'Major' ran the business with a gentle touch of guidance from his bride!

Ros was the perfect partner in life for Colin who was rather unique, with a strong numerate background, love and success of gambling, a sports enthusiast (including a tricky period as a jockey!) a wicked sense of humour, a good barman/host and deliciously impatient – for starters! The Black Watch even played a part in his grandchildren's lives (unbeknownst to them) where Colin liked them to salute him as his subordinates and would tell them to 'carry on please!' His enduring friendships from The Black Watch are testament to that period of his life and he always spoke fondly of his 'brother officers' – who remained a part of his life and all his girl's lives as godparents and family friends.

Alistair Hammond-Chambers

LIEUTENANT WILLIAM RAINEY (RAY) MCGAVOCK

Ray McGavock died on the 30th January 2022 aged 80, surrounded by his family.

He was born on 10th August 1941 in Newtonards, County Down where he grew up. Ray subsequently attended Belfast Academy and Greenmount Agricultural College before moving to Fife with his family. His father, who managed a linen factory, moved to a new position managing a textile factory in East Wemyss with the family settling in the then new town of Glenrothes.

He was always a person who enjoyed being outdoors both as a young boy in Newtonards and also after relocating to Fife. It was natural for him to join 6th/7th Battalion Black Watch TA at Kirkcaldy where the weekend training fulfilled his desire, a sense of adventure and travel as did attending annual camps and becoming a Medium Machine Gun gunner as a young TA soldier. Learning about explosives as an Assault Pioneer was a skill that he was able to use later.

In 1963 Ray took the advantage of the Assisted Passage scheme and for £10.00 he emigrated to Australia, the journey taking three weeks on the P&O flagship, Oriana. Whilst working on a farm in Australia he put his knowledge of explosives to good use when he got rid of several



tree roots which had been causing the farmer problems! He later tried his hand at telecommunications before returning home for what was supposed to be a holiday. However, he met his future wife, Lindsay, and never returned to Australia.

After a long engagement whilst both he and Lindsay were in full time further education, Lindsay became a primary school teacher and Ray was employed as the District Youth Community Officer. After Rae returned from successfully completing the TA Officer's Commissioning Course at Victory College, RMA Sandhurst in 1974, they were married in St Margaret's Church Glenrothes. They set up home in the former schoolhouse at Roundyhill, near Kirriemuir which was to be their permanent home and raised daughter Karen and son Christopher.

Ray loved working with young people and his enthusiasm motivated many young people to succeed in life. During his final appointment in his professional occupation Ray became the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Coordinator for Dundee where he planned and enjoyed many expeditions.

Irrespective of the heavy commitment of family life and working with young people which Ray loved and excelled, he continued to serve as an officer with 1/51 Highland where he was a leading light in the Battalion Shooting team. Gaining success at TASAAM and winning the falling plates competition on numerous occasions. He organised training at Company and Battalion training weekends and annual camps. He was also present at the presentation of New Colours by Her Majesty the Queen Mother to 1/51 Highland on the North Inch, Perth on 4 July 1986.

He volunteered to join the Home Service Force (HSF) on its formation and was a very effective Platoon Commander in Zulu Company. He was well liked and respected by all those who had the privilege of serving with him and his innovative training methods carried out in the Angus glens were enjoyed by all who took part.

He maintained a superb collection of deactivated weapons and enjoyed trips to Balhousie Castle where he was shown and given the opportunity to handle rifles and machine guns which he had used during his service. He was an active member of the Angus Branch of the Black Watch Association who attended functions when his busy programme allowed.

Ray lived life to the full and was great fun to be with, firmly believing that "no experience in life is wasted".

A loving husband and proud father who will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

R J W Proctor

LIEUTENANT COLONEL COLIN STRATHEARN ROPNER STROYAN 1927 - 2022

Born on 24th March 1927, Colin Stroyan was educated at Harrow School before he served initially on an Emergency Commission in 2nd Battalion The Black Watch in India aged 20. His elder brother Angus had previously joined the Regiment in 1944.

Colin was appointed Shooting Officer on arrival, a post for which he was ideally suited because throughout his life he had such a great interest in stalking, fishing and shooting and there was great sport to be had in India.

With the Battalion based at Peshawar, he was present during the final days of India and was with 2nd Battalion, the last British unit to leave the sub-continent, when they embarked at Karachi aboard the Empire Halladale on 28th February 1947. As MTO it was Colin's task to hand over all the Battalion's vehicles to the Pakistan Army and this he did on the final day, but he suddenly found that he had to take a taxi to the harbour, for he had no remaining vehicle.

Returning home, Colin went to Edinburgh University before joining Brodies WS in Edinburgh, a firm for which he became the eventual senior partner and where he was on the board of many companies.

Colin was a formidable personality, tall and well built, who became a very well kent figure in the Scottish legal and estate management world. Brought up at Lanrick, between Callander and Dunblane and on the River Teith, he was, at heart, a countryman but with a full time job



as well, yet he managed to work both well together, even once catching a salmon in the early morning before driving in to the Edinburgh office.

In 1959 Colin married Caroline Brownlow and they had 63 happy years of marriage, latterly living at Bridgend of Teith, in Doune, Perthshire, having two daughters and a son and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. He was a man who lived life to the full, a friend said that his bark was worse than his bite, though the same friend added that could not be said for one of his dogs!

Colin bought the beautiful Monar Estate at the top end of Glenfarrar in Ross-shire and this was the highland place he loved with all his heart. With the lodge at the far end of Loch Monar, it was a 25 mile journey from Beaulieu, let alone Inverness, and with no road access to the lodge, everything had to be transported by boat. The Monar Deer Forest was well known and also held some grouse and there was good fishing on Loch Monar and on a few hill lochs.

When Lt Col Earle Nicoll was commanding the 1st Battalion at Kirknewton in 1968, I was commanding Support Company. The CO called me in and showed me a very outline map of North West Scotland and on top of which was drawn in pencil a duck egg shape. The map was from the Ministry of Defence, who, in a brief fax, tasked the Battalion to carry out a reconnaissance of what they saw as a future large training area on which the Army could fire the Mortar and Anti-tank weapons at maximum range.

I plotted the outline map onto Ordnance Survey 1-inch maps and found, to my horror, that Loch Monar, Colin's deer forest, was exactly in the middle of the proposed range. The CO and I discussed this matter for a few minutes before it was obvious to both of us that Colin Stroyan must be kept informed, in case he knew nothing about the MOD proposal. I went down to see him the same morning and there was a predictable explosion in Brodie's then offices in Atholl Crescent, for Colin had certainly not been approached in any way. One telephone call to London was all that was needed to scotch this project but I am glad we helped out!

Back in Scotland, Colin joined 6/7th Battalion Black Watch TA in their Crieff Company and eventually rose to command the Battalion. He loved Mess life and, perhaps with his experience of 2nd Battalion regimental life in India, organised lavish Officers Mess entertainment, causing some young officers a little difficulty in paying their mess bills. He was a great supporter of the TA and spoke up for its reserve army value on many occasions. John Rankin, then one of his officers, recalls that Colin always wanted TA soldiering to be fun and if necessary ended weekend exercises in good time for the Jocks to get back home on time after a cup of tea and possibly a dram in the NAAFI.

Colin was an Elder of St Madoc's Episcopal Church, Doune but his Service of Celebration, held on 20th September 2022, took place at the nearby Kincardine-in-Menteith Parish Church, Blair Drummond and was attended by a full gathering of his family and friends.

Colin Innes

COLONEL PHIL THORPE, ROYAL LOGISTIC CORPS

Veterans of the 1st Battalion's Op BANNER tour in West Belfast under Lieutenant Colonel Garry Barnett in 1982/83 will be saddened to hear of the sudden death in October 2021 of Phil Thorpe. He collapsed and died while out cycling with his wife Jane on Salisbury Plain. He was the troop commander of the RLC detachment attached to 1 BW, responsible for providing the drivers for the Pig armoured vehicles and the Saracen armoured ambulances. A career soldier he completed four tours in Northern Ireland, the last as DCOS in the HQ in Lisburn. His military career also took him amongst other places to West Berlin, Tikrit with the US Army in Iraq, to Jakarta where he was Defence Attaché and finally to SHAPE in Mons. Phil Thorpe always talked with enthusiasm and affection of his time with The Black Watch. Those who knew him at that time will remember him with a fine mixture of great personal liking and of great admiration for a thoroughly capable and professional young officer. To quote from the address given at his funeral by his long-standing friend Brigadier Brian McCall: "If we are judged not by what we did but by what we leave for others, his legacy will live on in all of us for some time to come. We have lost a good man, a good soldier, a good husband, a good father and a good friend." He was certainly a friend to The Black Watch.

Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin

CAPTAIN DENNIS WILSON L D'H

Dennis Wilson was born in 1921 in Southampton. He enlisted as a Gunner in the Royal Artillery in 1941 before being commissioned into

the Middlesex Regiment. He served briefly in the 1st Kensingtons (TA) and then transferred as a platoon commander to 1st Tyneside Scottish, The Black Watch (TA). Having landed in Normandy on 11 June 1944, on 1 July he was seriously injured during Operation Martlet in fierce fighting near Rauray, west of Caen, and evacuated back to Britain. After the war Dennis was posted to Scotland and demobilised in 1947. During his working life he sold Encyclopaedia Britannica and in his own time was a keen poet. He was received by the Queen in 2013 at the Royal Reception on Contemporary Poetry, and in 2015 was awarded an honorary fellowship from the University of Southampton. For his war service he was awarded the French Légion d'Honneur. Dennis died aged 101 and is survived by two children.

T J O Carmichael



Mr Dennis Wilson (second from Right) at Poetry Reception 2013 at Buckingham Palace

JOHN CLARKE MBE KZ(POLISH)

John was born in April 1924 and died in October 2022 aged 98. John originally enlisted into the army at Manchester on 4th of August 1942, as a member of the Territorial Army. On joining the Colours, he originally served with the Highland Regiment which was a training unit for men destined to serve in Highland Regiments. He later served in The Black Watch and was posted to the 6th Battalion where he served in Algeria, Tunisia, Cairo in Egypt before moving with the Battalion to Italy in 1944. He took part in the battle of Monte Ornito, the first and second battles of Monte Cassino then Moricone, San Pancrazio, Monte Scalari, Florence, Coriano, Cesena and Forli. When 6 BW left Cairo the capital of Egypt and arrived in Italy, they found themselves in another town called Cairo, they left Egypt wearing thin Khaki Drill uniforms and arrived in the Italian winter where snow and cold winds caused problems with unacclimatised troops. Great coats and warm woollen serge battledress clothing was soon issued to the men to save suffering from frostbite and other physical afflictions caused by the adverse Italian winter.

He then moved with the 6th Battalion and served from 1944 until 1945 in Athens during the Greek Civil War.

Later in 1945 John along with others from the 6th Battalion was transferred to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and served in Jerusalem from 1946 until 1947. However, although having served in both regiments John's first love of regiment was The Black Watch and he was extremely proud to wear the Red Hackle.

He was a member of both the Stoke on Trent and Birmingham Branches of the Association and was also a founder member and Secretary of the Monte Cassino Veterans Association and for his hard work over a period of 40 years in organising veterans' pilgrimages to Italy John was awarded the MBE in 2005. He was also awarded the KZ by the Polish Government for his work with Polish veterans. The Greek Government also made an award for his service in Greece towards the end of WW2.

The successful battle of Monte Scalari opened 'the gateway to the north' enabling the allies to enter Florence. He was extremely proud of his service in The Black Watch.

John was a keen footballer in his younger days and played for Manchester Boys team which won both the English Trophy and Lancashire Cup in the season 1937-38. He was a lifelong supporter of Manchester City and enjoyed the occasional flutter, he could often be seen with his transistor radio glued to his ear hoping that he had placed a successful bet!



John's working life was spent in Manchester in management, he was a well-respected member of the Institute of Managers until his retirement. John married Olive in 1949 (Nee Fox who had served in the WRNS during the war) and they had 57 long and happy years together until she predeceased him in 2005.

John is survived by his daughter Susan, son Stephen, three grandchildren and great grandchildren.

R J W Proctor

WILLIAM DUNCAN



William (known as Willie) Duncan died in Colchester on 25th of October 2022 aged 65 after a hard-fought battle against cancer.

Willie enlisted in 1974 and joined the 1st Battalion at Colchester in 1975, he served in 13 Platoon, D Company in Colchester and Ballykinler.

On leaving the army in 1978 he returned to Colchester where he and his wife made their home.

He is survived by his wife Suzy, daughters Louise and Fiona and four grandchildren to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

R J W Proctor

VICTOR GRAHAM

Victor George Graham a National Service soldier died in Glasgow on 16th January 2022.

Victor enlisted into The Black Watch at Edinburgh on 2nd November 1950. On completion of basic training, he was posted to 1st Battalion stationed in Berlin. This posting was to be short lived as he and a number of other Black Watch soldiers were drafted for Active Service in Malaya. Victor initially served with 1st Battalion The Seaforth Highlanders and then after their departure he remained in Malaya for a further year with 1st Battalion The Gordon Highlanders. Despite the security threat, jungle living conditions and a short period of illness with malaria, Victor enjoyed the experience. He recalled that this was where he formed lifelong friendships with soldiers from three separate highland regiments.

Victor was born in Glasgow in 1932. His early years were spent in Baltic Street and Salamanca Street in the Parkhead area of Glasgow. On return from National Service, he met Rose MacNeill and after a very short romance they were married at Shettleston in 1954. On demobilisation Victor gained employment as a steel erector for the electricity board, he then trained as a telecom engineer and spent over 30 years with British Telecom.

Victor enjoyed trips to the West Highlands to indulge in his love of salmon and trout fishing. He combined this with family gatherings at a caravan based in Inveraray. He also enjoyed various types of music, with Nat King Cole being his favourite.

Victor was predeceased by his wife Rose in 2002. He will be sadly missed by his family, friends and the local community.

J A Menzies

THOMAS HALLIDAY

Thomas Halliday died peacefully at the Beeches Nursing Home Dunfermline on Sunday 20th February 2022 aged 89 years. His funeral service took place at Dunfermline Crematorium on 4th of March with members of the Fife Branch in attendance.

R J W Proctor

STAFF SERGEANT TERENCE HART

Terence Robertson Hart was born on 6th August 1930 in Bishop Auckland. He originally joined The Black Watch and began training at Fort George, near Inverness, in November 1948, but within a short time he transferred to the Intelligence Corps, and served in Field Security in Preston, Gibraltar, West Germany and Chelsea. On completion of his National Service he enlisted into the Intelligence Corps TA, based on Teeside.

Whilst serving in Gibraltar Terence's duties included the surveillance of visiting foreign nationals, particularly crew members from Russian ships which occasionally docked there. Later when serving in West Germany he was responsible for interviewing displaced persons and he also took part in surveillance of members of the Soviet Military Mission, 'Soxmis'. During his time serving with the Intelligence Corps TA, he was sent to Catterick to help train an Intelligence Section of the Leicestershire Regiment.

On leaving the Army he worked as a Journalist and for many years a Civil Servant, he died on 1st April 2021 and was laid to rest on Eriskay in the Outer Hebrides, where he spent the last 30 years of his life. He is survived by his daughter Gillian, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

R J W Proctor

RONNIE HEGGIE

Ronald Heggie known as Ronnie, was a Korean veteran who died at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee on Sunday 13th March 2022.

Ronnie senior was a great family man and is survived by his daughters and son, Margaret, Catherine, Peter, Elizabeth, Joan and Susan and was a dearly loved grandfather, great grandfather and great-great grandfather. His late son, also called Ronnie, served in the Regiment in Minden and died tragically not long after joining the Regiment in 1966.

His funeral took place at Dundee Crematorium on Monday 28th March and his Regiment was represented by a contingent from the Dundee Branch of the Black Watch Association.

R J W Proctor

GEORGE HORSBURGH

George Horsburgh died at home at Turin Cottages, Aberlemno near Forfar on 1st October 2021 age 77.

He was a member of the Angus ACF Battalion prior to joining The Black Watch in 1962. He served with the 1st Battalion in Warminster, Minden, Kirknewton and Hong Kong prior to the end of his service. He spent most of his service in the MT Platoon as a 4-ton driver.

He gained employment with B Company 1/51 Highland which became the 3rd Battalion The Black Watch, first as a civilian driver and then as a caretaker at the newly built TA Centre at Forfar and latterly with the Scottish Yeomanry until the TA Centre closed.

George was a founder member and great supporter of the Angus Branch Association until his health prevented him from attending branch activities and he is sadly missed.

His funeral took place at historic Aberlemno church on Monday the 18th October 2021. The large attendance of Black Watch veterans was a measure of the respect in which he was held by fellow members.

Our sympathy and condolences are offered to his wife Aileen and their surviving son Stewart.

R J W Proctor

ROBERT INGLIS

Robert, known as Bob, died very suddenly on Tuesday 4th October at St Columba's Care Home, Dundee aged 88.

A native and lifetime resident of Kirriemuir, Bob served his time as an electrician before being called up for National Service. He served in Crail, Berlin, and Edinburgh and took part in the Royal Guard in 1957.

Bob was a founder member of the Angus Branch of the Black Watch Association and a regular attendee at Branch meetings and events until illness prevented him from doing so.

He, along with Bob Mitchel and Bill Tindal, volunteered to help with work in the museum in the early 2000s.

Our condolences and sympathy are offered to his wife Margaret and their family.

R J W Proctor



DAVID KENNEDY

David Kennedy died on 9th April 2022 aged 80. David served in the 1st Battalion from 1968-1980. Initially serving in a Rifle Company he joined the Quartermaster's department becoming the Regimental butcher and attaining the rank of full Corporal. He was a keen footballer, playing in goal and then became the "kit man" for the Battalion 1st 11 football team.

After leaving the Regular Army, David was a very active member of the Black Watch Association holding membership in both the Fife and Angus Branches where he attended all major functions until illness prevented him from doing so.

Our sympathy and condolences are offered to his wife and surviving family.

R J W Proctor



JEFFREY LATHAM

Jeffrey Latham died on 28th March 2022 aged 90. During his service he attained the rank of Corporal and was very proud of his service in the Regiment.

R J W Proctor

GEORGE MCDONALD



George McDonald died very suddenly at home on the afternoon of 15th September 2021. That morning, he had carried out his weekly visit to the Black Watch Museum meeting up with several veterans over a coffee and bun and commenting on how proud he was of his grandchildren. George served in 6th/7th Battalion Black Watch TA and was very proud of his association with the Regiment. He was a stalwart supporter of the Association and the Perth Branch and attended all functions and meetings. He was generous and donated raffle prizes annually for the Black Watch Annual Reunion.

George's working life was spent with British Gas and on retirement he devoted his time to his wife Norma and their children Garry and Sharon. He was a much loved Grandad to his four grandchildren.

George's funeral took place at Perth Crematorium on 28th September 2021 which was well attended by many members of the Perth Branch of The Black Watch Association and those who had had the pleasure of knowing him.

R J W Proctor

LAWRENCE MCLAREN

Lawrence, known as Larry, was born in Kirkcaldy, Fife, the eldest of five children. He was educated in Kirkcaldy until he was 14. On leaving school he was employed as a trainee weaver and then a chef before joining the Merchant Navy. Due to an injury he was discharged in 1950.

Enlisting at the Recruiting Office in Dundee he joined his grandfather's regiment, The Black Watch. After training at Fort George, Lawrence was posted to Berlin on 20th December 1950 which began his love affair with Germany. He loved his life as a despatch rider within the Signals Platoon of 1 BW. As a keen sportsman he represented the Army in his first competitive marathon.

Five months later he, along with the Battalion, was posted to Korea. By now he was employed as a linesman within the Signals Platoon and often had to go out to repair lines while under fire. Lawrence was injured in Korea and sent to hospital in Japan, but as soon as he was fit he returned to Korea and remained there until July 1953.

Before leaving Korea he was involved in the interment of many of his comrades who had lost their lives. His hope to get back to Blighty was dashed in that the Battalion was diverted to Kenya to assist in the Kenya uprising until January 1955. On return to the UK Lawrence was selected to become a Small Arms Instructor at Hythe, but on the completion of his service he decided to return to civilian life, a decision he regretted. As a Reservist he had hoped to be called back for the Suez crisis but the call never came and he was very disappointed.



In civilian life he utilised the skills achieved in the Army to gain employment in ventures involving TV, wireless and hi-fi. He was employed in numerous organisations and at one point was the personal technician to Professor Jennison at the newly emerging Kent university where he was employed for thirty-two years.

His outside interests included sports, marathon running - competing in forty-two marathons including the London marathon and the Ben Nevis race. He was also interested in photography and being an amateur radio ham. He later became the Captain of Canterbury Squash Club which he successfully led in the season 1972-73. He was, in later life, introduced to flying and obtained his licence after flying lessons at Manston Airport and, as soon as he had his licence and could fly alone, he hired a plane and flew across the English Channel with his mother-in-law and wife to Ostend and back again. On one flying trip to the USA, his wife became concerned as they flew across the Everglades in Florida; through a confusion between American and English gallons they were running short of fuel and if they had had to make an emergency landing there were only swamps with alligators below!

Lawrence led a very full and practical life and thought greatly of his service with The Black Watch.

Mike Smith

GEORDIE REID

Former Sergeant Geordie Reid, the oldest living Black Watch soldier and the senior resident of Murthly village died on 5th July this year at the ripe old age of 103. Born way back in 1918, Geordie was already a trained motor mechanic when, aged 20, he was called-up in 1940 to serve in the Regiment and to carry out his basic training at Queen's Barracks before he was posted to 10th Black Watch Training Battalion, based at that time on the Island of Orkney. He was immediately sent to the MT Platoon where he was then appointed driver to the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Keith Purvis-Russell-Montgomery OBE of Kinross.

Geordie Reid well remembered driving the Colonel all over Scotland, for the Battalion was posted around to Montrose, Brechin, Thurso and even Barrow-in-Furness. Reaching the rank of Sergeant, he was demobbed at Stewarton in Ayrshire in 1946.

Working with his father at Middle Gourdie Farm, near Spittalfield, he later joined Macdonalds, driving cattle floats all over Scotland, and then herding Aberdeen Angus stock at Dunkeld Park Farm. Later he worked for Tarmac carrying out improvements to the A9 road before he finally retired in 1980 aged 65. Always sprightly and bright-eyed he was a well-kent figure in his village driving a wee red car around right up to his final year.

Never for him a quiet life, for Geordie was an Elder at the Church of Scotland's Birnam Kirk and at the Dunkeld Cathedral for 57 years; in 2017 he was presented with a special Certificate of Continuous Service by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, The Rt Rev Dr Leslie Barr.

A long-time member of the Perth Branch of the Regimental Association, the Branch provided a smart Guard of Honour to see the fine old warrior off in style at his funeral and Pipe Major Duthie played his pipes both at Little Dunkeld Kirk and at the Perth Crematorium.

Colin Innes



ALFRED (FRED) KYDD WATERS

2nd April 1920 to 1st April 2022

Alfie, or known to others as Fred, Waters lived the last 14 years of his life as a resident of Bridge of Earn Service/Caledonia Housing complex. On his 100th birthday he was given a rapturous applause by many in the village, including on such a milestone being marked by Sir Rod Stewart and, separately, PM Alistair Duthie. Never liking to be the centre attention he would regularly attend a Sunday afternoon service before heading off to the swimming pool to support Perth Dolphins Disability Swim Club.

In his younger days Fred played football to a good level playing briefly for Arbroath and Auchinleck Talbot Football Club near Kilmarnock. However, injuries and knee problems cut short his playing life which also affected his working life. When he could no



longer work on farms he ended up working in DC Thomson in Dundee for over thirty years. Football and swimming remained important to him up till relatively recently. Fred supported and encouraged his community where he could. For many years he coached local football teams in Alyth, Meigle and Abernethy.

He seemed to get so much from helping young people. Without doubt his upbringing shaped and moulded him into the man we knew. But it was his time in The Black Watch that left a lasting impression. Fred was immensely proud of his connection with this. While only in his early 20s he served with The Black Watch in the Battle of Heraklion in Crete and was subsequently rescued. He was most proud of having served under Montgomery in North Africa 1942 and in the Battle of El Alamein and how pivotal this had been in WW2. But he also experienced appalling conditions in Burma with the Chindits and war against the Japanese which left scars and prejudices.

Behind a modest and slightly dishevelled appearance lay a smart mind. He loved to read and would devour The Courier and The Herald daily. He loved poetry and enjoyed dabbling in creative writing himself. He had been very active in his local church also serving as a Sunday School teacher and even the Beadle. Like the experiences he had had, he was a deep and complex man.

His family knew this to be true. It was probably at a dance in Alyth that he met Betty who would become his wife. Fred was attracted to this strong independent woman. Betty and Fred were married for nearly 40 years before she died in 1992. Throughout his life he was helped greatly by his son, Bruce, and daughter in law, Sandra. Without question, Fred was a very caring Grandad to Christopher and Michelle and, according to his Minister, would listen to Christopher when he wouldn't to anyone else!

With thanks to Revd Allan Wilson, Minister of Dunbarney and Forgandenny.

JOHN WILKIE

John died 19th March 2022. John, with his brothers Jimmy and Paul, served in the Regiment.

John joined 1st Battalion at Colchester and served as a Piper in the Pipes and Drums. His wife, Angela, who was the sister of fellow Pipes and Drums member, Chick Mackay sadly pre-deceased John in the early 1990s. He is survived by his children, Michael and Nancy, and their families to whom we send our deepest sympathy and condolences.

R J W Proctor

GEORGE WILKIE

George, known as Dod, died in January 2022. Dod was a member of the Pipes and Drums who played at the White House in 1963. He was always immaculately turned out and was a great regimental character with a great sense of humour.

R J W Proctor

The following deaths have also been recorded

John Adamson died on 12th May 2022 Aged 103. John served in 1BW and was awarded the Legion d'Honneur.

Colin Bruce died on 19th August 2022.

Jeremy Dewhurst died on 15th June 2022 aged 87.

Thomas Dignam died on 27th January 2022 aged 87. Thomas was a member of the Newcastle Branch.

Bill Duff died on 30th April 2022, Bill was a Korean veteran.

Alec Gibb died on 30th July 2022.

Louis Henderson died on 23rd February 2022 aged 96.

George Ireland died on 10th May 2022, fuller obit to follow.

David Kelly died in March 2022.

David Murdoch died 26 December 2021 aged 90. Served with 6th/7th BW.

Weir Rankine died on 16th October 2021 aged 85.

John Satchell died on 24th January 2022 aged 95.

James Scott died in January 2022.

Charlie Stott died on 30th December 2021, fuller obit to follow.

Archie Stewart died on 28th January 2022 aged 75.

John Wilkie died on 19th March 2022. He was a 1BW piper.

Paul Wojnarowicz died on 18th June 2022.

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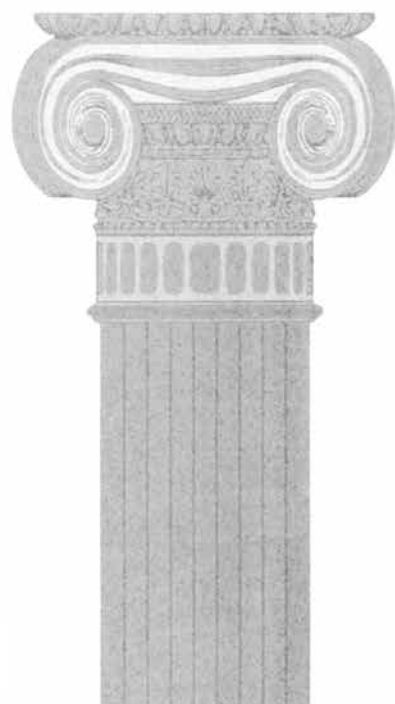
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THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO KOSOVO

By Colonel (Retd) A E F Cowan

Kosovo's history goes back for at least ten thousand years. In the medieval period, it had become the centre of the Serbian empire but in 1389 the Serbs under their leader Prince Lazar were defeated in the battle of Kosovo Polje (meaning the Field of the Blackbirds). The original peoples of Kosovo largely converted to the Muslim religion. However, over the next few hundred years, the Serbs continued to see Kosovo as their land, particularly as the centre of their Orthodox brand of Christianity.

Following the further weakening of the Ottomans empire during the 19th Century, Serbia regained its independence and annexed part of Kosovo. At the end of WW1 with the creation of the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, the Serbian population increased. At the end of WW2 Kosovo was granted the status of an autonomous province and virtual self-government in 1974. During the 1980s tension rose between the Serb and pro-Albanian populations. In 1987 Slobodan Milosevic, by then Secretary of the Serbian Communist Party, took advantage of the situation to promote the rights of the Serbs still living in Kosovo. Shortly after that, he became President of Serbia. In 1990 a state of emergency was declared; elements of the Federal Yugoslav Army were deployed into Kosovo's countryside and

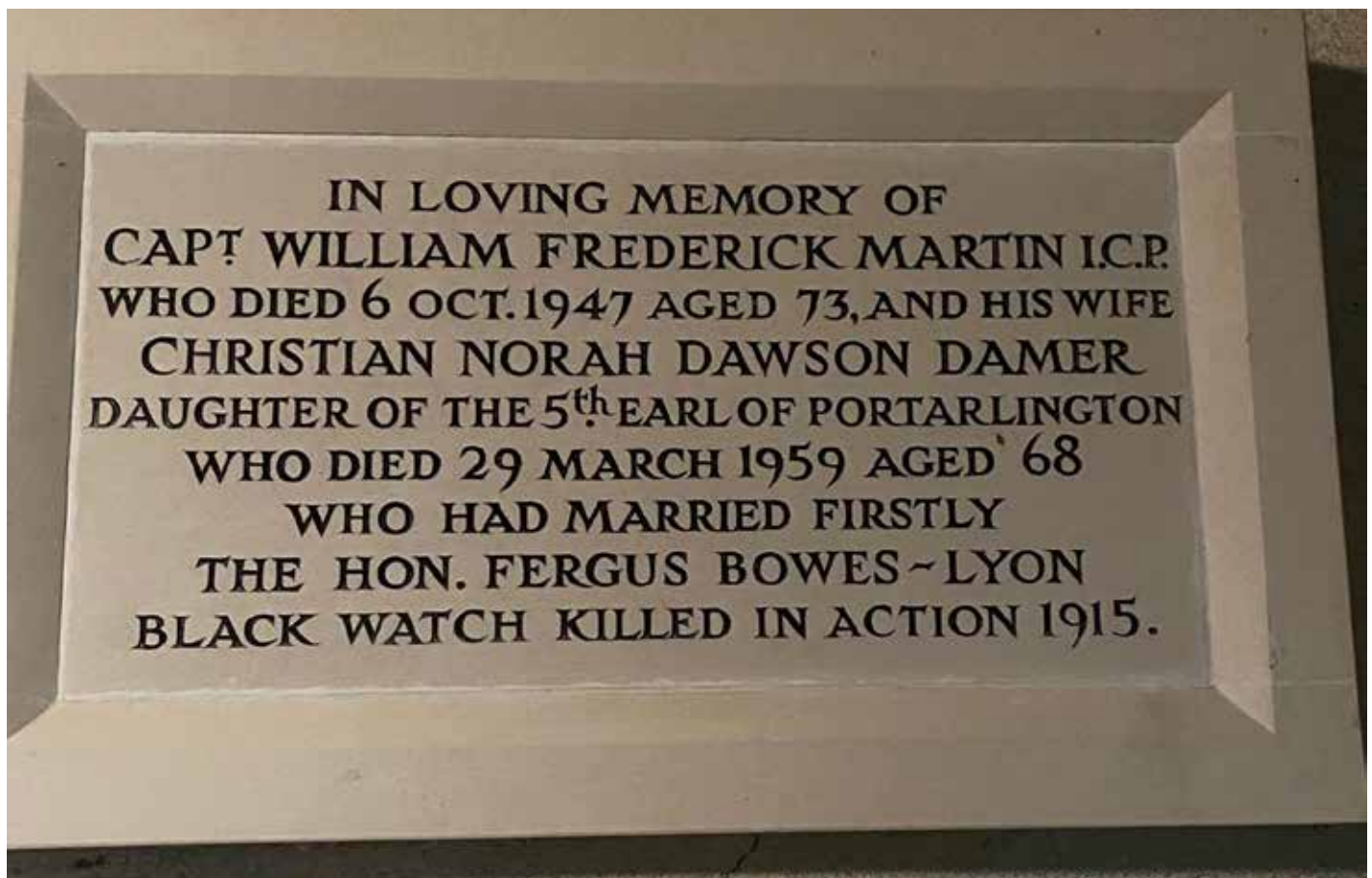
special police battalions were posted on the streets of the main towns. My role, as British Defence Attaché to Yugoslavia, at this time was to visit Kosovo and report. On one occasion sitting in a café in the capital, together with another diplomat from the British Embassy we saw a tank in blue police colours in the street outside. Visiting another town, I came across a dustbin with bullet holes in it. I picked it up and found matching holes in the wall behind it: indeed, the windows in the whole square had been peppered with small arms fire. The same went for a 'group' of bullet holes on a wall in another town which showed that the police force had lost control in terms of the use of minimum force as we would understand that term.

In the same period, I had seen 'special police' from Slovenia with their 'Triglav' shoulder badges in Pristina but the following week they and their Croatian counterparts had been withdrawn on the orders of their respective governments – a clear sign that Yugoslavia was breaking apart. Finally, the only 'special police' left in Kosovo were Serbian. In one incident three drunken policemen from this force left a pub and shot several innocent civilians stone dead. So, in reality the outbreak of fighting in Kosovo signalled the start of the civil war in Yugoslavia and indeed its final act ended with the Dayton Agreement, (1995) placing the international force in Kosovo to maintain the peace after the final breakup of the former Yugoslavia and the fall of Milosevic.

THE DAMER BOWES-LYON PLAQUE

Readers of the magazine may be interested to see a photograph of a plaque that is situated in St Peter's Church on the Came House Estate, Winterbourne Came near Dorchester in Dorset.

It commemorates the life of Christian Damer who had been married to Captain The Hon Fergus Bowes-Lyon at the time of his death in 1915.



The Damer Bowes-Lyon plaque

FROM THE MOON TO KIRKCALDY BY WAY OF EL ALAMEIN SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

By Mrs Tess Monteith

*"But they have set the deeds to music, as was done in days of yore
And their comrades laud their glory, to the men they led before,
And Scotland's hills and glens ring with all the World's esteem
Of the men who gave the music on the pipes of El Alamein"*

Dedicated to the pipers of the 51st Highland Division who made the supreme sacrifice at El Alamein

This October sees the 80th anniversary of the Battle for El Alamein - often touted as the psychological turning point of the war. Hitler's troops under the command of General Erwin Rommel stood poised to threaten an advance on Alexandria and Cairo in the seesaw battle for control of the North African coast. Montgomery conceived a plan to punch back at Rommel using his infantry to forge a way through the minefields and strong defences. It was to be a night attack; a head-on clash under covering fire to allow the armoured divisions to break through. The 51st Highland Division was earmarked for a critical role as one of the main assaulting divisions, with New Zealand forces on their left flank and Australians to the right. This was the Division's opportunity to strike back at Rommel to whom it had been forced to surrender when encircled at St Valery-en-Caux in 1940.

Rather than go over the military aspects of the battle which are well documented elsewhere, this article seeks out the more personal recollections from local sources, to try to understand what it was like to be a part of this great battle with its fears, privations and motivating factors. Major General Douglas Wimberley was known to the Jocks as "Tartan Tam" or "Big Tam" and his memories of which this is only a brief selection, give us an understanding of how he was able to mould and exploit the strengths of the reformed, but as yet untested, Highland Division. He laid great store on receiving accurate information preferring to site his headquarters close to the action which gave him the ability to grasp which objectives had been attained, and at what cost. He had fought in The First World War as a young captain and this experience invited comparisons in his mind. The narratives of Major Gerald Osborne (commanding D Company 1 BW) and Captain Cathcart (put in charge of a hastily-formed company in the midst of battle and later Commanding Officer 7BW) detail their exploits in hand-to-hand fighting as they advanced on the objectives of Stanley and Kirkcaldy. Captain Cameron (later Commanding Officer 5th Cameron Highlanders) probably one of the few remaining survivors of the battle, is now on the eve of his 102nd birthday.

After the surrender at St Valery, morale in the Division was low, with the rump of troop numbers made up of territorial battalions. It fell to Major General Wimberley to reform the Division which included rebadging

from the 9th to the 51st. He drew on all available Scottish troops to rekindle and exploit the tremendous fighting spirit of the Highlanders. Wimberley also gave orders that the familiar HD divisional sign should be raised at all opportunities, so much so that the Division earned the nickname of "The Highway Decorators" due to the frequency with which it was being daubed on any, and every, available roadside wall.

His sheer determination to bring the battalions up to strength, raise standards and root out officers who did not meet his high expectations, saw a transformation during 1941 with hard rounds of training in Scotland. He was an absolute stickler for high standards in turnout, and the wearing of the kilt on every possible occasion. Protecting his division from a drain of officers as the year turned into 1942 without seeing action was also vital; many excellent officers were lured away by the prospect of getting into battle sooner.

At one point The War Office raised with Wimberley how the people of Scotland would react to heavy casualties, if the Division were to go into action again after the disaster at St Valery. His view was that *"Scotland was accustomed to taking heavy casualties and would relish the chance to give a good account of themselves!"* Wimberley fought hard to ensure the Highland Division was drawn principally from those of Scottish stock. He even waylaid General Montgomery at a crossroads in Kent, so he could hitch a ride and appeal for more Jocks. Montgomery, "a man of vision who understood morale," gave his blessing, resulting in Highland Divisional Infantry numbers being 80% Jocks overall. On the eve of their departure, they were visited by the King and Queen, who sported her Black Watch brooch. According to Wimberley, *"there is no doubt that by this time we were a fine formation. We had first-class men; we had the picked officer leaders that congregate in the Highland Regiments and we had the tremendous tradition of the Highland Brigade and the World War I Highland Division at our backs."*

Bringing the Division to the battlefield involved a sixty-day sea journey, sailing from 'Glasgow to The Middle East via South Africa *"In a convoy of 22 ships, with 8 Destroyers steaming all around us on the lookout for submarines. It was an imposing sight."* The destination of the Division was only confirmed when they were at sea. General Wimberley undertook a hazardous journey by seaplane up through the African continent to arrive well in advance of his troops. The first stage of the air journey involved landing in neutral Mozambique where they had to adopt a civilian identity. Wimberley chose 'whisky distiller' as his profession while his staff officer, Urquhart, that of 'piano tuner.' They flew on via Mombasa and Lake Victoria, where Wimberley thought he had spotted hippo. In fact, they turned out to be rocks, which amused the unfortunate Urquhart very little as he suffered terrible bouts of sickness each time they came into land. However, the flying schedule necessitated an extra night at Luxor, allowing an extraordinary wartime sightseeing visit to the Valley of the Kings.

Wimberley arrived towards the end of July, quickly adapting to a dual lifestyle between the harsh conditions of the desert, albeit with a magnificent canopy of stars and cool pre-dawn, to the highly social and party atmosphere of Cairo. A visit from Churchill enabled him to experience at first-hand the Prime Minister's tremendous ability to speak off-the-cuff and inspire the men, officers and soldiers alike. As part of the esprit de corps, Wimberley ensured that the Highland Division lost no opportunity to reinforce their identity, with signage, kilts and pipers - their Scottish accents leaving no one in any doubt as to their motivation and intent. In this, he felt he had the backing of Montgomery who similarly understood the importance of morale.

In the largely featureless desert, objectives mapped out in great detail had to be reached by marching on a compass bearing and counting paces: navigation officers forged ahead without the benefit of their tin helmets for fear of distorting their magnetic compass bearings. The troops were to be practiced attacking close behind a moving curtain of bursting shells - what is termed "leaning on the barrage". Recalling the experiences of Ypres and Cambrai, Wimberley drilled each battalion in the job which he had allocated them in the initial attack, laying out an exact replica of the enemy's defences and naming objectives tailored to each regiment; the Camerons were expected to take Inverness, the



Black Watch Privates James Bruce and Alex McMitchell living up to their reputation as Highway Decorators



Major General Wimberley

Argylls, Stirling and the Black Watch, Killin. Unfortunately, the realism of these training exercises was occasionally too strong. In one incident, a number of men were hit by friendly fire resulting in the loss of 6 lives. Not realising the extent of their injuries, Wimberley had insisted that the troops should act as they would in battle and not stop for casualties and the delay in getting ambulances to the wounded had a sad result but it was the only incident in the practice attacks which, as Wimberley notes, "were so vital to later success."

Mindful of the difficulties in communication in 1918 "and how helpless one felt without communications", and having been warned, by General Alexander that "the operation would begin like a battle of the 1914-18 War with an assault on an entrenched position in depth" He decided "the depth of my divisional front was about 7000 yards in a belt of the park minefields and defended posts. I decided that wireless or no wireless, I would lay as much cable as I could, and bury it too!"

On the night of Friday 23 October, Wimberley made a final inspection. Having great confidence in his troops, he sited his divisional Headquarters well forward. "It was amazingly quiet. Hardly a gun or a shell broke the silence. In fact, with memories of the 1914-18 war, I thought it was really too quiet to be true. Then I remembered the first Cambrai battle, 25 years before, and how there, too, we had a very quiet time just before zero hour.

"1000 guns were to start firing at 21:40 hours, and in the stillness that preceded the storm, I stood at one of the gaps in the wall and watched my Jocks filing past in the moonlight. Platoon by platoon they filed past, heavily laden with pick and shovel, sandbags and grenades, the officer at the head, his Piper by his side. There was nothing more that I could do now to prepare for the battle, it was only possible to pray for their success, and that the Highland Division would live up to its name and the names of those very famous regiments of which it was composed."

Wimberley reflects that part of the success of the operation was down to his three Brigadiers, (George Murray (Seaforths), Douglas Graham (Cameronians) and Harry Houldsworth (Seaforths): three real fighting soldiers. "None of them were 'PSC' [Passed Staff College] but all of them had been in the 1914-18 war as infantry soldiers, and all 'knew the form' of taking their walking sticks or cromachs and going, unmoved by shellfire, among the Jocks on a daily visit that did so much to help morale in a long drawn-out battle." Keen to understand the true disposition and state of morale of his battalions, Wimberley would make extensive use of his

liaison officers, personal visits and carefully-laid telephone cable to stay as far forward as possible.

At first, he could only wait for reports to come in. After a long and trying time, the code word 'Inverness' came back from 5th Camerons, claiming the first objective. "Over the course of the night, hour by hour, the code words came through. By dawn it was clear to me that we had eaten deeply into the enemy's position." He decided to go forward to visit some of his COs, but almost immediately the jeep sustained a direct mortar hit, killing two men outright, gravely wounding a third and depositing Wimberley unceremoniously in the sand some distance away. Lucky to escape with relatively light wounds, the next day he attended a conference with Montgomery, heavily bandaged and patched up. Somewhat surprised and a bit miffed that Montgomery made no mention of his somewhat distressed appearance and narrow escape from death, it was only at a later date that Montgomery explained, for reasons of morale, he had judged it better not to make any acknowledgment of his misadventure. Wimberley ruefully concluded it was probably the best tactic, and certainly one that his wife would have deployed.

Always a stickler for high standards in appearances, Wimberley was soon back to "spit and polish in which I so firmly believe. I soon had my smart kilted Gordon sentry outside my caravan, and my Divisional Headquarters flag fluttering in the breeze. I made it very clear to all that the first test of the first-class fighting formation was to smarten up, directly after battle."

It was time to indulge in small pleasures. "While at Divisional Headquarters we guzzled on marmalade, British, but from an Italian store. No doubt they had taken it at Tobruk, and now we had captured it back again."

"At Daba we picked up a puppy dog. A poor little mongrel pup, which was a great pet, we kept it till we reached Tripoli."

Wimberley touches on the nature of fear. "We had quite an uncomfortable recce. Poor old George Elliot, my C.R.A., [Commander Royal Artillery] who was a magnificent gunner, and like little Ian Bruce, really a brave man, because he was terrified all the time and yet always did his duty thoroughly and well. We are, I am certain, all afraid of different things. My especial terrors are doctors who examine me, and aeroplanes, in general, in which I have to fly. As far as shells and bullets were concerned, I found they worried me less than most, and a great deal less than some. That day, whenever we appeared on the skyline to have a look through glasses at the enemies' position, they at once brought down an artillery concentration on our area. Poor old George clasped his steel helmet to his head with his teeth chattering!"

Major Gerald Osborne lined up D Company 1BW on the start line with the objective of taking Stanley under a creeping barrage. There was a full moon, broad as daylight as they advanced on a fixed bearing with the piper playing the Company march - 'Scotland the Brave'. At one point the barrage seemed to be falling short and he had to make the decision to advance in front of the shells raining down from his own side. They took a certain number of casualties but 'we would have been far worse if we had stopped - we had to keep going.'

His Batman, Pte Thomson, was hit by a bullet, collapsing beside him. (He had to be left behind, fortunately later making a full recovery). The pipers gave a tremendous boost to morale, believing it had a bloodcurdling effect on the 'Eye-Ties' and the Germans. Enemies in their "douvres" (trenches) were dispatched with grenades and bayonet or taken prisoner if they came out with their hands up.

Encountering reasonably light casualties, Osborne decided to go forward, approximately a mile beyond the objective and in so doing managed to capture seven machine guns and an 88mm field gun, stores and a field ambulance. When an 88mm gun was turned on them and began to fire, he sent two platoons forward to attack, mop up and take prisoners. Having obtained their objective, 1 BW dug in but came under continued mortar fire. Osborne considered that he was extremely fortunate not to become a casualty, his Batman being killed just after



Major Gerald Osborne

delivering his shaving water. In the adjoining Company Headquarters' bunker, his Company Sergeant Major and his Piper were killed also. Asked about his attitude to the German prisoners, Osborne tells that, *"We were fighting a good, open desert war - a clean war, really. I don't think you'd call it a lot of animosity, really. We took prisoners - we got about 80 prisoners on that first night at Alamein, which we took back with us. Some of them were terrified, but generally speaking I think they were rather pleased to be captured and come out of the war. I think they (the Jocks) treated them pretty well. I mean, our men had fixed bayonets and things and marched them back to the rear. The Italians weren't the good fighters that the Germans were."*

Major Charles Cathcart receives much praise in C. E. Lucas Phillips'



Major Charles Cathcart

book, El Alamein, for storming the Miteiriya ridge *'with great courage and determination.'* He got there with about 40 men, that being all that remained of two companies (200 strong) with which had started the night. All five Company officers had been killed or wounded. Cathcart was amongst the wounded but remained in his position, exposed and without relief, for the remainder of that night and all the following day. Phillips describes the action of this night a *'shining example of leadership, initiative and guts at all levels in a battalion inspired by the fighting spirit.'*

Cathcart's memory is of terrific noise, dust and the foul smell of explosive. *'Lying flat on the hard gravelly desert, with shells falling all around and whizzing over one, was one of the nastiest sensations I have ever had. Never have I made myself so flat, never have I prayed so hard that one would not land on me.'* At one

point they attacked an enemy machine gun position through a hail of bullets. Whilst one Italian emerged with his hands up, squealing, the machine gun beneath him continued firing. Cathcart notes the necessary action was engaged, putting a grenade into each well dug-in position, he taking a dim view of an enemy who professed to surrender whilst continuing to fire. However, his luck was not to last, as having had three stick grenades thrown at him he was unable to dodge them all, taking some significant shrapnel in his neck and leg. Cathcart attempted to return fire with his revolver which made only a *'feeble pip'*. However, undaunted, Cathcart continued to take the fight to the enemy, getting the sensation *"as if on an early morning rabbit shoot at home, when they were bolting well."* He was obviously a well-practised shot and the *'Ities'* soon retreated. It was now 4 am on Friday 24 October, but with the Kirkcaldy objective gained, he gathered in his now much depleted band and dug in as hard and deep as possible. He was down to 17 men, including two officers, of whom one was wounded and the other out for the count. Virtually encircled by twelve Jerry tanks at 1800 yards, he was shelled for much of the remaining day, having lost his wireless and unable to communicate. The flanking NZ troops came to his aid with supplies of ammo, food and water. At night he was able to reinforce his position, put out mines and distribute grenades. He also obtained some machine guns and anti-tank guns to shore up his position as the intense shelling continued for much of the following day. Cathcart's wounds deteriorated and he could barely move but despite being pinned down and unable to move for snipers, they sustained no further casualties, taking the fight to the enemy with what weapons they could muster. All the following day they could really only sit tight and pray the next shell did not land on them. Finally relieved on the Monday morning and reunited with the Battalion, the CO took one look at him, ordered a tot of whisky and condemned him to an extremely uncomfortable bump and rattle in an ambulance back to Alexandria.

From letters we learn that Cathcart was evacuated to Syria, on 3 November commenting, *"I was in it for three days...It was a ghastly nightmare, but not quite so bad in daylight."* The medical authorities

decided that they must remove the shrapnel from his neck so he was further detained, lamenting, *"It's a bit hard, having had three of the worst days of the battle, to miss the smashing up of the German army."* Enduring jaundice, convalescence homes in Haifa and Cairo, with absolutely no clothes other than the ones he stood up in and hitch-hiking halfway across Africa, Cathcart finally returned to his Battalion on 18 January, going into battle again on the 24th. He was awarded the DSO for his action at El Alamein.

Charles Cameron, aged just 22, was in command of B Company, 5th Cameron Highlanders. Under a creeping barrage, they advanced using compass bearings, Cameron endeavouring to keep his troops to the requisite pace and gap; one hundred yards every two minutes, gap 5 yards. He complained that *"like on a grouse moor, the line of men tended to congregate towards the centre."* Being so busy, he did not have time to be frightened. However, they were under heavy shell fire, the noise being terrific. Having judged that they had reached their objective, the 7th BW passed through. *"When I heard the BW approach with their battle cries, I feared they might think we were the enemy, so I told our company piper, Macpherson, to play our regimental tune to show who we were."* The Company dug in for the night, the harsh desert landscape providing little cover. Cameron shared a scrape trench with his batman. Coming under heavy shellfire they sustained many casualties. The



Charles Cameron

adjoining trench received a direct hit, Piper Macpherson and his Sergeant Major, also a Macpherson were fatally wounded. Cameron sustained shrapnel wounds resulting in his evacuation to Cairo. Of his company of 78, there were 45 casualties (dead and wounded).

Osborne considered himself very lucky that he had escaped unhurt; Wimberley, Cathcart and Cameron all sustained significant injuries. The total casualties at El Alamein were 13,500 for the allied troops out of 150,000, the Axis forces lost 10,000 out of 90,000. Of these the greatest number of casualties were taken by the Australian Division (2,827); The Highland Division (the only British Division) took 2,495 and the New Zealand Division, 2,388. There was great praise for the Highland Division, the 1940 defeat at St Valery had been thoroughly avenged. Wimberley records the comments from those who had cause to know our real achievements adding *"In the*

last fourteen days, we of the 1942 edition, have, I am sure, reminded Scotland that we too were chipped off the same block of Northern granite that provided the best British fighting Divisions of the last Great War”.

Wimberley was awarded an immediate DSO and Osborne was awarded an MC in the Italian Campaign of 1944.



The Start Line

Thanks must go to Major Colin Innes, Major Neil Wimberley, Captain Bruce Osborne and Lieutenant Colonel Charles Cameron for kindly lending me copies of the accounts quoted here.

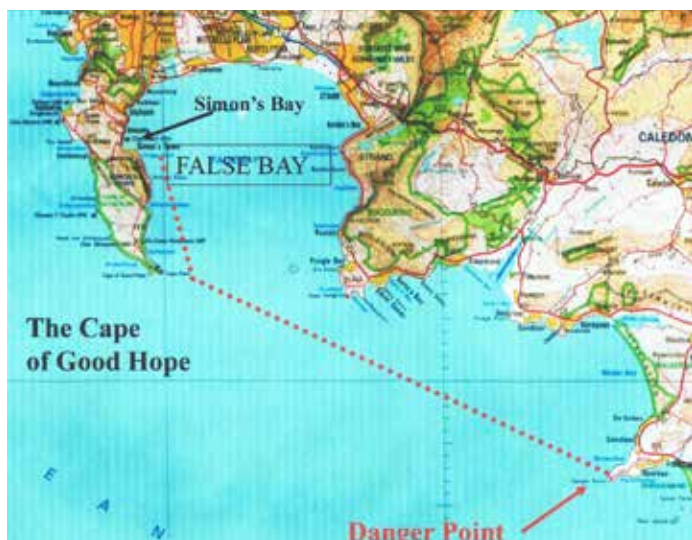


El Alamein battle- 51st Highland Division Plans courtesy of the family of the late Ian G M Eadie

WRECK OF HM TROOPSHIP “BIRKENHEAD” ON 26 FEBRUARY 1852

By Major (Retd) C B Innes

170 years ago, at about 2 am on the night of Thursday 26th February 1852, the Royal Navy troopship BIRKENHEAD struck a rock at Cape Agulhas, popularly known as Danger Point, near the southernmost tip of South Africa. This naval disaster is the origin of the “Stand Fast, Women and Children First” a custom followed to this day by marine organisations.



Map of Birkenhead Route and Wreck Site

In 1852, the British Empire was at its maximum expansion phase, although, as always, a number of wars kept cropping up. Among these were the Cape Frontier Wars in South Africa, where Basuto, Hottentot, Xhosa and Zulu tribesmen had been making punitive raids upon farms and stealing the cattle from the colonial settlers for many years, making further colonial expansion difficult and costly in lives.

In 1820 the British had paid a group of about 400 unemployed people and their families to go out to the Cape as settlers and the ships carrying these people landed at Alcoa Bay. Each family was given a small piece of land upon which to grow crops. European traders and Missionaries had also started arriving in the area north of the Orange River but driving the native tribesmen off their land proved to be a costly operation

In 1846 the 73rd of Foot, later to become 2nd Battalion The Black Watch, arrived in South Africa. By 1852 the Battalion had served in South Africa for over five years and a draft of reinforcements was expected on Her Majesty's Troopship BIRKENHEAD, which arrived at Simon's Bay on 23rd February 1852.

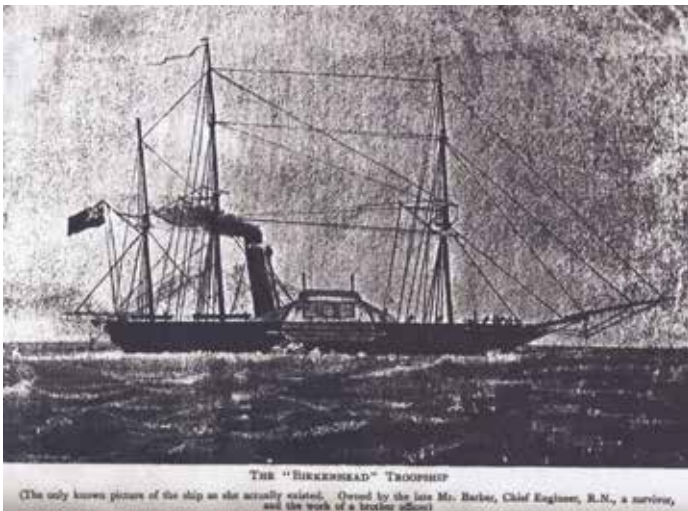
Ensign Alexander Cumming Russell of the 74th of Foot, who was to die in the wreck having given up his place in a boat to a non-swimmer had written to his father that their long journey was nearly over after a passage of almost fifty days. He described Simon's Bay as being



Ensign Cumming Russell gives up his place on the boat Painting by Thomas Hemy

nearly landlocked; a dreary sort of place despite being the principal Naval Station of the Colony with a Flagship and two or three men of war. He wrote that everything on board HMS BIRKENHEAD was in the most awful mess from coal dust, making it impossible to keep clean. Mail was expected and he was looking forward to reading the English news. Nine horses were stabled up on deck with their fodder. Interestingly, he wrote that the stores destined for Cape Town and Simon's Bay were not offloaded, due to the rush to proceed onwards. It was thought that they could be offloaded on the Birkenhead's return voyage in a few days' time.

BIRKENHEAD was a steam-driven paddle troop ship with sails, captained by Commander Robert Salmond RN with orders to sail without delay from Simon's Town to East London via Port Elizabeth. The troops were reinforcements, mainly from Ireland. There were 638 men, seven women and thirteen children of which seventy-one officers and men were to join the 73rd including Lieutenants Audley H Booth, Charles W Robinson and Ensign Gould Lucas. The crew was 118 strong and there were 20 Royal Marines. The ship sailed from Simon's Bay on 25th February 1852.



HMS Birkenhead – a square-rigged frigate converted to steam-driven paddle troopship

It may have been the urgency of his orders that caused Commander Salmond to select a course close to the coastline. When HMS BIRKENHEAD sailed at 6pm on Wednesday 25th February 1852, it was a fine evening with a calm sea. Commander Salmond set a course SSE and $\frac{1}{2}$, with directions not to go Eastwards of it. Cape Hanglip was rounded at 9.30 pm with a berth of 4 miles, the weather continued calm and the ship was making 8 knots. Only the throbbing of the engines disturbed the night as the vessel rolled gently in the swell settling in towards the shore, some two miles away. A few lights could be seen from the usual bush fires at that time of year, it was a very hot night. Mr Davis, a Second Master, was in charge up on deck. Lt Lucas of the 73rd and Lt Girardot of the 43rd Monmouths were on watch together. Commander Salmond and Mr William Brodie, the Master, were below. Thomas Coffin was at the wheel and a good lookout was kept by two sailors stationed at the bows. From the paddlebox, a leadsman, heaving his line, took depth soundings. On the forecastle stood C/Sgt John Drake, Royal Marines, in full uniform including his red sash. There was no sign of trouble ahead.

At 2am on 26 February 1852, the leadsman obtained a sounding of 12 fathoms (22 metres). Before he could take another, the Birkenhead struck a submerged rock pinnacle, which all but fractured her bows. Within twenty minutes, she sank. This tragic and extraordinary grounding occurred on a hazardous and poorly surveyed and wreck-strewn coastline some 60 miles from the entrance to False Bay and 60 miles from Cape Agulhas, the southernmost tip of Africa.

As the hull ground into the rock the Captain ordered her engines to be put astern, the bow section was still on the rock and severed, causing a loss of buoyancy amidships. As the ship pitched to starboard and down by the bows, the stays on her tall funnel fell across the starboard paddle-box killing those trying to launch the large boat stowed on top of it. Only three of the lifeboats were able to be launched because many of the tackle-pins and bolts were rusted up due to want of maintenance. Only minutes afterwards, the hull again split, this time just forward of

the engine room, leaving only the stern afloat, on which some 20 troops were now mustering.

The navigational circumstances of how BIRKENHEAD came to run aground remain amongst the most enduring of sea mysteries. Commander Salmond was an experienced Warrant Master, but the course of SSE by $\frac{1}{2}$ East, which he allegedly ordered, proved fatally close to Danger Point. If this course is drawn on the chart published in 1851, which might have been on board, it intersects with the surveyed reef that doomed her. It seems unlikely that Commander Salmond would have failed to consider the compass variation (remember Grid to Mag add!). The compass had been swung the previous year and it is possible that the deviation had changed (deviation takes account of the effect of metal and electrics on the compass at different points of sail); however, it would have been normal practice to check the compass against sunset regularly during the voyage. At a guess, the onshore swell may have caused more leeway than predicted.

Before GPS you never knew where you were at sea, you only knew where you thought you were. Being close to the shore might have enabled a fix on land features to be taken before dark some eight hours (64 miles) before grounding. Depth is a useful aid to navigating and the posting of a leadsman to take soundings would not have been exceptional. It is not unusual for a skipper to instruct that his ship is not to cross into waters that are less than, say, 20 metres. Similarly, the instructions of SSE by Half East, with nothing to the East of it, suggests the course ordered was expected to take the ship clear of danger.

Following the grounding, Colonel Seton came up on deck wearing his sword and regimental forage cap and calmly called his officers about him and impressed upon them the necessity of preserving order and silence amongst the men.



Troops formed up on stern deck

In the next five minutes 60 men were ordered to man the pumps in the lower deck and 60 more were sent to haul on the tackles of the paddle-box boats. The remaining troops and the 20 women and children on board were assembled on the Poop (stern deck of the ship), in order to relieve the forepart of the ship which was going down fast. There was no confusion and no murmuring. All orders were obeyed and almost perfect discipline and steadiness prevailed. Gunner Third Class John Archbold, who had been ordered to put up flares, found them to have been wet, however he did send up some rockets, but there was no help at hand and no one saw the signals.

Commander Salmond ordered all the women and children into the cutter. Terrified women, dressed only in shawls and nightgowns, some with babies in their arms, clung in a last embrace to husbands they were to leave to their fate. The cutter was lowered, and the crew began to row away from the side of the ship. Simultaneously, the horses were pitched out of the port gangway. This was a difficult operation as the horses were wild with fear. Meanwhile the wreck was grinding and breaking up on the rock. Lt Booth, of the 73rd Regiment, took command of the pumps, but he and his men all perished as the ship broke up a few minutes later.

In the final five minutes, as the men clustered together awaiting their fate, Commander Salmond called out "All those that can swim, jump overboard and make for the boats." However, hearing this, Colonel Seton called out "You will swamp the cutter containing the women and children. I implore you not to do this thing and I ask you all to stand

fast". The soldiers stood fast almost to a man and the cutter with the families pulled safely away.

A few seconds later the ship parted in the middle and the stern went down and all who had stayed on board were left to struggle in the water. The seawater was warm, and the current carried those survivors who could swim, or those who were able to cling to some wreckage, towards Danger Point.



Horses and passengers in the water

In the aftermath, only the main topmast and topsail-yard remained above the surface to mark where the ship sank. Those who could swim and were not trapped below decks or drawn down by the pressure of the sinking ship swam for the shore; many were eaten by sharks. The shoreline, rugged and surf-beaten, was bordered by a growth of long sea bamboo or kelp which trapped the swimmers. Some 40 non-swimmers were rescued by ships the next day after clinging to the masts.

Cornet Ralph Sheldon-Bond of the 12th Lancers put on his life vest - he was the only man to have one - and swam ashore to safety where he found his horse waiting for him - one of the five to survive. He later christened it 'Birkenhead'. The remaining horses, some of which set off swimming out to sea rather than towards the shore, were either drowned or were eaten by the sharks.

Captain Wright, of the 91st Argyllshires, also eventually managed to swim ashore and found himself the senior survivor. He rescued the men who were also coming ashore and took out search parties along the coastline, successfully gathering more survivors. He also found his horse had swum ashore. He found some 90 bodies, many of them frightfully mutilated, and arranged hasty burials for them more or less where they were found.

The news of the Wreck of the *Birkenhead* was carried to Cape Town by Surgeon Culhane. He had boarded the gig with a crew of 8 men and this boat joined the two cutters looking for a place to land, but all three boats considered the coastline too dangerous. So, they rowed on in the general direction of False Bay, trying to catch the attention of a schooner which they had sighted at daybreak. The gig, being the fastest of the three boats, set off after the schooner, but, after rowing some 30 miles, made a landing at Port D'Urban, where a Mr Philipson owned a store and looked after the exhausted ship's crew. Surgeon Culhane borrowed a horse and rode over 80 miles in 36 hours to Cape Town, and later went on to Simon's Bay, to deliver the first news of the disaster.

There were 207 survivors from the loss of the BIRKENHEAD (out of the total ship's complement of 638). However, all the women and children on board were saved.



The Paddle Steamer Birkenhead in Table Bay 1851 by Thomas Bowler (1812-1869)



The Wreck of the Birkenhead by Thomas Hemy (1852-1937)

AFTERNOTES



The Birkenhead Claret Jugs are still in Regiment's possession

Ensign Lucas of our 73rd of Foot stayed on in South Africa and later commanded a Squadron of the Cape Mounted Rifles before later still rising to be the Chief Magistrate of Durban and one of the founders of the well-known private Hilton Boys College, near Durban.

Lieutenants Audley H Booth and Charles W Robinson both died.

Two silver Claret Jugs, which are still owned by the Regiment, were being taken out by our 73rd of Foot reinforcements and were on the Wardroom table. One of the wives, on her way up to the lifeboat, grabbed both jugs and hid them under the cloak wrapped around her. She later sold the claret jugs in London but the Regiment was fortunately tipped-off and was able to buy them back at auction.

In 1993 an unmarked grave containing the remains of 3 men was found near Danger Point. Evidence such as military buttons suggested that these bodies were some of those who perished in the Wreck of the *BIRKENHEAD*. Their reburial under the auspices of the British War Graves Commission took place on 25 August 1993 in the Seaforth Garden of Remembrance, Simon's Town.

The *Wreck of the Birkenhead* has become one of the most striking examples of bravery and discipline. It hit the headlines at home because the casualties came from the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines and from ten Regiments that were recruited from all over the United Kingdom.

Queen Victoria was fascinated by the story and ordered that a Memorial to all those who perished should be placed within the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. The inscription reads:-

*THIS MONUMENT
is erected by command of
HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA
to record the heroic constancy and unbroken
discipline shown by Lieutenant-Colonel Seton,
74th Highlanders, and the troops embarked under his
command on board the Birkenhead,
when that vessel was
wrecked off the coast of the Cape of Good Hope
on the 26th Feby, 1852,
and to preserve the memory of the Officers,
Non-Commissioned Officers and Men who perished
on that occasion.*

A SERIES OF ARTICLES TO COMMEMORATE THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALKLANDS WAR

Introduction

Many individuals who went South to fight have published their recollections this year to mark the 40th Anniversary of the conflict. The Regiment planned to mark the event by inviting a series of lecturers to speak at Balhousie Castle. Sadly, our plans for a well-structured programme were sunk by COVID restrictions although a few lectures are still taking place.

The Regiment itself was not involved in the fighting in 1982 but there were some individuals involved on the Staff including three (then)

majors in the Ministry of Defence namely Alistair Irwin, Donald Wilson and Hugh Rose.

We thought that we might mark the anniversary of the war for the readers of *The Red Hackle* by pooling our individual and collective recollections of the time.

If there are any other members of The Black Watch who contributed to Operation CORPORATE and who would like to add their memories to ours in future editions, please do not hesitate to do so.

OPERATION CORPORATE, APRIL TO JUNE 1982

By Brigadier D R Wilson CBE



Ministry of Defence Sign

A highly personal account of one staff officer's role in the Falklands War

These notes relive a period of my career that stretched and influenced me considerably. I think I remember much of it well but some of my recollections have been challenged by history and others' experience and some may have grown (or been forgotten) in my mind after 40 years. Subsequent appointments in MOD and my year at The Royal College of Defence Studies in 1996 have helped me to understand the strategic context of Op CORPORATE and the very small (and safe) part that I played in it.

We were Grade 2 staff officers (Majors) – pretty low down the pecking order in MOD. Hugh and Alistair had a year's more experience than me but I soon found that, despite the many tiers of staff and rank above me, the SO2 was usually the only officer who had complete mastery of the information and contacts relating to his appointment. Thus, in modern parlance, the SO2 was the 'go-to man' on his subject. My responsibility, as SO2 Army Staff Duties (ASD) 2a, was the organisation and deployment of the Army in peace, routine operations and in transition to war - quite a large brief! For several years, my predecessors had industriously and meticulously organised the deployment and movements of the Army and occasionally deployed the SPEARDHEAD battalion to Northern Ireland or Belize. It all seemed to be a very well-oiled machine when I arrived in January 1982, straight from the Staff College. Hugh worked for the Quartermaster General (also in the MOD main building) and Alistair was next door in the Old War Office building in GS(OR) 2, responsible for operational requirements for infantry weapons. I settled into my job, probably took myself far too seriously and soon found that working at head office was stimulating and absorbing with many interesting and capable colleagues, both military and civil servants. The practical and domestic circumstances of working long hours in central London were less attractive to me but they are not part of this story.

I should add some other dimensions and context to the plot which, ranging from the fundamental to the mundane, are worth remembering forty years on. At the top level, Margaret Thatcher seemed insecure and under siege in No 10 (riots in London, Liverpool and Manchester, battles looming with the unions, IRA hunger strikes and so on). The Defence Review published in 1981 proposed a further retrenchment of UK defence capability towards NATO, including significant reductions in the strength and reach of the Royal Navy. Somewhere in the small print was the planned withdrawal of HMS Endurance from the South Atlantic. That didn't cause much interest in London, except perhaps on the desk of the Argentine Naval attaché. Finally, the Ministry of Defence is both a department of state and was a military headquarters. The latter role was still significant in 1982, before the consolidation of various commands into three single-Service HQs and the formation of the Permanent Joint Headquarters at Northwood. The staff were looking upwards to Minister's, outwards to other government departments and downwards through multiple chains of command, not

least to Commander-in-Chief Fleet at Northwood who was appointed the operational commander.

Some of today's readers are also invited to imagine operational staff work without readily available secure communications, mobile phones and certainly no networked desk top computers, printers, email, PowerPoint, geographic information systems or even Google Earth! Briefs and papers required before the MOD's typing pool response time, were submitted in long hand, sometimes going up to the CGS himself. Every staff officer had a formal message pad ready on his desk. Paper maps and charts were everywhere and, on my desk, large sheets of graph paper showed the various plots for every major unit of the Army for the next 2-3 years. Briefings requiring illustration with 35mm slides could take 48 hours to prepare in a pokey little office next to the FCO and were likely to be well out of date by the time they were ready to be projected. During the operation, our typing pool actually acquired word-processors. They became useful for the more efficient maintenance of routine reports and returns which were updated regularly but still required a turn round time of an hour!

My part in Op CORPORATE started in late March 1982 when I was attending a meeting held every weekday morning to brief the Director of Military Operations. DMO's colonel in charge of what was known as 'The Rest of the World' (ie not UK or NATO) announced to the general that there was a problem with a place called South Georgia. DMO's response was "Is it one of ours?". *The Times Atlas of The World* was sent for and lo and behold, South Georgia appeared to be "one of ours"! In passing, we learned that the Falkland Islands were down that way too. Either way, they were a very long way away!



Falkland Islands Map

Events gathered pace with Argentine forces landing on South Georgia and then East Falkland on 2nd April. British foreign policy in the South Atlantic was in disarray (some said through neglect) and we were all moving alarmingly quickly to what seemed to be the only remaining course of action available, the use of force. There were some very highly-placed doubters but then we heard that the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Henry Leach, had persuaded the Prime Minister to authorise the preparation and deployment of a Naval and amphibious task force. A nuclear attack submarine had already been ordered South.

The Navy and the Royal Marines were swinging impressively into action all over Whitehall, at Northwood and their bases along the South coast. Requests for Army assistance were coming in thick and fast, most urgently for additional infantry and air defence missile units. Cynics might say that the Navy's enthusiasm was in part driven by the opportunity to undermine the Defence Review of 1981. The resignation of Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary, and the emergency debate in the House of Commons (on 3rd April - a Saturday!) passed in a blur

as the MOD as a whole began to address the situation. By good fortune (or good practice?), we had recently completed the annual Transition to War Exercise across the higher echelons of HMG and NATO, so our organisation had had a dry run through. Even so, one of the little cogs in the middle of it (me) began to revolve increasingly quickly.

The UN Security Council also passed its Resolution 502 on 3rd April. It went through the motions of expressing concern and calling for a diplomatic solution but, significantly, required Argentina to withdraw its forces as well as granting the UK the authority to invoke the right to self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter. Sometimes it seemed surreal and like reading the opening pages of an imaginatively drafted exercise scenario.

Back to the General Staff on the 5th floor of MOD: we dealt with the immediate requests to deploy Army units and capabilities, the most significant ones being 3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment (the SPEARHEAD battalion), a Rapier air defence battery, RHQ and squadrons of 22 SAS (they would have gone anyway, as we now know) and a host of medics, movers and logisticians of every possible creed and colour. Somewhere along the way, two troops of The Blues and Royals in their tracked reconnaissance vehicle joined the party. Task Force 317 sailed on 6th April – a very impressive achievement and signal of intent. After the initial flurry of activity, a more considered phase of planning started. Under the general direction of the Prime Minister's 'War Cabinet', MOD and the major subordinate commands considered the big questions. The following list of notes gives a flavour of the moment:

- How would the Argentinians react? Would it come to war? The Argentine Air Force was known to be strong, well-equipped and well-trained.
- What forces would we actually need? For how long? How could we move and sustain them?
- The political dimension: the UN Security Council – allies, the early ambivalence of the US, NATO, some people's mistrust of the EU.
- What reserves did we need? Deployed or at home?
- NATO commitments – BAOR. The CGS (Gen Bramall) had ordered that no units from BAOR were to be deployed without his personal approval. (If only we had known then how useless the Russian Army was!)
- How do we keep routine current operations (eg Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Belize and even public duties) going? (All this required lots of rubbing out and pencil amendments to the graph paper.)
- Can we use Gurkhas? Signals sent to the DA in Kathmandu.
- What sort of post-war garrison would we establish? (A new sheet of graph paper!)
- Rules of engagement.
- Press policy, including embedded journalists. The Navy was reluctant, not having had the 'benefit' of close attention by the press in Northern Ireland for a decade like the Army.
- Where can we find Spanish speakers?

The campaign then entered a phony war phase as Task Force 317 steamed relentlessly South, ordered to enforce a Total Exclusion Zone around the Falkland Islands and to be prepared to eject Argentine Forces from South Georgia. The diplomatic option was pursued in parallel with Al Haig, US Secretary of State, who shuttled between London, Buenos Aires and Washington DC for two weeks, eventually to no avail. The Amphibious Task Group (3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines and its reinforcements) paused at Ascension Island to reorganise after its hurried departure from home shores. The island hosted a huge logistic build up, with Gibraltar paying a supporting role in the plan. This infuriated Spain which, conspicuously, had abstained in the vote on UNSCR 502. Alarms bells rang in MOD about the security of the Rock. It was reinforced (another line added to the graph paper).

There was a light-hearted moment when intelligence revealed that the newly-appointed military assistant to General Menendez (the enemy commander on the Falklands) was none other than the Argentinian student on Army Staff Course 15 at Camberley from which I had just graduated. This flashed round the ASC 15 cohort in MOD and elsewhere and the unanimous conclusion was that we were going to win the war, come what may. Prophetic! here then occurred a series of events in which I was personally and closely involved and which had consequences through the remainder of the operation. Some of the decisions were controversial at the time and I have often thought whether we could have easily avoided some of the mistakes that I considered that we made. The issue was the provision of a second



The 'Big Picture' – Falklands Islands position in relation to Argentina and UK

infantry brigade as requested by the Task Force Commander. With hindsight, it went wrong right from the start when 3 PARA was assigned to the Commando Brigade. The battalion was part of 5 Infantry Brigade at Aldershot, a formation that had been established as a half-hearted [my opinion] attempt to re-create some of the capability of 16 Independent Parachute Brigade that had been disbanded in 1977. 5 Inf Bde had been reformed in 1979 when Mrs Thatcher directed that we should have a formation-level airborne contingency force. The PM had been much influenced by the success of the Belgian and French airborne operation at Kolwezi in the Congo in 1978. Sadly, the re-introduction of the capability was never achieved robustly, not least because the RAF was not resourced to support formation level airborne operations and training. The result was a 'lash-up' which, while it delivered a parachute capability at battlegroup level for low intensity operations, was never more than that. With two parachute battalions, 5 Inf Bde was the home of that capability but it was not a properly joined-up formation that could operate outside a conventional divisional structure with, for example, 3rd line logistic support. It was not 16 Indep Para Bde reborn, or anything like it. There were two other formations at brigade level with the capability of limited independent operations: 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines which, as we have heard, was already committed and afloat and 1st Infantry Brigade which had its own 3rd line logistic group because of its NATO role.

After 3 PARA was detached to the Task Force, the next step in unpicking 5 Inf Bde occurred when a second battalion group was requested. 2 PARA (earmarked for a tour in Belize) was selected for a number of reasons, some perfectly sound and others more questionable. We now know that its CO (Lt Col H Jones) had lobbied his chain of command furiously to be chosen. It is ironic that he was to be killed leading his battalion at the iconic but bloody battle of Goose Green at the end of

May¹. The departure of 2 PARA with associated gunners, sappers and medics left 5 Inf Bde a hollow shell with only 1st Battalion 7th Gurkhas. My graph paper looked very untidy for a few hours. The next step in the 5 Brigade saga was the request from CTF 317 for a second brigade to implement the outline land campaign plan that had been developed to follow the landings at San Carlos which eventually took place on 21st May. The staff recommendation was unanimous: 1 Infantry Brigade and its 2nd/3rd line Logistic Support Group. After much debate and briefing, this was rejected for two reasons: we had already committed one UK NATO brigade and CGS was reluctant to pull out another one; CinC UKLF (Gen Kitson) argued that we should retain 1 Brigade as a strategic reserve, should the land campaign run into difficulties. Even with a field army twice the size that it is now, we were beginning to run out of troops whilst maintaining our commitments to NATO and holding the line in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Belize, Berlin and Hong Kong. By this stage, the ASD2a graph paper was a best seller in these deliberations and on one occasion was actually spread out on VCGS's desk for the great men to see for themselves! The order came down from on high: backfill 5 Infantry Brigade. Dropping down from brigade to battalion level added another level of complexity and knock-on effects disrupting the carefully worked-out plots, most of which I had inherited from my predecessor. Without revealing all the issues concerned (political, military and practical), two Guards battalions (2nd Battalion Scots Guards and 1st Battalion Welsh Guards) were identified, warned and placed under command of 5 Inf Bde. These two battalions had taken the first steps towards Mount Tumbledown and Bluff Cove respectively. Later, I felt strongly about the 5 Brigade decision but given some luck, it might just have worked. The Commando Logistic Regiment, established to support one brigade would now have to take on a second and would be stretched to the limit, particularly at the end of an 8,000 mile line of communication. A big blow, that we had not seen coming was the loss of the container ship *Atlantic Conveyor* with much of the stores and, crucially, three Chinook helicopters, which would have resolved the movement and logistic problems later experienced in supporting two brigades in the advance across east Falkland. In short, we didn't get the luck and 5 Brigade for many reasons that have been well aired since 1982 was a 'lash-up' and struggled throughout the campaign.

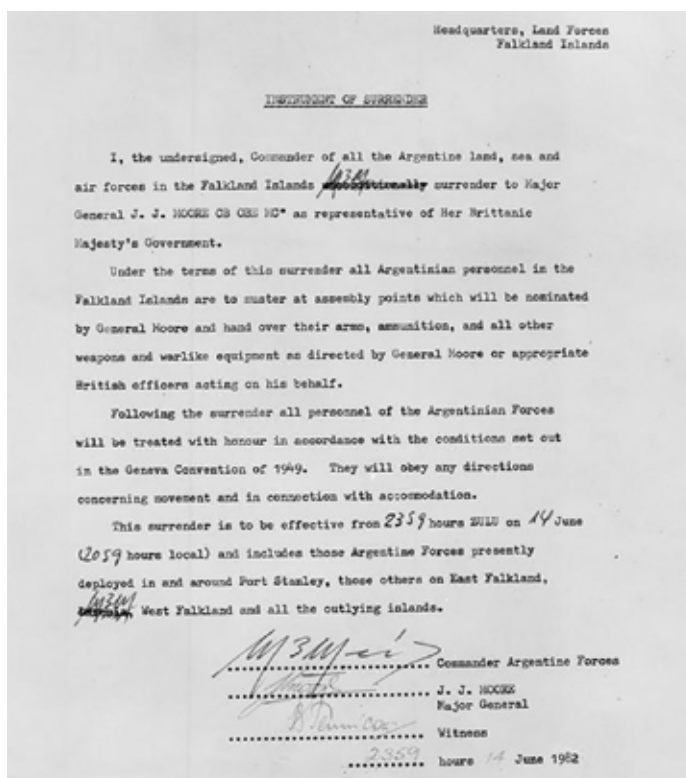
My final chore in the 5 Brigade business was spending a day researching and writing a brief and draft letter for the CGS to respond to a robustly worded complaint from The Duke of Edinburgh that there were to be only four guards on Trooping the Colour, rather than the usual six! The story of the fighting in the South Atlantic, on South Georgia and on the Falkland Islands is well known and covered by many excellent books and publications, some of which have been recently produced to mark this year's anniversary. Back at MOD, we monitored the progress of operations, briefed our chiefs and their political bosses and did what we could to support deployed commanders. A filtered list of my (admittedly MOD-centric) recollections of this phase in May and early June includes the following:

- The constant dilemma between over-management from the top and sensible delegation to the initiative of commanders at sea and on the ground.
- The insatiable and relentless demand for information to be fed up the chain of command. Attempts to "manage" the press and control the news. The dead pan delivery of Ian Macdonald, the MOD press spokesman. Seeing news billboard headlines at tube stations on the way home and comparing them with the privileged information seen an hour before in the office.
- Operational shocks such as HMS Sheffield; the Belgrano; warship losses in San Carlos Water; Atlantic Conveyor and Bluff Cove. These and the associated casualties suddenly dispelled the early atmosphere of unreality and it seeming like an exercise scenario unfolding.
- The sobering effect of casualty lists, occasionally including the names of friends and contemporaries. The bravery of the Argentinian Air Force at San Carlos and the sheer bloody-minded determination of all ranks of the Amphibious Landing Group to continue with their operations. The spectacular capability of RN and RAF Harriers providing air cover.
- Comparing notes with Brigadier Adam Gurdon (Cabinet office) late at night on deserted platforms at Liverpool Street station before

boarding our respective trains home. I think we were of some use to each other.

- Planning, re-planning and planning again the post-war garrison of the Islands – more graph paper!
- COs across the Army ringing me up trying to get on the ORBAT, including Garry Barnett ("we're just back from BATUS" etc).
- Occasional after work drinks on the SS *Tattershall Castle* by the Embankment. Immediately renamed the Belgrano by MOD officers.
- Throughout it all; concern, admiration and, sometimes, envy of friends and contemporaries fighting 8,000 miles away.

On 15th June 1982, blurred photocopies of a single sheet of paper began appearing all over MOD Main Building, including in the ASD2 office on the 5th Floor:



The surrender document

The war restored British sovereignty to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and other South Atlantic dependencies. The human cost was the lives of 255 British servicemen with hundreds wounded. It is thought that 650 Argentinians died, along with 3 Falkland islanders. Shockingly, it is believed that more UK veterans of the campaign have committed suicide subsequently than died in 1982.



The summit of Mount Tumbledown

After 40 years I have no other comment to add to the millions of words already published, apart from still feeling privileged to have played a very small (and safe) part in a fascinating episode of modern British military history.

¹ It is also ironic, that the officer I took over from in ASD2 in January 1982 was in The Parachute Regiment. He had decided to leave the Army because "all they can offer me is 2IC 2 PARA". He would have been at Goose Green and would have taken over from H Jones when he was killed.

MEMORIES OF THE FALKLANDS WAR

by Lieutenant General Sir Alistair Irwin KCB CBE

Although 1st Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) played no part in Op CORPORATE, it may not be too much of an exaggeration to suggest that the three Black Watch officers then serving in the Ministry of Defence as Grade 2 staff officers were indispensable cogs in the military machine that enabled the troops to land in the Falkland Islands and to retake them from the Argentinians with such gallantry and fortitude.

Two of those officers had roles of immediate and vital significance. The third, myself, had a somewhat more background role, glorying as my job did in the title General Staff Officer (Weapons) Grade 2 Land Systems Operational Requirements 2c (GSO(W) 2 LSOR 2c)! That role was to state the requirement in terms of specification and quantity, for future infantry mortars and anti-tank weapons and ammunition. Once the detailed requirement had been agreed (a lengthy process), the project was passed on to the Procurement Executive whose job was to deliver that requirement.

The Byzantine procedures that took an initial idea through to the issue of new weapons to front line units were devised to ensure that as many people as possible in MoD and the Treasury were involved to ensure that public money was neither wasted nor used fraudulently. The system generally achieved the second purpose but very significantly contributed to the costs thus failing to achieve the first. One of the consequences of the whole procurement process was that it took a very long time (years rather than months) and a great deal too much money (spent wastefully but honestly) to satisfy any new or urgent requirement.

Recognising that there might be circumstances in which new weapons might be needed in very short order, the MoD had up its sleeve a 'wizard wheeze' known as an Urgent Operational Requirement (UOR). In an emergency this procedure could be invoked and a much more streamlined process kicked into action. Provided that the required item was available off-the-shelf, the UOR system was capable of very slick procurement and deployment.

The Argentinians landed on the Falklands on Friday 2nd April. For those of us in LSOR2, the usual Friday drill was to head for home as soon after lunch as possible. This was of course in the days before the usual avalanche of emails which these days land in one's Inbox just as the weekend is about to start. Back then, with all typed work having to be sent to the typing pool and postal deliveries completed well before lunch-time, there was little need to linger in the corridors of power. The train home (which in my case was near Shrivenham) beckoned and off I went as usual. Digging the garden the following day I listened to the broadcast of the special sitting of the House of Commons and to Margaret Thatcher very satisfactorily thumping the patriotic drum: my spade turned the soil with equal patriotic vigour.

In the office the following Monday there was much talk but it was not immediately clear what LSOR2 could do to ensure victory. It was for Hugh Rose and the Quartermaster General's Staff to get the existing kit from store to ship: it was for Donald Wilson and Army Staff Duties to construct the order of battle. There was no way that we could hasten the development of the new anti-tank weapon (LAW 80) or the 51mm mortar, let alone get the new rifle (SA 80) into service in time.

Then someone referred to the boggy nature of much the Falklands terrain. Surely the 81mm mortar recoil would drive the base plates into the bog rendering the weapons unusable! Enter Royal Engineer Colonel Dan Raschen who was by then working as a retired officer at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham. He had invented a device made of tough canvas that, when stuffed with anything from straw to old socks, could be placed under a mortar's baseplate to spread the load of the recoil and thus prevent the mortar from disappearing into the mire. As the responsible staff officer I took pleasure in naming this device the '*Raschen Bag*' and took equal pleasure in the joy that this gave to a delightful, much loved and respected officer. Incidentally, the wonderfully eccentric Dan described his life in four volumes of autobiography, the second of which is entitled *Send Port & Pyjamas!* In this he describes his Korean visits to 1BW on The Hook in late 1952 and writes movingly about the battle on the 18th November, at which by coincidence were present the fathers of two of the BW desk warriors in the MoD 30 years later.

Dan Raschen's invention had nothing to do with the Falklands because it had been conceived a year or two earlier and was currently grinding through the normal, procurement process at its customary laborious pace. However here was an ideal candidate for a UOR – so a sufficient number were swiftly procured and despatched. I have not the faintest idea whether '*Raschen Bags*' had any beneficial effect on the outcome of the war but I procured them in time.

It was said, with what authority I do not know, that the name of this ingenious device (for which I was personally responsible) caused confusion and disappointment amongst our tired, wet and hungry soldiers. They thought that they were about to receive bags full of much desired rations! As far as I can remember after 40 years, this was the only contribution to the Falklands enterprise that emanated from Irwin's desk at LSOR2c.

Actually not quite the only contribution - like most other Grade 2 staff officers in the MoD, I had to do some overnight and weekend duty officer duties, sleeping beside a telephone that in my case never rang. But at least, when answering the question: "What did you do in the Falklands War Daddy?" I can say that I was part of the vital link between those that faced the enemy and those that fought the war from the labyrinthine corridors of Whitehall.

MY MEMORIES OF THE FALKLANDS WAR FROM BEHIND A DESK IN MOD

by Major H R Rose

In 1982 I was employed in the Quartermaster General's department in Main Office Building of the Ministry of Defence. My role there was primarily concerned with briefing Army Board papers and the future organisation and manpower levels in the Logistic Corps – it was a very tedious staff job! Before my London posting, I had completed a year of technical training at The Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham followed by a Staff Course at the Royal Navy's Staff College at Greenwich.

To prepare me for this naval ordeal, I had been to sea for a short time in a frigate during which I experienced a Force 10 storm. Thus I understood what was meant in naval jargon by "shipping it green" When ploughing into a heavy sea, the waves break over the ship's fo'castle as a solid, green mass rather than as white foam! Thank Goodness for anti-seasickness pills!

I had been an observer at an anti-submarine exercise in which the frigate lost! I had seen a Resupply at Sea (RAS) and been spared a ship-to-ship transfer in a Breeches Buoy. I had taken part in a Battle Damage Control fire drill and got a sharp rebuke for querying whether the wearing of nylon shirts with anti-flash gear when at Action Stations was really sensible. However, I partially regained my 'Pongo's' reputation by sinking a raft target at 400m with 5 shots from an SLR (1 sighter and 4 to count) when it had been repeatedly missed for some minutes by a series of firers using the 20mm deck cannon. Many of the Navy and Air Force students and staff at Greenwich with me were to play important roles in the war just a few months later.

Since the disturbances had started in South Georgia, it had been pretty clear to most of us in MOD that serious trouble was brewing in the South Atlantic. The Argentinian "scrap dealers" on South Georgia had raised their national flag and fired a rifle salute just like Marines that they eventually proved to be. Groups of MOD staff officers had discussed potential developments and the various possible UK responses but it did come as a surprise when things escalated so quickly because we had received no formal intelligence until a day in advance that a full-scale invasion of the Falkland Islands was imminent or even possible.

On Friday 2 April when the Argentinians actually invaded, I was on a weekend leave visit to my parents in Scotland. I remember discussing the military options with my father. When I suggested that any attempt to recapture the Islands was going to be extremely difficult and the critical risks involved meant that a successful outcome was far from certain, I got a firm scolding from him for "defeatism"! Of course, Dad had not just spent a very revealing 6 months at the Naval Staff College! Driving back south down the M6, we were delayed behind long convoys of Army trucks carrying stores and ammunition from the northern depots like Central Ammunition Depot, Longtown. The trucks had obviously been loaded at speed in order to catch the departing Task Force ships and loose tarpaulins allowed me to see what ammo was actually being out-loaded. I remember being slightly puzzled as to why they needed so many Anti-Tank mines on the Falklands!

Back at work in the MOD, the atmosphere had changed completely. Ops Rooms were being established in all those Departments with responsibilities for some aspect of Task Force mobilisation. Army 'Q' (Logistics) matters were being handled by our colleagues along the passage in 'Ops and Plans' (another department in the QMG's empire). However, we were put on stand-by to help them at night as watch keepers and it was in this capacity that I was required to make my first major contribution to the war effort.

At about 0230Z, the Q Ops Room received a call from the port organisation responsible for loading the logistic ships asking where the Rapier Missile Launcher Repair Workshop was going to be located: the ship to which it had been allocated was due to sail the next day. Its cargo had to be packed correctly to ensure it could be off-loaded at the right destination without unloading the whole ship to get at it. A decision within 2 hours would be acceptable! The senior duty officer was a logistician so he gratefully transferred this tactical problem to me - deeming the infantry to be more qualified to make such a decision! At this stage we had no confirmation of where the landings were actually going to take place. Indeed, for security reasons, we had been

ordered not even to discuss the different possibilities amongst ourselves. I remember being severely told off for disobeying that instruction by Donald Wilson when we were chatting in the corridor on the way to some meeting. The tactical requirements of any invasion beachhead are fairly obvious to any trained officer (especially as I had the advantage of some knowledge of the Naval and Amphibious requirements). The options available on the Falklands were pretty limited but there was no point in assisting the media and press speculation which were already rife with many pundits' suggestions.

At 2.30 am that morning, I had no idea what a Rapier Launcher Workshop even looked like let alone its requirements but I knew someone who did! I called our subsidiary 'Q' Ops Room at Andover where all the logistic Corps HQs (RCT/REME/RAOC etc) were co-located and asked to speak to the senior REME staff officer on duty. It took a bit of time to drag the Colonel out of his bed! His answer was that Rapier Launchers can be dismantled into a number of component "boxes" and these are then repaired/ calibrated using sensitive, high-tech machinery which had been built into a "workshop" consisting of a number of steel shipping containers. The containers required fairly gentle handling; level hard-standing; to be connected to each-other and a stable electricity supply and "clean air" whatever that meant! With some relief, I decided that those requirements definitely excluded siting the repair facilities in the "yet-to-be-chosen" beachhead admin area or on South Georgia. The remaining options were to send it to Ascension Island or not to take the workshop south at all. Being an aggressive infanteer, I decided to send it as far forward as possible i.e. to Ascension Island – it was the wrong decision!

On deploying the Rapiers around the landing site at San Carlos, many guidance 'boxes' were found to be malfunctioning due to the salt-laden, sea air and rough handling during the passage south and offloading. The 'box's are not very bulky but it was difficult enough to get them off the hills around San Carlos. It proved nearly impossible to get them back to Ascension Island because all ships coming back from the Falklands with mail etc tended to sail straight home to UK. Argentinian air attacks were increasing and more and more ships were being damaged or sunk in Bomb Alley", so it was essential to keep the Rapiers working at all costs. In the event, working "boxes" were resupplied to the beachhead by air from "alternative sources" until the broken boxes could be recovered to UK for repair. I hope the under-employed REME fitters on Ascension found some useful alternative work for the workshop and were not just improving their sun tans!

Whilst the task force was ploughing south, it was suggested that all staff officers not immediately involved should all take a short leave to prepare us for the long hours which we were going to have to put in when the land battle started. Always keen to travel, my wife and I booked our young children "into kennels" (The Norland Nanny Training School!) and flew out to Portugal with some friends for a short, bird watching holiday. It was a great success. The weather was lovely; we saw both species of bustards in full display and a wealth of other birds; we ate much delicious food and met some charming ex-pat British people running a B&B in an old castle. Together we all tried to understand the Portuguese news programmes reporting the Task Force developments – the names South Georgia, Harriers and Belgrano seemed to be somehow involved! Too soon I was back in the 'Q Ops' Room in MOD Main Building for my next contribution to the war effort.

In an effort to counter the low-flying jet attacks in San Carlos Water after the landings, light machine guns were being mounted on the ship's deck rails – one memorably being manned by the NAAFI manager! They soon started to have success which surprised many people. Why had we all forgotten that concentrated small arms fire (especially when tracer is used) not only distracts low-flying pilots but also actually destroyed many low-flying aircraft in WWII? Just because they fly faster, jet fighter-bombers are no less vulnerable to well-aimed, small arms ground fire. I remember my father telling me that in Tobruk, he 'bagged' a strafing Messerschmitt with a Bren gun mounted on a high-angle tripod.

Someone then remembered that we had a number of .50" calibre heavy machine guns in storage at Bicester. The problem was they had been

mounted in the turrets of the old Conqueror tanks for use as a ranging machine gun so there were no ground mounts for them.

When I came on duty for a routine night shift, I was told to place a call to the Browning Arms Sales Department in the USA to try to buy some mounts for our old .50 Cal MGs. I soon got through to the right person and an enthusiastic Sales Director said he had been expecting my call and had 50 ground mounts ready for us! I asked how he knew how many we needed and his reply was "Well we sold you the guns in the first place and they haven't appeared anywhere else on the world market!"

He was asking \$3M for the mounts which seemed a bit extortionate and I tried hard to negotiate a better price but failed dismally. The very welcome American support for our war efforts did not come at no cost! But I suppose the price was pretty insignificant compared to the price of a ship sunk so the duty Brigadier gave his approval – 'wartime accounting' must have made it a bit easier for him to justify the expenditure!

I asked my "new best friend" in America to throw in a million rounds of ammo (a snip @ another \$1million!) and to deliver the whole package to an East Coast airport where a Hercules would collect it. I then handed the transport problem over to the 'Movers' and gather the guns/ mounts and ammo were all down in Ascension within 24 hours. We received lots of reports (probably wildly exaggerated) of how effective they proved to be!

A day or two later my final personal contribution to the UK war effort turned out to be rather less martial in nature. I got a call from a young RAF staff officer working somewhere in the depths of the Main Building saying "The Air Vice Marshall wanted to see me on an urgent issue!" I could get no further details out of him over the phone so my Colonel told me to go downstairs and find out what their problem was. I was taken straight into the AVM's office where he told me that the RAF personnel on Ascension Island were having to wear DMS boots because the sharp volcanic rock was cutting up their soft uniform shoes. Not being used to wearing DMS boots in the heat was leading to all the RAF maintenance crews getting foot rot!

Knowing that serious trench foot problems were being caused by leaky DMS boots in the Falklands, I managed to avoid a frivolous response! Instead, I discussed various possible self-help remedies like regular washing between the toes; the liberal use of foot powder and even the wearing of flipflops or trainers while doing their beach bathing exercise. (Our intelligence sources had already reported that many well-bronzed RAF bodies were lying around on Ascension beaches!)

None of my helpful suggestions were acceptable – the AVM was adamant – he wanted them to be issued with desert boots to be purchased immediately from civilian sources as an operational emergency! When I got back to my office and consulted the experts (the Army's clothing organisation was another department in the QMG's empire) the cost was eye-watering. It came close to the cost of the aviation fuel that the RAF had expended to land just one bomb from a Vulcan on the edge of the Port Stanley runway but no doubt 'wartime accounting' covered that too!

Finally, the war was won and hostilities ceased. We were all much impressed by the national effort and bravery displayed by our forces.

Many expressed great disappointment that we too had not been 'down south' to take a more active part in the fighting while being secretly very relieved that we hadn't!

The other MOD staffs were soon being invited to a round of "thank-you" receptions at Downing Street and elsewhere but our work then began in earnest. The Vice QMG (Major General David Thorne) had been appointed as the Force Commander of the new Falkland Islands Garrison. All the HQ troops already down in the Falklands naturally wanted to be relieved and to return home as soon as possible so we had to decide on the detailed composition of his new Joint Arms Headquarters staff as a matter of some urgency. There were few similar organisations on which to base our proposals. I was very grateful that I could vaguely remember the outline staff organisation for the Hong Kong Garrison HQ and had retained my Staff College Handbook! After several more late-night sessions, we finished it; handed it over to Donald Wilson in ASD and I was allowed to go home for the weekend to our house in the country - I was very tired!

When I got onto a hot, stuffy train at Paddington station, I was sure I would soon fall asleep so I explained the situation to the man sitting opposite me and asked, if I did drop off, would he kindly wake me as we approached Swindon station which he promised to do. Of course, he failed to do so! I woke up to find the train waiting on a side line in the outskirts of Swindon having already gone through the station. I was furious but he wasn't the slightest bit apologetic! I knew my wife would be waiting for me in the car park but of course there were no mobile phones in those days.

Not being prepared to go all the way onto the next stop and wait for a train back, I picked up my overnight bag, opened the train door and jumped out onto the line still dressed in my dark suit and tie! We had all been much impressed by the SAS activities down in the Falklands and I felt rather "empowered" to emulate them. Watched in horror by the train carriage occupants, I tossed my bag and suit jacket over the high wire fence on the side of the line and then scrambled over it myself (in fine Special Forces style although I say it myself!) just as we had been taught to do at Hereford as young officers. I then had to sneak back along the track to the station car park without being caught by the railway staff who were soon out looking for the reported 'trespasser'! Eventually I managed to reach our car undetected and slid into the passenger seat - grateful that I had been taught 'Escape and Evasion techniques' at Hereford too!

There was a rather touching finale to my story. A few weeks after the war, I was surprised to receive a much-travelled, airmail letter at my office desk - it was lucky to reach me having been just addressed to "Major Hugh Rose, The Black Watch, c/o Ministry of Defence, London"!

It had been sent by the family in whose castle we had stayed whilst on leave in Portugal. It contained a large donation to the South Atlantic Fund with a note saying how impressed they had been by our Forces' bravery and would I please ensure that their cheque reached the right hands! Writing a fulsome letter of gratitude to the kind donors seemed to me as important as anything else I did during the Falklands Conflict!



.50Cal MGs in the Falklands

AN OLD SOLDIER REMEMBERS HIS FIRST HOGMANAY IN THE REGIMENT

By Major H R Rose

I went up to Cambridge University with the idea that a degree would qualify and prepare me for a highly remunerative career in industry. I should have realised sooner that I didn't want that sort of job at all. During my first year, I realised that I really wanted to be a soldier instead so I put in a late application for the Army Cadetship Scheme. This allowed an undergraduate completing a three-year degree course to be commissioned and paid (as a 2nd Lieutenant on probation). On graduation (provided he obtained a Third Class Degree or better) his Commission would be confirmed and back-dated to seniority as if he had attended Sandhurst in the normal way.

I had recently been commissioned into the 6th/7th Black Watch TA and just completed the Mons TA Platoon Commanders Course but had to attend a Regular Commissioning Board at Westbury. As University Cadets our formal military training was limited to a three-week Potential Officer's course at Mons Officer Cadet School which I was excused on the strength of just having completed a similar course. We were then expected to do some training with the Officers' Training Corps while at university but we were not actually compelled to do any military training at university at all. Another cadet kindly lent me his modern DPM combat kit unknown then in the TA. He refused to do anything military except ride to hounds at least once a week. He passed his degree (gaining a Third in Land Economy as I recall) and joined his Regiment with some very well-worn combat kit but no other military qualifications at all! His lack of any basic military expertise apparently came as a slight shock to his Commanding Officer but the Cadetship Terms of Agreement were checked and there was nothing the Army could do about it. However, his traditional approach to military qualification did his career no harm at all - he became a Colonel in the Household Cavalry!

With a small group of friends in the OTC during our first university year, we expended huge quantities of ammunition learning to fire all the infantry weapons and actually became quite proficient and took part in several noisy field-firing exercises on the Stanford Training Area. Then, in November I received an "invitation" to join the Regiment for a three-week attachment in Cyprus where most of the Battalion was serving with the United Nations Peacekeeping Force. The "invitation" was clearly not optional so I wrote off many optimistic plans for a highly social Christmas vacation and reported to Brize Norton as instructed.

I arrived in the Battalion with a slight degree of apprehension. I had only served in the 6th/7th Black Watch for a few months, had very little kit and barely knew how to clean it or put it on. Through my Regimental connection, I already knew most of the senior serving officers and all the Warrant Officers and Sergeants seemed to know exactly who I was! The CO (Lt Colonel Earle Nichol) had been my father's Adjutant and his Adjutant (Captain (later Brigadier) Garry Barnett) was a family friend and neighbour in Perthshire. I hoped people would make allowances from my lack of expertise - most did! Luckily there were no formal parades and we were dressed in kilt and jersey or denims most of the time!

I spent my first two days at the Battalion HQ in Polemedia Camp at Limassol, meeting the other officers, drawing my UN kit and doing administrative documentation. The highlight of those two days was my first Regimental Guest night. Of course, I was familiar with all the Regimental silver and traditions but, as a 'barrack-rat' in Kenya, I had never had the courage to do more than listen to Officers' Mess functions from behind the kitchen door. I remember the meal and wine were both pretty mediocre but as things progressed through to the toasts and piping, I became captivated by the candlelight, the uniforms, the traditions, the good-natured conversation and general ambience of a happy, extended family. The Pibroch, I remember, was MacIntosh's Lament and as the strains of Lochaber No More died away - I knew I had made the right career decision.

The next day I was sent out west to Pine Trees Camp at Ktima now known as Paphos to join D Company (The Golden Don) commanded by Major Alec Macdonald Gaunt, known by everyone as The Ghost. When not in the main camp, I was attached in turn to each platoon who were guarding various key flash points round the town with instructions

to learn how potential trouble between the Greek and Turkish communities might be avoided. I learnt the routine of administration in a camp under canvas and got to know the other officers, the senior NCOs and many of the junior ranks too. The CSM 'Black Angus' was held in awe by everyone and appeared to be a rather scary character. He sported a magnificent black moustache and I knew he had been one of my father's sergeants in Korea. The CQMS was CSgt McNie who always seemed a little distant. Slowly I began to learn the history behind various individual company characters. One strong, dark, older private soldier with whom I spent some time, was doing all the cooking for a whole platoon in one of the outposts. He was clearly extremely competent at his job; he also understood all about the rationing system; he seemed to be running the base and was also very knowledgeable about many different aspects of tactical soldiering and the Cyprus problem. I later quizzed his platoon commander as to why he was still a private soldier and learnt that "Black Bev's" nickname was 'Yo-Yo' because he had been up to and down from full corporal so many times! Christmas passed fairly quietly. I was taken out by The Ghost as a sort of ADC to accompany him on his tour of the area to meet all the local town dignitaries. At each stop we were pressed to accept refreshments - alcoholic from the Christians or sweets and coffee by the Turks. At one stop, an evil-looking sausage was plucked from the rafters and we were offered a snack! The Ghost firmly refused but said that I would like some, telling me '*sotto voce*' that it would be considered an insult not to accept! Our host produced a fearsome-looking flick knife from his back pocket, hacked off a hunk of sausage and proceeded to toast it on the knife point in the flame of a candle. While it sizzled, smelling revolting, he produced a bottle of colourless, slightly oily liquid with a paper label on which was inscribed in shaky biro the letters "VO" - this he assured us stood for "Very Old" - in my estimation maybe 10 days old at most! He filled a not-very-clean tumbler and thrust the sizzling sausage and drink into my hands with an encouraging leer. Foolishly, I thought I could wash down the sausage with a gulp of brandy but of course the hot sausage evaporated the raw, over-proof spirit - I thought I might die! When I had recovered sufficiently to refuse another round, the Company Commander bid our host a polite farewell and I fell into the back of the Landrover in a groaning heap. On our way home, the Ghost commented that at last he had found some useful employment for me! Hogmanay was a very different sort of party. Jamie Campbell, the company 2IC, had procured a turkey from somewhere so we had a second Christmas dinner and afterwards played backgammon until midnight when we were bidden to parade at the cookhouse where the Jocks' party was in full swing. To my inexperienced eyes, things were already out of control and I asked how soon we could slip away. I was told "not till the first man drops"! The Ghost said a few words which were mostly drowned out by raucous singing. Then he proposed a toast to the New Year and the Regiment which was drunk with enthusiasm by all before the first Jock slipped gracefully under the table to the floor at our feet allowing the officers and senior ranks to beat a hasty retreat. Leaving the sounds of a rapidly developing riot behind us, we made our way to the Sergeants' Mess where we were welcomed with large whiskies by the CSM who had somehow got there before us. We settled down in chairs and the party developed slowly. After about 20 minutes the CSM said he was off to put the Jocks to bed. I wondered if the whole guard armed with pick helms would be enough to back him up but he seemed quite confident that they would go quietly. Sure enough he was back 10 minutes later without a hair out of place but I thought his pace stick looked a bit bent. At about 1am after some good piping, the Ghost stood up and said "Well, thank you Sgt Major a very pleasant evening and a Happy New Year to you all" I drained my glass and stood up only to be pushed firmly back down into my seat with the CSM's heavy hand on my shoulder and a growl in my ear "You aren't going anywhere yet!"

At 2am Jamie Campbell stood up and said, "Hoots and Gibbers, Sarn't Major I'm for bed and A Good New Year to all!" This time the heavy hand on my shoulder prevented me from even leaving my seat! I remember little of the next two hours except that the CQMS took over the piping. We were regaled with tune after tune - some

thoughtful; some sad; some wild but all played too beautifully. After one particularly moving set, Wattie Angus looked me straight in the eye and said “The only mistake your father ever made, Mr Rose, was to break that man!” and then I knew that I had just been told another piece of Regimental History. The night continued with more whisky and stories of old battles in past wars, previous postings and old comrades. The Chief Clerk, Alan McKinnell was there as a visitor from Battalion HQ as was the Regimental Tailor, Sergeant Mitchell; a wee round man with a red, freckly face who proved to be a dab hand on the spoons. “Mitch The Stitch” was leaning on the bar and it seemed to me as if he was shrinking before my eyes. I watched in awe as he took one last pull at his drink, placed the glass carefully on the bar and remained clinging on with just his fingertips which finally disappeared too as he silently slipped to the floor. Wattie Angus who was just explaining to me in detail how they had recaptured the forward trenches on the Hook, hardly paused in his narrative, just giving a quick aside to the mess staff: “Take him off to his bed”.

At about 4am I suddenly realised that the other subaltern was about to go the same way as Mitch The Stitch and I firmly told the CSM that I thought I had better take him home as we were living in a bungalow just outside the camp gate. I was given permission to go:

“Aye he is in a bit of a state, see him home safely if you would please, Mr Rose!”

I managed to get my unsteady charge across the dusty parade ground with only two tumbles and steered him past the guardroom without incident despite his loud demands that the guard should be turned out for inspection! I dragged him out of the muddy ditch into which he fell a few yards outside the gate and dumped him on his bed before crawling into mine having set my alarm for 7am. Three hours later, I woke up with a splitting headache – I couldn’t wake my companion so I shaved and dressed and went over to the Mess and forced down some sweet tea and a small tomato juice with a lot of Worcestershire Sauce before presenting myself at the Company Office at 0800. The only other person there was the CSM, as immaculate as ever. Maybe it was just the morning light but perhaps even he was looking a little grey around the gills.

“Did nobody tell you, Sir? The Regiment doesn’t work on New Year’s Day! Well, you may be a pretty useless officer, Mr Rose, but you can certainly handle your whisky – now be off with you, back to your bed!” Faint praise from a great man – I obeyed him gratefully!



WO2 W Angus

Memorial Service for Private Robert Easson

Mrs Doris (Dorrie) Nelson, the great niece of Pte Robert Easson, carried out detailed research on her great uncle, Robert Easson, who died of wounds in 1919. She found that he had been interred in a common plot in the grounds of St Monans Church in an unmarked grave. Through her hard work and dedication Dorrie engaged with the Commonwealth War Graves (CWG) and a military headstone was erected to mark Robert’s resting place.

Dorrie organised a short memorial service on 2nd September 2022 at St Monans Church yard to commemorate the erection of the headstone. Family members, the Lord-Lieutenant of Fife, a representative from the CWG, members of The Black Watch Association and others took part. Group Captain Jim Leggatt OBE, CWG, gave a résumé on Robert Easson. Jacob Downie from Carnoustie, wearing WW1 Black Watch uniform, recited In Flanders Fields. The Revd David Clark led the prayers and Stewart Malcolm played the Last Post and Reveille during the act of Remembrance. Audrey Clark, a local piper with the RAF Association Pipe Band, played the lament.

Wreaths were laid by the family, Mr Robert Balfour, Lord-Lieutenant of Fife, Major Ronnie Proctor, The Black Watch Association and others. Mr Bob Scott, the Fife Branch supervised the Standard Bearers from Fife and Angus Branches.

Robert Easson was born on 7th February 1892 in St Monans, he was the fourth son of John Easson and Euphemia Pearson. By 1911 he had moved to Buckhaven where he worked as a coalminer. At the outbreak of WW1 Robert enlisted into his local Territorial Force Battalion, the 7th Battalion The Black Watch.

Robert was severely wounded at Neuville–Saint-Vaast, near Arras, on 24th May 1916 and was transferred to Alder Hey Hospital in Liverpool at some point.

Over three years later, on 14th November 1919 sadly, at the age of 27, Robert died in the hospital never having been able to return to his family in St Monans. His death was registered in Liverpool on 17th November 1919 by his elder brother, David, of Braehead, St Monans. The cause of death was registered as a gunshot wound to the hip. Robert’s body was brought back to St Monans for burial in the churchyard. On 20th November 1919 Robert was laid to rest in common ground with no headstone to mark his resting place.

This omission has now been rectified thanks to the efforts and dedication of his great niece, Dorrie.

R J W Proctor



Association members attending the service



Robert Easson



Robert Easson headstone and wreaths laid

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



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel MC Hayton
Second-in-Command:	Major A J Magee
Adjutant:	Captain CAW Howie
Operations Officer:	Captain ND Hannay
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 1(RSM) M R Gray Warrant Officer Class 1(RSM) A Ferrier

As Commanding Officer, you can mark the passage of time most accurately by the journal submissions you write. This is my first contribution to the Red Hackle and marks the end of my first year in command of The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland. As I reflect on the past twelve months, I would identify two key strategic issues which have impacted on the lives of our soldiers: the continued COVID-19 pandemic with its associated effects on the NHS and other key national outputs and the return of war on a major scale to Europe with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Each of the companies has felt these issues in different ways and each has had its periods of frenetic activity followed by time spent waiting for orders, as is often the lot of soldiers during uncertain times.

Continued COVID disruption has caused the Battalion to be held at readiness or deployed in support of the nation almost continually between September and February. Charlie Company (The Savages) deployed to Aberdeenshire in the Autumn to help the stretched emergency services deal with the aftermath of the horrific storms which caused so much damage in the Northeast of Scotland. 70 soldiers spent 4 days roaming the northeast of Scotland checking on the vulnerable and eating cake provided by the friendly locals. At the same time, Bravo Company provided tanker drivers and drivers' mates to make sure that fuel kept flowing in the face of staff shortages in the haulage industry. The Battalion was again stood-to, ready to deploy in support of the civil authorities over the festive season, this time Alpha (Grenadier) Company and Bn HQ were held at 24 hrs Notice to Move. Fortunately, the ask never came. However in early January, 50 soldiers from Charlie Company did deploy to support the NHS in England. In total, the deployment to assist hospitals across the Midlands maintain vital services lasted for almost 2 months. It wasn't all bad as most of the soldiers lived in 3 or 4* hotels for the duration, much to the dismay of many of their wives left in Inverness. This level of luxury meant the Jocks had to work hard to find something to complain about, but after six weeks, the steak in the hotel restaurant had become boring and they bemoaned that "they'd rather have 'normal food' instead".

The war in Ukraine has also impacted the Battalion hard. The Grenadiers have been held at 7 days' notice to move since February to support a NATO response force if, and when, it gets generated. Alongside this commitment and along with elements of Delta (Light) Company they have been committed to training the Ukrainian Army in Wathgill, North Yorkshire since the start of July as part of the UK's support to the Ukrainian Government. Not to be forgotten, Bravo and Charlie Companies are also held at 2 days' notice to move to support the UK's efforts in Ukraine.

Despite these national level commitments, training hasn't stopped, Alpha Company deployed to Sennelager in the Autumn to sample the delights both of the training area and the surrounding German towns – in some cases reliving past glory; in some cases experiencing the joys of Paderborn for the first time. The Anti-Tank Platoon deployed to Salisbury Plain and together with Wildcat helicopters took on the KRH's Challenger 2 tanks as the culmination of their cadre in an exercise enjoyed by all. The Recce and Mortar Platoons deployed to the US to conduct training in Fort Knox and Fort Benning respectively, both enjoying R&R in Nashville. Alpha Company has deployed to the less salubrious Sennybridge in support of the Platoon Commanders' course and has conducted night platoon dark (no illum) live firing in Otterburn and subterranean training at the Corsham Mines. The Snipers have been honing their skills in the Cairngorm Mountains and have competed in an international competition for the first time

in many years, finishing 11th out of 70 in Sniperfest in Lithuania. The Assault Pioneers made it all the way to Barry Budden and Catterick for their cadre and in their other guise, the Pipes and Drums also made a name for themselves. So far this year, they have played as a band in Liverpool Street Station for Armed Forces Day and on The Mall for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations as well as deploying pipers to Azerbaijan, Singapore and Pakistan for Remembrance Day. Cpl Noble is now a firm favourite with the Singaporean Minister for Defence having not only played for him at a private dinner party at his home, but then joining him for Karaoke afterwards. As I write the band are performing in Basel before heading to Edinburgh for the Tattoo there.

One of the challenges I have faced is coupling this level of activity with a sense of fun, making the Fort and the Battalion a place that people enjoy and want to come to work. In delivering this vision Adventurous Training, Sport and whole battalion activities (families and all) are key. Delta Company have managed to take part in three sailing expeditions, our Light Aid Detachment (LAD) conducted a mountaineering expedition to Croatia and our doctor is currently in the Pakistani Himalayas. Our Rugby, football, cross-country and clay pigeon shooting teams have competed across the country. The Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess has even held a curling event!

The Families Office, under Scouse Gridsale, has put massive efforts into delivering on numerous events such as the Jubilee street party, trips away to local tourist and family attractions and are currently delivering light lunches weekly to children on the patch to keep the sense of community going: all this in addition to running the Battalion Youth Clubs and coffee mornings. We have also conducted a period of self-help, a patch wobble in Inverness and a spring clean in the Fort, decorating common rooms and clearing out the detritus that collects in all Army units; including a set of Lynx helicopter blade covers which were found in the Casemates.

There is always more to do; however, the future is bright as we look towards joining 11 Security Force Assistance (SFA) Brigade and taking on the new role given to us in the Integrated Review. We have many new skills to learn and challenges to face, but we do so with a confidence and assurance that would be familiar to those who served in the Battalion before. Much about the Battalion has remained constant and all the Jocks wearing the Red Hackle continue to draw praise from across the Army for their flexibility, adaptability, and ability to deliver on time against challenging demands. I will of course update you on any changes to our laydown, task or location, as and when I can. For now, rest assured that the Jocks, NCOs and Officers in the Battalion are all fiercely proud of the reputation you all worked hard to secure and are constantly striving to be worthy of its legacy. I wish the Association members all the best and would be happy to welcome any of you to the Fort to come and see your Battalion as and when you can make it.

THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee:	Major TJH Towler Major AJ Magee Major MA Dobson
Secretary of the Mess Committee:	Captain TM Thorpe Lieutenant LE Broad

After a period of limited social contact due to COVID-19, it was great to see the Mess back in full swing under Mark Dobson and Andy Magee's leadership. Successful St Andrew's Dinner Nights and Christmas Parties were long overdue and a lot of fun. The COVID-19 outbreak following the latter was less so, but it did ensure that the Mess's immunity for Christmas itself was high! It sadly also meant that Officers to Sergeants in December, and the return leg in January, were postponed until next year. Training is in full swing!

A series of short-notice commitments and tasks since has meant that some proposed events and occasions have not been celebrated as we had hoped, but we are already looking forward to our delayed summer ball in November once most of the Battalion is back in the Fort. Despite these challenges we have marked several people's leaving: Captain Fergus Haig left us, and the Army for life in London; Captain Rory

Walters moved to take up his role at the ITC Catterick; Lieutenant Sam Hayes has been posted to AFC Harrogate and Captain Iain MacLachlan is to take over as QM at 2 SCOTS. We wish them all well and look forward to seeing them all in the Mess again soon.

We have also welcomed Second Lieutenants Grant Drummond, Andrew Duff and Ben Calder to the Mess, along with Captain Richard (Scouse) Grisdale who has returned to the Battalion on commissioning. It is also great to have the former RSM, Captain Marty Gray, in the Mess too.

We are also delighted to celebrate Captain Haig's and Captain Howie's engagements, and wish them both, along with their partners, every happiness.

WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' Mess

Presiding Mess Member:	Warrant Officer Class 1 (RSM) A Ferrier
President of the Mess Committee:	Warrant Officer Class 2 (CSM) D Bruce

Welcome to this year's update on the activities of the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. We hope this finds you all well, during what has been and continues to be an extraordinary year for the Mess and the Battalion. Since our last entry the WOs' and Sgts' Mess has continued to work hard supporting and driving the Battalion's activities from the shop floor, but with restrictions eased we have finally had the chance for some social activities as well.

The Mess has had to be adaptable and agile in its approach to support UK Operations during 2022 which saw Mess members deployed in support of the COVID pandemic as well as supporting the emergency services in the northeast of Scotland during Storm ARWEN. The War in Ukraine has undoubtedly sharpened the focus of the Mess presenting new and interesting challenges. Mess members have deployed in key roles delivering high-quality training to our Ukrainian allies at Wathgill Camp and being held at high readiness in support of UK Ops in Ukraine. These challenges have been met with the usual enthusiasm and energy with an acknowledgment that the dispersed nature of the last 12 months could well be the way things look in our future role as a Security Force Assistance (SFA) battalion, within 11 Brigade.

As usual the door to the Mess continues to revolve with many fond farewells and the welcoming of new members to our team. The most notable of these being when WO1 (RSM) Marty Gray handed over as RSM to WO1 (RSM) Alan Ferrier on his promotion. WO1 M Gray has been commissioned and is now Company 2ic of Charlie Company (The Savages). On behalf of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, we would like to thank Marty for all his hard work and guidance during the past two years as the head of our Mess.



WO1 Ferrier taking over from WO1 Gray

We say a fond farewell to a few of the Mess stalwarts: WO2 (CSM) Duncan Blake, leaves us on posting to ITC Catterick; WO2 (AQMS) Armstrong is posted to Kenya; and CSgt Colin McColl is posted to ITDU on promotion to WO2; CSgts Andy Ritchie and Scott McFadden have moved to instruct at the Infantry Battle School and CSgts Grant Lilley and Jamie McFarlane have been selected to instruct at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. We wish them all the best in their new roles.

We have also had the opportunity to mark the completion of colour service for a number of Mess members: most notably our Master Tailor WO2 Scottie Currie who has completed 26 years Battalion service; WO2 Brian Morris has completed his time and WO2s Jim Copeland and Dougie Dempster are now in the final stretch, we look forward to dining them out, in true Mess fashion in the near future.

We welcome to the Mess, WO2 (CSM) Martin Arnold, returning to the Mess as CSM Bravo Company and WO2 (CSM) Andy Reid to HQ Company. On their promotion, we welcome Sgts Cameron, Muir, Tamang, Christie, Brown, Chadburn and Couper.



WO2 Scottie Currie on completion of 26 years' service

Whilst the operational functions of the Mess have continued at pace throughout the year, it will come as no surprise that the social calendar has been somewhat pared back (just as we were hoping to breathe life back into it). However, we did manage to squeeze in a couple of events.

First up was our Christmas function which was superbly organised by WO2 Duncan Blake and his team. This was a fantastic festive celebration that brought the Mess and their guests together after a long absence of mess activity, a hearty feast was followed by an evening of questionable dancing and festive fun.

Before parting on Christmas leave the Warrant Officers' joined forces with the Officers' Mess in entertaining the patch with wildly out-of-tune carol singing.

Unfortunately, this year's Burns Supper that was planned by WO2 James McCarthy (Loon) had to be postponed until next year, much to the disappointment of those who had rehearsed their poems, I am sure! Desperate to get something in, Loon organised a Mexican lunch, with much of the Mess deployed we forged ahead anyway, and the twenty-three members present had a good go at eating a table full of Nachos.

The finale of a very busy and demanding year will see the Battalion returning from its deployments in time for Christmas and reforming with a focus on the SFA role and the exciting opportunities that will bring. On behalf of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess we hope you stay safe throughout 2022 and we look forward to updating you next time on the activities and events we have been involved in.

ALPHA COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major TJH Towler (from Aug 21)
Second-in-Command:	Captain KJ Nicol
	Lieutenant LE Broad (from Jan 22)
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 D Bruce
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant A Lavery
	Colour Sergeant A Ritchie

Readiness, uncertainty, and change have been the three main themes for the Grenadiers over the last six months. By November 2021, the Company had returned from an exercise in Germany and a Battlefield Tour in Belgium with newly promoted LCpls Bartlett and Skirving in tow. The aim then was to slow things down for the Company, noting the toll that the last 12-months had taken, but, as ever, 'events' resulted in further change and demands.

First to rear its head was Storm ARWEN which saw most of the Grenadiers deploy alongside the Savages to Aberdeenshire, checking on residents and ensuring that they were safe and well. Unsurprisingly, the next challenge was COVID-19, and, in typical fashion, just as the

Company was enjoying its first week of Christmas leave. Along with many other parts of the Army, the Company was brought to readiness to provide vaccinators to support the national effort. Having suffered through hours of NHS online training, Christmas on 24 hours' notice to move, and Hogmanay without a drink, Ptes Dawson, Manson, Duffus and Spiers found themselves spending the last of their leave as part of the local vaccination efforts in Melrose and Livingstone.

With January came increased tensions in Europe, and the Company was brought to readiness for a NATO contingency operation. We also bid farewell to Capt Kenny Nicol as the Company 2IC and welcomed 2Lt Drummond, who took over from Lt Lachlan Broad (the new Company 2IC) as OC 1 (Senior Highland) Platoon. The few weeks that followed saw the team continuing with its return to our core infantry role, focusing on shooting, navigating, and operating collectively in the field. This included a night week, where the Grenadiers spent each day starting as the sun set and working through the night to hone our skills in darkness. It was a thoroughly rewarding week and one that we will repeat.

February saw our readiness reduced, as we moved to complete specified pre-deployment training requirements and looked to exploit as many training opportunities as we could. When Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 Feb, we were in Brecon, having taken the whole Company for a two-week platoon-sized task to support the Infantry Battle School. It was a rewarding couple of weeks, and the Jocks set an impressive standard for the Infantry's future platoon commanders, LCpls McGregor and McLoughlin receiving effusive praise from the Brecon Staff. It also marked the end of CSgt Ritchie's time in the Company as CQMS, as he moved to take up his role as a CSgt Instructor in Brecon.

After the briefest of returns to the Fort, we headed south to Warminster so that the CO could validate us as a Company as our readiness reduced again. Ready to move, the Bn was given a short notice task to support Ex LION STRIKE, the run out for future Company Commanders on Salisbury Plain. The Grenadiers were lucky to be asked to play the enemy, and the Jocks loved it. Pitching themselves against B Company 3 SCOTS, A Company 5 RIFLES, the future Combat Company Commanders and 3 SCOTS Bn HQ was a big challenge, but one the Jocks rose to with aplomb. As enemy, tactics varied from conventional and impressive, to less conventional and slightly mad. Pte Crawford hiding in a pile of leaves to ambush a B Company section commander, and Pte Douglas launching a counterattack against the RIFLES from halfway up a tree in a woodblock. The Jocks had a ball, especially Pte Fraser who managed to capture 2IC B Company whilst defending Copehill Down Village, taking his land rover and signaller by surprise – one for the scrapbook! Despite the frantic period leading up to it, Lieutenants Dakin, Walters and Drummond then organised an excellent Live Firing package in the Fort and Otterburn, prior to a delayed but thoroughly deserved Easter break.

Rested, the Company headed south to a disused quarry and tunnel system for an urban week. Going from team to platoon level drills, the Jocks learnt a huge amount in the most testing urban environment any of us had experienced. Pitch black, and with disused boiler rooms, corridors, tunnels and caverns, the soldiers' skills were developed and honed with support of UV cameras and audio and visual playback capabilities. It was an excellent week that finished with a well-earned BBQ and beers in the Wiltshire sun.

A period of further tasks followed, with Jocks completing ceremonial commitments and elements of the Recce and ATK Platoons (.. attached) returning to Brecon as well as conducting a security exercise at a nuclear facility. Unsurprisingly, the Jocks rather enjoyed taking on the civilian police on the latter, but ... for fear of reprisals, I will leave it there.

Come the Jubilee Long Weekend, we had assumed another readiness task that saw us switch focus again to complete a separate set of training requirements and another smaller set of live firing. With little notice, the Grenadiers then deployed to Northern England to play our part in the Defence of Ukraine.

And that is where we currently are and proudly so. Part of a wartime Battlefield Casualty Replacement training centre. The Jocks, JNCOs and officers are taking part in the most meaningful and tangible activity we can remember. It is sobering and at times upsetting, but it also deeply uplifting, utterly rewarding and a whole lot of fun. The standard of the training our junior commanders are delivering is something to behold, as is the focus of our brave partners.



Ready to strike underground in Wiltshire, May 22

BRAVO COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major AJ Magee
Second-in-Command:	Lieutenant S Smith
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 D Blake
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant S McFadden
Officer Commanding 5 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant R Strawbridge
5 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant J Cameron
Officer Commanding 6 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant A Duff
6 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant K Hart
Officer Commanding 7 Platoon:	Second Lieutenant B Calder
7 Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant S Moktan Tamang

After a few, busy months dispersed supporting the British public with Military Aid to the Civil Authorities taskings, November 2021 saw Bravo Company finally able to regroup and return to their true calling as fear-inducing infanteers. Aligned to Ex JEBEL STORM 22 in the Dohfar region of Oman, the Company dived straight into training, conducting ranges and finessing section-level skills.

With the New Year came new beginnings, so when the Company deployed on Ex BRAVO STRIKE in early January, it felt like a fresh start for Bravo Company. The end of Operation TORAL, followed by months dispersed, meant this was the first time in over a year the Company had deployed together – a real opportunity not just to reaffirm our core skills, but to allow the Company and its influx of new commanders and soldiers to gel. A week in the bitter cold on Warcop Training Area focussing on platoon and company level operations in the rural environment meant the three platoons returned to the Fort with strong identities and a healthily competitive spirit.

Confident that Bravo Company was in a good place with rifle company infanteering and fighting at night, the Company's focus switched to the



Sgt Cameron conducting the N-LAW range on Otterburn Training Area

wider range of weapon systems, in particular getting to grips with the now famous N-LAW. Collaborating with the Anti-tank Platoon, Bravo Company received a 'zero to hero' package, going from initial weapon handling tests to in-depth lessons on foreign capabilities and threats, as well as using the weapon systems within the rifle company. The top performers throughout this package then deployed to Otterburn where they had the opportunity to fire N-LAWs live, drawing a lot of jealousy from the rest of the Battalion!

Given the buy-in from the soldiers on the foreign capabilities lessons and keeping an eye forward to our future as an SFA battalion, Bravo Company sent a team to the National Firearms Centre at the Royal Armouries in Leeds to increase our understanding of both our allies' and potential adversaries' weapons and equipment. Here they were able not only to recognise, understand and handle various foreign weapon systems, but also had the opportunity to fire them live. Meanwhile, back at the Fort, the emphasis remained on being combat ready, with the rest of the Company focussing on their Close-Quarter Marksmanship principles on a company range package.

The Company then deployed as set troops for Ex LION STRIKE on SPTA to support the Sub-Unit Commander's Course, an arduous 5-day exercise of rolling attacks in the Urban-Rural interface. Here Bravo Company soldiers demonstrated not only their robustness, but their ability to show initiative and to adapt to new commanders, including those not from an infantry background. The fortitude, stoicism and staunch Caledonian humour set the example to the newly appointed infantry and cavalry subunit commanders. The Jocks set the standard, fighting hard and pressing on through to an excellent final assault onto the village of Copehill Down.



Soldiers clear through Copehill Down Village on Ex LIONS STRIKE



Soldiers sweep through the inflatable skills house developing their urban capability



Ex LION STRIKE, B Company clearing Shrewton Street as part of the BG attack.png

The invasion of Ukraine in February saw UK Defence shift its focus, unfortunately causing Ex JEBEL STORM in Oman to be cancelled. While initially disappointing, Bravo Company recognised that having completed their pre-deployment training, this left them in a position to be able to focus on more advanced concepts and drills, again with an eye to their potential taskings in the SFA re-role. This included preparing and delivering TEWTs for the Bn considering challenging urban locations such as a nuclear bunker and the Inverness railway network. On a more practical level, Bravo Company conducted dynamic urban training, exploiting their access to an inflatable skills house where, under their section commanders, troops rehearsed room clearances and break-ins in daylight and complete darkness. With commanders confident in Bravo Company's urban capability, the Company then conducted Ex BRAVO BREACH, an urban operations exercise using the Marker Rounds Training System in a force-on-force environment, raising the stakes, and adding complexity and realism to the stingingly realistic training.

Despite a year filled with fastballs and demanding taskings, Bravo Company has still found time to enjoy itself, whether that be a particularly memorable company smoker, or platoons escaping to lodges in Aviemore to conduct practical navigation training on some of the most spectacular landscapes that the UK has to offer.

The Company is continuing to adapt to what it expects to be its future role and Area of Operations. Soldiers have been conducting training in a range of complex environments alongside different branches of the Army; growing their knowledge and understanding of new technologies and processes. Bravo Company soldiers continue to prove that they are flexible and able to transition seamlessly between conventional training and warfighting and some of the more unconventional complex environments the future might hold, proving time and time again that they are more than ready for whatever the upcoming months may throw at them.

CHARLIE (FIRE SUPPORT) COMPANY - The Savages

Officer Commanding: Major N Drapper
 Second-in-Command: Captain M Gray
 Company Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class 2 J McCarthy

Company Quartermaster Sergeant: Colour Sergeant T Meighan

Another year and another Red Hackle article which forces us to stop and take stock of the year that has been and the year that is yet to

come. As ever, the Army has continued to find new ways to keep C Company busy. However, it is safe to say that this year has presented the Savages with its most varied set of challenges in any singular 12-month period. During this period the Company has enjoyed three operational deployments, sent soldiers away to six different countries and conducted innumerable training events of differing scale. Throughout, the soldiers of C Company have risen to all challenges and continue to earn the mantle #SavageNotAverage.

In customary style we begin with the Honour roll of those who have departed or joined us over the last year. In Company HQ the long-vacant Coy 2IC position has been filled by Captain Marty Gray who joins us on commissioning from the hot seat of Bn RSM. In the Mortars Captain Fergus Haig has left the Army to take up a place with JP Morgan and has been replaced by Captain Elliott Smith who has come across from Bravo Company and CSgt Kyle has fully bedded into the Mortar 2IC role having replaced Mr Dempster at the end of 2021. Other departures from the Mortar Platoon included CSgt Watson who has left on promotion to take up the role of 4SCOTS Mortar Pl 2IC and Sgt Leith who has called time on his career and transitioned to 'civvy street'. In the Machine Guns, Lieutenant Ben Dodson has settled in as Platoon Commander. However, we have lost a stalwart in Sgt McTernan who has been posted to ITC Catterick as an instructor. Sgt McTernan has in turn been replaced by Sgt Chadburn on promotion. Lastly in the Assault Pioneer Platoon we welcome back to the Battalion Sgt Peter Muir who takes up the post of Drum Major, joining his twin brother Sgt James Muir, the Pipe Major. This pairing of identical twins leading the Pipe Band is thought to be a first for the Battalion and the Royal Regiment of Scotland. While Sgt Muir replaces CSgt Lowe as Drum Major we are pleased to report that we have not lost CSgt Lowe's services. He remains in the Company and will take over the role of Assault pioneer (APNR) Platoon Commander following the battalion reorganisation changing the P&D's trade to become Machine Gunners.

The individual Platoon updates will cover their areas in detail but from a Company perspective there are four activities worthy of mention.

December saw the Company's first Operational deployment. In a stormy and snowy month, C Company with some supporting cast members from A and D Companies, were called upon at short (13hrs) notice to deploy to Aberdeen and conduct assurance checks on members of the public in the Grampian Area. STORM ARWEN had knocked large portions of the power grid offline and snow had caused havoc with the road network. Combined, these problems saw vulnerable members of the public go without access to local amenities and shops for several days. C Company were tasked to go door-to-door contacting those considered to be vulnerable, checking they were coping, delivering supplies and taking people to medical appointments where needed. This was a rewarding experience for many in the Company as they were

from the Grampian region and they felt that they had been given an opportunity to support their local communities.

Our second deployment came hot on the heels of the first. In the first week of our return from Christmas Leave, the Company was again deployed at short notice (48Hrs this time) to further afield (the Midlands) and this time for longer (5 weeks) to support the NHS during the COVID-19 Pandemic. 51 Savages were living in hotels and deployed into 11 hospitals. Working in 4-5 man teams they embedded with their NHS counterparts to conduct General Duties covering: moving patients to appointments, X-rays and blood tests; oxygen distribution; mealtime support; managing welfare calls with families; scrub suit management & issue; catering support; collections and transfer of charity donations brought to site and acting as porters. This deployment brought with it a host of new challenges. The team learned a lot of different skills from the NHS approach to problem management. This was another hugely rewarding task and one in which the Jocks received huge praise from their NHS teammates and there were several attempts made to recruit the Savages.

March saw the Company accomplish a 'Green' challenge. With the near constant deployments since the TORAL 12 Pre-deployment Training in 2020 C Company has had few opportunities to focus on its core skills. With our re-role back to a Light Role Battalion a key skill for any Fire Support Asset is the ability to carry heavy kit long distances, a bit of a forgotten ability when you are vehicle-based, so C Company set itself the challenge of conducting a heavy carry over challenging terrain. Ex SAVAGE CARRY saw us conduct several build-up carries before taking on Beinn Bhuidhe Mhor with 45Kg per man. This challenge saw the Company conduct a 5-mile insertion march with an elevation gain of 543m before conducting a TEWT and then a 3-mile extraction march.

Lastly, the Coy conducted a Pre-deployment Training Package ahead of our deployment to POLAND in August. This Pre-deployment Training package was our first look at the types of tasks and training that we will be expected to conduct as part of the Bn's new Security Force Assistance Battalion Role. The package covered many of the normal Pre-deployment Training (PDT) serials; Team Medic; Navigation; OPLAW, etc. However, it also included many new skills; Civilian Armoured Vehicle (CAV) driving; CAV Contact Drills, Spot Map Navigation, Advanced Pistol shooting including discreet carry, language training, enhanced Comms and Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) training and casualty extraction from civilian vehicles. It also allowed us to plan and execute a unique exercise incorporating all this over an extended Area of Operation. Ex READY HACKLE had the Company exercising from Cape Wrath in the NW tip of Scotland down to Gordon Barracks in Aberdeen, exercising in both Urban and Rural locations.

But enough from the Company HQ, it's always better to hear it from the platoons in their own words ...



Tabbing it out in good order



Sgt Fay the 1-man SF GPMG Team



PPE 12 hours a day

MACHINE GUN PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Lieutenant B Dodson
 Second-in-Command: Sergeant P McTernan
 Platoon Sergeant: Sergeant J Fay

2021/22 has been a brilliant and turbulent year for the Machine Gun (MG) Platoon. The Battalion re-orbat meant many new faces were introduced into the platoon and that a MG Cadre would have shortly to follow their arrival. Cpl Finlayson planned some platoon-level bowling and drinks in Inverness which meant team cohesion was oozing just before the start of the cadre period. Sgt Fay planned and executed Ex RED GUNNER, a dry exercise and live firing package on the Air Weapons Range (AWR) Tain (AWR should stand for Aggressive Wind and Rain) in October/November. The Cadre period finished with a final exercise in Warcop with all 29 soldiers passing the external requirement standards. A special mention to LCpl Diffin and Pte Stark, who were the fastest and most accurate pair on the GPMG (SF) ACMT (Annual Combat Marksmanship Test).

The MG Platoon has performed excellently on recent PNCO Cadres in Penicuik, with LCpl Bell, LCpl Duggie and LCpl Sangerman all above the quality line and achieving promotion in December 2021; as well Pte Williamson and Pte Odihambo completing the course and awaiting promotion.

The MG Platoon was asked to jump out of its comfort zone and help with Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) support to the NHS during the COVID-19 pandemic, with Sgt Chadburn, Pte Whyte and Pte Jones all being commended for their selfless and reliable commitment by the NHS Hospital staff. After the MACA tasking, the Platoon was informed it would have to re-orbat, with the Pipes and Drums returning into the role and the current outfit moving elsewhere within the Battalion. In 2023 the MG Platoon will be full of new faces and talent, with a MG Cadre in its sights at the earliest opportunity as well as juggling Pipe band commitments!



Getting to grips with patients

MORTAR PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Captain E Smith
 Second-in-Command: Colour Sergeant W Kyle

As readers will know, The Mortar Platoon was left, after an excellent tour on Op TORAL 12, as the Force Protection platoon at the TAIPAN location in Kabul. This was followed by a period of readiness for Op PITTING in September 2021. Our recovery from this busy period allowed us to return to our core skills and hone our mortaring skills once more.

After two weeks in South Cerney, we returned to Fort George and began our Mortar Cadre. This was a thoroughly enjoyable period of training that saw the Platoon deploy to Cawdor estate, the local training area, and to Warcop Ranges to complete live firing. With a new core of JNCOs practising their MFC skills, the Platoon once more proved its ability to apply accurate and effective indirect fire. The newest Jocks to the Platoon completed their cadre with some excellent displays of soldiering and were warmly welcomed as mortar operators.

We finished 2021 with a fantastic week in Edinburgh covering some valuable navigation training in the Pentland hills and a run up Arthur's Seat. We were hosted at the castle by Regimental HQ with the Jocks learning about the history of the Regiment. The week culminated with a social in the town which was a suitable end to what was a hectic year.

After a well-earned Christmas leave, the Platoon returned to start pre-deployment training (PDT) for their role as opposition forces (OPFOR) to an upcoming 1 PARA training exercise in the USA. We ran through a live-firing package that refreshed our small-arms live fire currency and began rehearsing low level skills and company drills for what would no doubt be a challenging scrap with the Special Forces Support Group (SFG). In April, we deployed to Fort Benning, Georgia on Ex URBAN AVENGER for a 6-week exercise.

The 6-week exercise followed a programme of acclimatisation, refresher training, 'test week', combined training, and some R&R. Leaving a rather cold Fort George led to some sun-shy Jocks sweating a bit in the humid 32°C of our arrival. A week of physical training saw

everyone well-adjusted however, and a week of close quarters drills honed the tactics we would need in the future.



Sgt McKenzie and Cpl Peebles in role as the 'demo troop' for Close Quarter Battle

As we moved into 'test week' we started the night shift. With the majority of operations, and therefore exercises, conducted at night, we had to adjust quickly to the now even more steamy conditions. However, the Platoon quickly gained a reputation for being a particularly effective enemy and those being tested regularly remarked so – in more prosaic terms! Combined week saw the entry of the 3/75th Ranger Battalion and some incredibly well-resourced training. Fast-roping, unmanned aircraft, drones and support helicopters gave the Jocks the chance to see some of the tools less used in our trade, especially the new Jocks. Of course, we made sure the Jocks had time to snoop about some of the kit and equipment, which has led to plenty of stories of the next generation of kit that will no doubt be coming our way soon.



The Mortar Platoon flying the flag for the Savages abroad

No trip abroad is complete without a quick run into a local town, and this deployment was no different. The Platoon was split and descended upon various towns and cities, including Nashville and Atlanta, in order to see the sights that only the USA can offer. In all, Ex URBAN AVENGER gave us a fantastic opportunity to test and refine our drills and enjoy some of the pleasures of the American South in spring.

With our return in June, the Platoon has had a very busy period conducting further PDT. Our mortar family has been somewhat split across several tasks, which the JNCOs have, of course taken in their stride. As we move into the remainder of 2022, we look forward to some new and interesting challenges and the chance to complete some career courses to bring through the next generation of JNCOs into the Platoon.



Ptes Campbell and Muritoki in a Blackhawk helicopter on a morning off

ASSAULT PIONEER PLATOON/PIPES AND DRUMS

Assault Pioneer Platoon

Commander:

Second-in-Command:

Colour Sergeant (Drum Major)

C Lowe

Sergeant (Pipe Major) J Muir

3 SCOTS Pipes and Drums took part in one of the first events in the yearlong Platinum Jubilee celebrations, to be held throughout the United Kingdom & the Commonwealth marking

The month of November started off with the Platoon travelling to London to support the London Poppy Day which marks the official launch, and flagship event, of the annual Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. This annual event provides much-needed funding used to support serving personnel, their families and veterans. The Band joined 800 performers from across the three services who spent the day playing at iconic locations across London. The Band was located at Charing Cross Station and provided musical entertainment to commuters coming in and out of the city.

The first overseas engagement activity was conducted by Cpl Noble who spent Remembrance in Jakarta, Indonesia, where he conducted three high profile activities.

11th November. The British School, Jakarta

This is a top-tier private international school which serves both expats and the Indonesian community. Cpl Noble led the Act of Remembrance for an audience of 350 students covering both Primary and Secondary



Cpl Noble posing for a new Instagram picture

School audiences. After the event Cpl Noble was invited to meet and talk with the School's Board of Governors, Principal and others.

12th November. Dinner with Defence Minister

Accompanied by the Defence Attaché and the Defence and Security & Exports representative, Cpl Noble was invited to a private dinner hosted by Mr Prabowo Subianto, Minister of Defence for the Republic of Indonesia. Having piped the visiting contingent into the house Cpl Noble was seated opposite the Minister for dinner, with members of the Indonesian Parliament and the Minister's close family flanking him. This was a relaxed dinner for approx. 50 people after which Cpl Noble excelled himself by tutoring the Minister's own Pipers, who performed at the dinner, before leading them in a second performance. To cap the evening off he then joined the Minister for karaoke and dancing.

The Act of Remembrance

The final event was the Act of Remembrance at the Menteng Pulo Cemetery where Cpl Noble performed twice. This was a high-profile event attended by the Defence Minister, now a firm friend, Commonwealth heads of Mission, their DAs and members of various UK and Commonwealth organisations. The Band was very well received, generating the highest total from a single location, and contributing to the grand total of over £800,000.

Islamabad, Pakistan

LCpl McCaskill spent Remembrance being hosted by the British High Commission in Islamabad, Pakistan. Based in the diplomatic enclave he took part in two events.

11th November. Canadian Embassy

This year the Canadian Embassy hosted the Act of Remembrance, and it was a truly international event with senior ranking officers and officials representing all the embassies in the enclave. For many attending it was their first time hearing the bagpipes and seeing someone in full regimental dress. LCpl McCaskill was complimented on both, particularly his playing of the lament. Afterwards he was invited into the embassy for a traditional Canadian meal of cornbread, chilli and Moose Milk and to mingle with the guests. LCpl McCaskill took centre stage during the photo call at the end of the event.

13th November. Hiking in the hills

Between events there was the opportunity for LCpl McCaskill to get out and see something of the local area. He joined a small military contingent from the High Commission comprising members of the AGC and RAF on a hike up the Margalla hills which form part of the Himalayan foothills. This was a fantastic opportunity to see more of a country few of us get to visit, although the 27 degree "winter" temperature did not make it easy. This experience was capped with a meal in a hilltop restaurant enjoying stunning views over the foothills and surrounding area.

14th November. Remembrance at the British High Commission

On the Sunday he then played at the Remembrance service in the British High Commission. This was a closed event for British Service and Embassy personnel only. Again, LCpl McCaskill received many compliments for his playing, turnout and the manner in which he conducted himself. Following the event, he was invited to attend the Ambassador's Garden Party for tea and toast where he was able to mingle with various high-ranking officials, many of whom were intrigued by the dual role of musician and Assault Pioneer. This was a once in a lifetime experience that LCpl McCaskill thoroughly enjoyed. Well hosted and well looked after throughout it has formed a career highlight, one not to be forgotten.

Lastly, for the overseas trips, Captain Haigh and Pte Moir travelled to Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan to conduct Remembrance Day engagement activities for the British Embassy. This activity comprised two events:

14th November. Act of Remembrance

Held in the Otan Qorgaushylar in The Defenders of the Fatherland Square, Nur-Sultan, this necessarily short service, attended by ambassadors from various Embassies, was conducted in a chilly -5 degrees, but with windchill taking this down to -11. The extreme cold temperatures posed a significant challenge for both members of 3 SCOTS. On the advice of the Drum Major, who told him that greatcoats are very warm and that you can't fit your No. 1's jacket underneath,

Capt Haigh stepped out attired in just a T-shirt under his coat, only to have a close brush with hypothermia. While Pte Moir did not realise that the moisture he had put into the bugle whilst warming it up would freeze, making the playing of the bugle impossible! Aside from the bugle mishap, both were well received and were invited back to the Canadian Embassy for a warm drink, some excellent food and the chance to mingle and socialise with the distinguished guests. Following the event, they were brought back to their hotel in the city centre and had enough time to relax and explore the city.



Captain Haigh and Private Moir battling the cold in Kazakhstan

15th November. The International School

The next day they visited an international school within Nur-Sultan where they spoke to children of all ages and nationalities about the meaning and importance of Remembrance. Both were dressed in their respective No.1s, and the younger children were in awe of the dress and turnout, while the older children enjoyed talking to them about how the British Army and 3SCOTS conduct events like Remembrance Day. After the school visit there was a rest day before heading home which provided another opportunity to explore the beautiful city of Nur-Sultan.

Whilst the overseas contingent were busy enjoying their time abroad, the rest of the Platoon were also busy conducting Remembrance activities on the home front.

Ptes Wainwright and Bruce played the last post and lament at Kingside Cemetery for the 3rd Annual Multifaith Remembrance. DM Lowe and Pte Bruce laid a wreath on behalf of C (Fire Support) Company for two Pte soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) who are buried in Ardersier cemetery. Cpl Watt and Pte Bruce played the last post and lament for Remembrance Day within Fort George and PM Muir was in Glasgow playing the lament for their Remembrance Parade. Five junior pipers and drummers joined the marching contingent from C (Fire Support) Company at the Inverness Remembrance Parade, escorting the dignitaries to and from the War Memorial. DM Lowe and Pte Gratton attended the Remembrance event at Balhousie Castle.

During February and March, the Platoon packed away their Pipes and Drums and switched focus to their primary role as Assault Pioneers (APNR). This saw them complete the first phase of their APNR Cadre, a three-week exercise covering both classroom lessons and a blank fire battle camp in Barry Buddon. The first week of the cadre had focused on introducing and re-learning the basics of Assault Pioneering. This element covered theory, equipment and the deployable task organisation

for the Platoon. Classroom-based and heavy on theory, it was an eye-opener for the new members of the Platoon who quickly realised that to make things go “bang!” you really had to know what you’re doing. Week two saw the Platoon put theory into practice. Under the watchful eye of the Drum Major and Cpl Muir they deployed from the Barry Buddon accommodation onto the area to conduct daily Battle Lessons covering the complete APNR skill set as well as low-level Infantry Skills. This allowed them to complete their Battle Craft Syllabus (BCS) whilst putting their skills to the test in a tactical environment. To round off the cadre, we conducted a confirmatory exercise to test our knowledge and skills. Following an insertion march, the Platoon occupied High Lighthouse and converted it into a FOB by reinforcing the location with Type 2 Cat wire fencing, low wire entanglements, knife rest chicanes and a phoney minefield.

Defensive work is arduous, strength sapping and bringing about rapid degradation, but the Jocks rose to the challenge and achieved the desired learning objectives, proving that they had taken onboard the defensive lessons. Following the defensive phase, we deployed on offensive operations. Tasks included mobility and counter-mobility recces, the creation of an abatis and electromagnetic operational environment (EMOE) tasks. This phase saw the Platoon practice contact drills, section attacks, urban skills refresher and plenty of patrolling. The exercise finished with the dreaded Minefield clearance by hand - a mentally and physically draining endeavour. Having deployed on patrol in the early hours, approx 0300 hrs, on encountering a mine field they began the clearance and after 4 hours they had cleared a 45m channel in a 100m minefield. In a cruel twist of fate, the enemy lacked the resources to lay a live minefield and had chosen to place a phoney one instead!



Stacked up



Pte Gray engages in some aggressive gardening

The beginning of the Pipes and Drums’ summer musical programme has seen the band deployed North and South of the border covering three events, with the most significant being Her Majesty the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Pageant in London. Between 26th May and 6th June 2022, the band played to a wide variety of audiences; royalty, military, civilian, UK and international both live and televised. The three events were:

The Colonel of the Regiment’s Beating the Retreat

On 27th May the Colonel of the Regiment, Maj Gen NRM Borton DSO MBE, hosted a Beating the Retreat in honour of The Queen’s Birthday. This event was hosted at the Headquarters of NATO’s Allied Rapid Reaction Corp (ARRC) in Imjin Barracks, Innsworth, and was attended by many high-ranking military guests. It was supported by bands from across the Army, but it was the 3 SCOTS Pipes and Drums who took centre stage entertaining the crowd with both music and dancing.

It was an honour to play at this event, but the highlight for the band was seeing Pipe Major Muir receive his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal from Air Vice Marshall Sir Graham Miller KBE, High Sheriff of Gloucestershire.

Lighting of the Moray Firth Beacon

The lighting of the Platinum Jubilee Beacons was the first community event of the four-day Jubilee Weekend and was supported by the Battalion with the lighting of one of the Moray Firth Beacons at 2145hrs on 2 June 2022. The event was managed by WO2 Roadnight (D Company) and executed by Lieutenant Dakin (A Company), CSgt Lavery (D Company), Pte Wainwright and Pte Keith, both of C Company.



Lighting the Community Beacons for the Jubilee - left to right, Pte Keith, Pte Wainwright, CSgt Lavery and Lt Dakin

The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Pageant

The Platinum Jubilee Pageant was the largest public event on the final day, 5th June, of the Jubilee weekend and involved a combined military/civilian parade in central London. The parade was composed of a series of ‘acts’, of which the military contingent was first, followed by a large civilian procession combining street arts, theatre, music,



Leading the way

carnival, and costume to mark the seven decades of Her Majesty's reign. The 3 SCOTS Pipes and Drums formed part of the contingent comprising mounted troops, marching detachments and bands of up to 1800 military personnel including foreign and Commonwealth detachments from units with a special connection to HM The Queen.



Drum Major Lowe ready to step off



Warming Up

We would like to say a fond farewell to Cpl "Spick" Jose who has been posted to the Dems Trg Regt for two years, we wish him all the very best in his new role.

Congratulations are also in order for members of our platoon: to Pte Scott Taylor 67 on the birth of his son Oscar; to CSgt Craig "Pogo" Lowe on his promotion to CSgt; to Sgt Peter "Pete" Muir on his promotion to Sgt; to Cpl Scott "Lexi" McCaskill on his promotion to Cpl.

One final farewell to CSgt (DM) Craig Lowe who after 18 years in the Pipes and Drums is moving on to take over the role of Pioneer Platoon Commander within the Battalion. He will be succeeded in the role of Drum Major by Sgt Peter Muir; we wish them both all the very best in the next chapter of their Careers.



Cpl Muir and Pte Keith lead the Bn buglers



Drum Major Lowe, HM The Queen, OC BKA Major Law watching on



The Pipes and Drums outside Ibrox Stadium

3 SCOTS Pipes and Drums took part in one of the first events in the yearlong Platinum Jubilee celebrations, to be held throughout the United Kingdom & the Commonwealth marking the 3 SCOTS Pipes and Drums took part in one of the first events in the yearlong Platinum Jubilee celebrations, to be held throughout the United Kingdom & the Commonwealth marking.

COMPLEXITY AND CHANGE/DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major MA Dobson
Second-in-Command:	(Unfilled)
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 P Roadnight
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Lavery
Tech Sergeant:	Sergeant S Grandison

These notes are penned from the British High Commission in Ghana where I am currently detached as the Land Staff Officer in support of the Defence Section and wider Security Force Assistance scoping work. My current predicament is not unique amongst the soldiers of D (Light) Company, who have over this recent period been at the vanguard of battalion activity, delivering as they do best, small highly motivated teams in support of the wider battalion main effort.

In the weeks post-Christmas leave the outlook seemed reasonably stable for the Company and the Battalion as a whole. The CIS had just completed an innovative cadre, run out of ARMEN in Bovington, whilst the Anti-Tank Platoon was preparing to deploy on a force-on-force exercise with D Squadron (The Black Pig) QRH on Salisbury Plain Training Area. Thereafter the Recce Platoon and Snipers had invested significant time and resource into planning their qualifying cadres for delivery in March. The long-term goal was to be at Training Level C (CT2) by the end of May to integrate into the planned battalion exercise in June /July on SPTA.

By the end of February all certainty had evaporated as Russia invaded Ukraine and Defence began a noticeable pivot towards reinforcing NATO and European-based commitments. At battalion level that resulted in an increase of sub-unit readiness tasks crossing the Operations Officer's desk, predominantly focused on delivering Light Role rifle company capabilities. With this in mind, some hasty workforce planning led to the Anti-Tank Platoon and Recce forming a third deployable element within A (Grenadier) Company and the remaining soldiers supporting B Company in their preparations. The Communications & Information Systems (CIS), as ever, has remained committed to supporting both companies and a BG HQ tasking.

The pace of these changes has caused considerable complexity in the battalion Forecast of Events, however, as you would expect the platoons have risen to the occasion. From a Company HQ perspective, CSM Roadnight has manfully delivered the administrative command of all D (Light) Company soldiers in the absence of a detached OC and gapped 2ic; whilst not to be outdone the CQMS has not only taken on the responsibility for running two company stores after an unexpected gap elsewhere, but also delivered a demanding sailing expedition that enabled 12 soldiers to sail round the North Coast of Scotland in exceptionally challenging conditions. Elsewhere Captain Lewis has deployed forward as the Battalion PJHQ Liaison Officer leaving two platoons worth of soldiers under command of Captain Adkin, whilst CSgt White has assumed CQMS responsibilities for C Company at short notice.

Collectively the individual platoons have been equally impressive. They have balanced completion of the required Joint Training Readiness Requirements with a continued desire to improve their core skills.

As we close, it is appropriate to say a fond farewell to those leaving us, Major Dobson and CSM Roadnight will respectively hand over in August to Major David Hamilton and WO2 McClurg. Whilst in the CIS Platoon, WO2 (RSWO) Docherty and CSgt McColl (on promotion to WO2) are both departing on postings, whilst CSgt Smith has moved to HQ Company as the Welfare SNCO. The Recce will see Sgt McLaren leave on posting as a SNCO instructor within the SWI DTT whilst LCpl McGuire will move to Army Foundation College (Harrogate) as a PTI, joining Cpl Meehan from the Sniper Platoon who has left to take up a post as a section commander and Sgt Gordon (Anti Tanks) who will be a platoon sergeant. We also extend a warm welcome to Sgt Dougall who has joined us from 2 SCOTS as the Sniper Platoon Sgt and CSgt Rae who joins us as the CIS PI BSM. As ever we have also seen success with promotions since October 2021. Congratulations to now WO2 McColl,

CSgt Brownless, Sgt Dalglish (moving to A Company), Sgt Gracie, Cpl Robertson, Cpl McQueen, and LCpls Armstrong, Timms and Coull.



Looking for the perfect sight-picture



The potholes get worse every year



Sunrise on Salisbury

THE COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS (CIS) PLATOON

Regimental Signals Officer:	Captain T Thorpe
Regimental Signals Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer Class 2 Docherty/ Warrant Officer Class 2 P Roadnight
CIS Platoon CQMS:	Colour Sergeant Smith
Bowman Systems Manager:	Colour Sergeant McColl
	Colour Sergeant Reay
Company Quartermaster Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant Smith Colour Sergeant Gillies

The number of Red Hackle articles that do not start by mentioning that the last year has been a busy and demanding one can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. Having no wish to break with tradition it has indeed been another bumper year for the Signals Platoon with plenty of last-minute surprises along the way.

Following the return of the Battalion from Afghanistan in the summer of 2021 and the subsequent hasty deployment to South Cerny to support Op PITTING, the British military operation to evacuate British nationals and eligible Afghans from Afghanistan following the 2021 Taliban offensive, the CIS Platoon was able to spend some much-needed time focusing on training its core skill set and integrating a number of new arrivals. This CIS cadre conducted in November saw the Platoon deploy to Bovington to the Combat Signals School for a complete refresher of communications training. Having used the school's LBTA assets (much like the back of 20 Land Rovers fitted into a large hanger) and brushed up on some technical theory of frequencies and signal propagation, the Platoon deployed for the practical element of the course. Stage one of the exercises focused on a full-scale run-out deployed Bn HQ and CP locations. This involved wrestling with green tents and swearing at cam-nets. Then followed the real test – providing communications and HQ support to the Anti-Tank Platoon Commanders' Course during one of their exercises. This was extremely well received by both sides, highlighting many useful training points and was deemed so beneficial it will now form a regular fixture of the training year.

Having brushed up on their professional skills, it was time for some broader development and the all-important team building. In a series of self-planned and generated activities, the platoon embarked on a period of cohesion events. This saw the Platoon spend the day hill walking and testing their navigation skills on Ben Wyvis. Latter, they spent a busy and interesting week at the Highland Wildlife Park assisting in the repair of storm-damaged elements of the enclosures, topped off with a welcome surprise of getting up close and personal to the polar bears.

With the new team and the old team well along the path to a cohesive unit, and some high-quality training completed, thoughts at the end of December turned not unnaturally to Christmas Leave. 2021 had one more surprise to throw in, however, with the arrival of Storm Arwen. With large areas of Aberdeenshire without power or essential services, the CIS Platoon joined other elements of the Battalion to visit isolated homes to assist in the council-coordinated relief effort. This was a rewarding experience for those who deployed, assisting in their local community and with many cups of tea forthcoming from those houses with power.

The new year came in much as the old one went out with a short notice force generation. The Platoon deployed with the bulk of the rest of the Battalion to provide exercising troops and enemy to trainee company commanders on Ex LIONS STRIKE. A snap inspection of the ability to deploy a full Battlegroup headquarters and 2 company command posts may have caused several members of the Platoon to age 20 years, but in reality, it provided an excellent refresh and a reassuring base mark for the skills and readiness of the Platoon.

Activity throughout the rest of the year has been equally busy and varied – urban navigation training, pistol development ranges and fieldcraft refreshers featured among many other activities. Throughout, the focus has been on innovation, embracing the CIS Platoon's role as leaders in technology and development within the Battalion. Trials have included a deployable HQ in an ISO container, a tracking and communications system used by cave rescuers and support to a full company exercise in the underground tunnels of Corsham Mines (any fans of laying line would have felt a warm glow during this operation).

Congratulations go to the following on the successful completion of their respective courses

RS – Ptes McDonald, Moffitt, Guthrie

RSDC – LCpl Lorenzo

RSAS – Cpls Eadie, Omondi

And finally, our very best wishes to LCpl Smith and his partner on the birth of their child.

SNIPER PLATOON

Platoon Commander:	Colour Sergeant T Brownless
Platoon Sergeant:	Sergeant J Dougall
Section Commander:	Corporal P Dagleish Corporal D Meechan

The last 6 months have been an exceptionally busy period for the Snipers, with a significant focus on supporting wider battalion and brigade training activity; something the Sniper Platoon are used to doing. With extensive knowledge in fieldcraft and marksmanship, the Snipers have spent weeks enhancing the delivery of battalion training, from training rifle company soldiers on the Sharpshooter weapon to further developing the wider understanding of sniping across the Battalion on the Sniper Operator Course.

While all this training was going on, in the background, our badged snipers have been continuing to develop their own skills through internal training. Having been invited to compete in Snipers Festival 22 (an International Sniper competition hosted in Lithuania) the Snipers worked hard to ensure they were ready to compete in their first competition. Their capabilities required multiple range events to collect data and test the ability of each Sniper in their rapid engagements, long-range shooting and overall marksmanship. With the Sniper Rifles cleared for Live Firing again, and the Snipers ready to compete, 2 pairs with support staff deployed to Poland before making the journey north to Lithuania. Arriving a few days before the competition started, our Snipers took advantage of this time by doing some broader personnel development; visiting lots of museums around Kaunas and Vilnius including the KGB Museum and the museum of illusions. They also spent time in the historic Old Town in Kaunas, Klaipeda beach, Go-Karting & bowling.

With our cultural development satisfied, it was then time to compete. The Battalion teams at Sniper Fest were: Team 1 - CSgt Brownless & LCpl Duthie and Team 2- Cpl Dagleish & LCpl Armstrong. Both teams were confident in their shooting ability but unsure of how the competition was to be run. The first day was to prove an exciting introduction into International Sniper Competition, with over 70 different teams taking part from across NATO. Over the next 2 days the 2 Sniper pairs would conduct Loophole shoots, moving target shoots, transition shoots, rapid engagements, multiple target shoot, long-range and short-range shoots, with some targets being as small as 12cm and ranges out to 1000m, as well as being given 8 seconds to engage 5 targets, it is a very tough task, especially with a bolt-action weapon. It was very clear which teams had competed prior to Sniper Fest, with most of the top 10 having just competed in Sniper competitions in the last month. However, even with inexperience in competitions, let alone on the international stage, the 3 SCOTS Snipers represented the UK outstandingly and should be proud of their hard work. Placing 11 and 47 out of 70 Sniper teams across the World is a great achievement and one which we, as a platoon, hope to improve on next year.

Having pushed the Snipers hard throughout the year, Cpl McCarthy and Cpl Meechan also supported the Jocks in A Company on the range as they prepared for the 1XX Operational Shooting Competition. With a 2-week intense range package, the team conducted demanding live fire practices to push their marksmanship abilities. This paid off as the team performed extremely well and qualified for the Army Operational Shooting Competition. The value of this demanding training was also the case for the Sniper Pre-Course on which Cpl Dagleish pushed the students hard in their marksmanship abilities to improve their capabilities as a Sharpshooter and hopefully as a Sniper in the future. Most of his students moved on to attend the Sniper Operator Course in Glenshero, in the Highlands. With an average temperature of 3 degrees throughout the course and a landscape that is formidable even in nice weather, the students were pushed daily, from navigating around an unknown area, to stalking around the huge hills near Ben Nevis. It was an experience I am sure none of them will forget, especially the students attending from 2 MERCIAN, who weren't quite expecting the Scottish wintery hills.

As we see every year, farewells are becoming more frequent. Having completed 22 years in the Army, it was time for CSgt Stevens

to move on to civvy street, moving from the R Irish to 3 SCOTS as his last posting. He decided to remain in Inverness and keep working close by in Range control with DIO. Also leaving the Snipers is LCpl Laidlaw as he has transferred to the REME, LCpl Clements has transferred to the MPGS, LCpl Campbell has moved to CIS on promotion, whilst LCpls Campbell-Brown & Frearson are both off to civvy street and Cpl Meechan is posted to AFC Harrogate.

We must also congratulate Sgt Brownless on his promotion to CSgt and assumption of command of the Sniper Platoon as well as Cpl Dagleish on his promotion to Sgt and subsequent move across the square to A (Grenadier) Company. We wish him luck and hope to see him back in the future. It is also a pleasure to welcome Sgt Jamie Dougall to the Snipers who has come across from 2 SCOTS as our Pl Sgt.



A Sniper patrol through the Scottish Highlands



A Sniper stalking on the SOC



Go Karting AT in Lithuania



LCpl Duthie, Csgt Brownless, Cpl Dagleish and LCpl Armstrong – Sniper Festival 22



Team 1 conducting the Loophole Shoot



D Coy Snipers

ANTI-TANK PLATOON

Platoon Commander: Captain RKM Lewis
Second-in-Command: Colour Sergeant R Miller
Section Commanders: Sergeant Gordon, Sergeant King

After a busy end to 2021 supporting MACA tasks, 2022 continued the pace unabated for the Anti – Tank Platoon with Ex JAVELIN PIG on SPTA. A welcome return to working in the Anti – Tank role, JAVELIN PIG offered the opportunity to deploy as a platoon to fight against D Sqn (The Black Pig) from the Queen's Royal Hussars (QRH), supported by Wildcats from the Army Air Corps and a company from 1 MERCIAN. As can be imagined from that we were significantly outgunned but the Platoon stood up well and fought with tenacity and ingenuity to disrupt and degrade the enemy. The QRH proved excellent hosts for the first couple of days of the exercise as we exchanged lessons on TTPs before moving onto the exercise phase where the Platoon performed admirably; special mention must go to Cpls Livingstone, Tod and Wallace who were instrumental in the Platoon's excellent performance.

Following JAVELIN PIG, the Platoon began to focus on supporting the Battalion's SET taskings. Consequently, we split to the four winds, and we once again travelled back to SPTA to support ranges and exercises on SPTA and STANTA. Those left behind were charged to deliver anti-tank training to the Battalion in preparation for a battalion exercise in June, where we hoped to perform our role in a company context for the first time since Ex WESSEX STORM in 2019.

This, however, was thrown into disarray by events to the East. Following President Putin's unsolicited jaunt into the Donbas our outlook for the year took on a different tone. The Anti – Tank Platoon

combined with the Recce and rerolled to be a rifle platoon in A Company to support their tasks. This resulted in a deployment to SPTA (again!) as part of Ex LION STRIKE to validate the combined platoon. This was done with great success and the Platoon performed admirably in warm conditions against a testing enemy. We were getting familiar with SPTA by this point!

Following LION STRIKE we were reshuffled again. Cpl Tod was attached to B Company, and I was sent to PJHQ to be the 3 SCOTS LO while the remainder of the Platoon stayed in Inverness and came under the command of Captain Adkin. Following a period of readiness, most of the Platoon has now deployed with A Company to Catterick to assist on Op INTERFLEX, the British-led multinational military operation to train and support the Armed Forces of Ukraine, where they were once again showing their quality.

In the background, the Platoon succession plan continues. CSgt Miller has spent most of the year trawled to Kenya and is now supporting Bn HQ as the stand-in Ops WO, Cpls Gracie and Livingstone completed their Anti-Tank Section Commanders course, both receiving excellent reports from the Support Weapons School, and Pte Hart has attended his PJNCO Cadre. Cpl Gracie has since been duly rewarded with promotion to sergeant and we hope that Cpl Livingstone and Pte Hart will follow him soon.

As a final note, Sgt Gordon will be leaving us in August, moving on to take up a post at AFC Harrogate. Sgt Gordon has been a fantastic member of the Platoon over many years and, as a platoon sergeant for the last couple, he has guided the platoon through a series of upheavals and challenges, most notably the deployment to Afghanistan last year. We will all be sad to see him leave and look forward to welcoming him back soon.



Tank Stalking



The REME finding an alternative use for the rifle oil



The LAD enjoying the European sunshine



A new battalion sport was born



Taking a well-earned rest in the shade



Lcpl Robertson promoted to Captain, briefly



Sgt Taylor putting on a brave face



CSgt Lavery leading the Delta (SR) Coy Sailing Team

RECCE PLATOON

The first 6 months of 2022 has been an exceptionally busy and turbulent period for the 3 SCOTS Recce Platoon as it conducted its Close Recce Patrolman's Cadre. This culminated in an Urban Exercise paired with the Royal Marines in Whinny Hill. Unfortunately, due to external factors, this cadre was cancelled and will be resumed if possible. The Platoon then moved up to very high readiness as part of Op ALUMINIUM and Op INTERFLEX as a response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. As part of this high readiness, the Platoon conducted several verification exercises and live firing to be at the standard to deploy.

3 SCOTS Recce were then activated under Op INTERFLEX and deployed to N Yorkshire to assist with the UK Defence ME of training 10,000 Ukrainian Battle Casualty Replacements. They have just completed their first rotation of 200 soldiers and are regrouping to train the next.

Special mentions go to: LCpl Coull who passed SCBC. LCpl Verrall who has attempted selection. LCpl Mullen who assisted with converting the entire Bn to CAV. LCpl Timms for receiving a recommendation for SCBC on the beat up. Sgt McLaren who has transferred to the SWIDTT. LCpl Weir who has transferred to 5 SCOTS.

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major D McCutcheon
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 A Reid
Company Quartermaster	
Sergeant:	Colour Sergeant K MacFarlane

Headquarter Company over the last 12 months has continued to focus on enabling the Battalion in all aspects of training and deployment. A challenging period for all as Pre-deployment training and short notice deployments have seen the Company take on the role of overseeing Bn Main that encompasses all that remain in station in Fort George.

Training packages for attached personnel have been ongoing during this period, including a Sharpshooter Cadre at Blackdog ranges in Aberdeen that focused on building the soldiers' competence on what was a new weapon system to many. Navigation training in Aviemore under Sgt Cruikshank tested their ability with map and compass in an area slightly more scenic than many other training areas within the UK. The Medics have also been doing their part, ensuring all those remaining in the Fort are receiving quality Combat Medical training.

The Unit Aid Post (UAP) have worked tirelessly over the last year to ready the unit for operational commitments this has included Force Health Protection, live medical covers, attending and passing operational required courses and running countless Team Medic cadres. The UAP has deployed on multiple taskings alongside the companies with the RMO deployed on an EXPED in Broad peak conducting clinical trials. 3 Medical Regiment have also assisted working with 3 SCOTS UAP conducting training and clinics.

In June a group headed up by OC HQ Company was invited to attend an Armed Forces Day event in Aberdeen, where they were hosted extremely well at a lunch reception ensuring that, although busy, community engagement is continuing.

The QMSI and his team that has remained are ensuring as always, the PT for Bn Main has been challenging and varied. A lot of work has been done to improve battalion sports days with sports reps being selected for specific sports. The climbing wall is able to be used weekly under the supervision of Sgt Campbell who is now qualified.

A team of 14 personnel from Bn Main has also been selected to be part of a Tattoo support group which will consist of an honour guard and admin team for the 2022 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. This once in a career opportunity for the volunteers to be part of a world-renowned event will be a fantastic opportunity for all involved. They will also be able to soak up the atmosphere in Edinburgh during the Fringe Festival.

QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster:	Major P Marshall
Quartermaster (Technical):	Capt P Ingram
Regimental Quarter Master	Warrant Officer Class 2 M Robb
Sergeant (Maintenance):	
Regimental Quartermaster	Warrant Officer Class 2 R Hunter
Sergeant (Technical):	
Regimental Catering Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer Class 2 S Bristol (RLC)

Master Tailor:
Work Services:
APFA:

Sergeant T Couper
Ms Wendy Young
Capt T Topping (RLC)

For the second year in a row the Department has been split up to support the Battalion on Ex and Operations as well as maintaining support to those remaining in Fort George. We have also seen a change in some of the key personnel. Firstly, we had the retirement of WO2 Scotty Currie (Master Tailor) who has retired after almost 27 years of service. He has handed over the needle and thread to 'Coups'. Maj Iain MacLachlan has departed to become the QM at 2 SCOTS; he is succeeded by Capt Phil Ingram, arriving from 4 SCOTS. WO2 Mark Robb has returned from Balaklava Company and assumed the responsibilities of RQMS (M); he replaces WO2 Alan Ferrier who has been promoted to WO1 and is now RSM. WO2 Steve Bristol has been posted in to become the RCWO. Cpl Bradley Hartland (Big H) has replaced Cpl Sion Miah as the 1 LO 2IC. We welcome the new arrivals and wish those that have moved on the very best for your future endeavours. Warmest congratulations also go to RQMS Robb and Lisa on the birth of their son Torran William Robb.



Cpl Rae's Birthday



QMs Surprise Birthday Cake

Stores Team

The year started with the A3 Rifle arriving and being distributed throughout the Bn. We also prepared for B Company's deployment on exercise in Oman, which was cancelled but not before we had sent 6 ISO containers on the boat. At the time of writing, we are still attempting to recover B Company's CQMS Stores. Luckily the current operations are nuanced and did not require any of the green army stores. We continue to work towards 're-rolling' from Light Mech to Light Role Infantry by handing over the fleet of FOXHOUND vehicles to 2 SCOTS. During Easter Leave we got the call for a further Operational Tour. Getting the Unit ready in 4 weeks was a complete team effort often working into the wee small hours just to mobilise. The RQ(T) managed to complete the vast amount of freight documentation from a distance whilst on his RQ Course, while the rest of us packed and prepared it for movement. It is not often that a department gets the chance to start from scratch but in this instance, we did and continue to develop and support our own soldiers and the wider theatre. During the time, we have had 3 birthdays in the team. Cpl Jock "Pure Solid Man" Rae celebrated his 43rd, Sgt Rona Smith at the ripe old age of 34 and the QM who turned 21 for the 27th time. Two of the team received a birthday cake. As you can see in the pictures, Jock looks absolutely over the moon, as always (Picture 1). With the QM receiving a birthday cake with a cruel twist (Picture 2). The final picture captures Pte Fraser Cassie with his RLC war paint on whilst moving mattresses around the yard (Picture 3). On 1 July the Bn changed Brigades from 51 to 11 Security Force Assistance Brigade, this means that we had to change our tactical recognition flashes. The Tailor Shop quickly seized on the opportunity to deploy on Operations with a sewing machine. 'Coups' had made a case but, due to commitments in the UK, the Master Tailor was anchored in Fort George. The job fell to his 2IC LCpl Toni Moir who has the bragging rights of being the most recent tailor to deploy in support of operations.

Catering Team

Once again, this year has proved to be a very busy year with the department supporting commitments at Battalion, Brigade and Army levels. The new RCWO WO2 Steve Bristol took up position in December 2021. Pte Manners deployed to Kenya in support of Ex ASKARI STORM for 3 months; Cpl "Tags" Tagivetaua deployed in Nov 21 to the Falkland Island on a 6-month assignment, being replaced by another 3 SCOTS chef, Pte Norbert. Pte Fishenden attended a bread making course in April, enhancing his growing catering knowledge which will be put to good use as he will deploy in support of 5 SCOTS (Royal Guard) at Ballater from July to October. LCpl "Bez" Beswick has been selected to represent the UK as part of the Combined Services Culinary Arts Team. He was challenged by the QM to create two desserts for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations which were very well received by the Unit judging panel consisting of the CO, QM, OC HQ, RSM and Adjutant. Sgt Smith and Cpl Jimmie are on Ops with B Company, with Bez replacing Rona at the midway point. The operation presents our Chefs with an ideal opportunity to show off their skills in the kitchen as they plan, shop, prepare and cook all meals, often showing how talented they really are, out with the restrictions of having to cook within the contract at Fort George.

LIGHT AID DETACHMENT

The last six months have presented a busy yet rewarding challenge to the members of the LAD. With the new re-role of the Battalion from Light Mechanised Infantry to SFA, the LAD has been subject to a workforce reduction - dropping slowly from 39 + 1 LMI structure down to 15 (which will take effect early 2023). As part of the unit re-role, the LAD handed over the FOXHOUND equipment fleet to 2 SCOTS in April 2022.

On Exercises with the Battalion, LAD soldiers have deployed with A Company on Ex LEOPARD STAR (Germany), providing close support to them as a small team on Sennelager Training Area, LAD personnel have also deployed to SPTA on Ex LION STRIKE 22, providing ES to 3 SCOTS BG. Additionally, the LAD has supported Ex HADES REALM.

LAD social activities over this period have included St Eligius Day 21 which saw the entire LAD and the Padre travel to 39 Engr Regt in Kinloss to compete in engineering challenges and sport against 39 Engr Regt Wksp REME. The LAD has also held a go-karting day during this

period, which saw elements of the MT Department and the LAD entire compete together at Aviemore Kart Raceway.

To maintain key unit competencies on equipment platforms, personnel from the LAD have attended and passed numerous equipment Courses in MOD Lyneham to enable them better to provide equipment support to the battalion - these include FOXHOUND, HUSKY, JACKAL, GMG and Mobile Air Con Maintainer courses - through gaining knowledge on equipment and increasing sub-unit SOEP.

LCpl Peacock has been away at MOD Lyneham on his Class 1 VM course, learning in-depth skills and knowledge which will qualify him - like other class 1 VMs - to make battle-winning ES decisions at reach where ES CoC is not always readily available. The Class 1 Upgraders course represents a pivotal moment for the tradesman, who will now be qualified to work unsupervised, and expected to be able to reteach their ES knowledge to more junior tradesmen both on camp and in the field.

In Adventure Training - Cpl Tunnah has spent time sailing as part of the Battalion team. In January, 12 members of the LAD deployed on Unit AT course Introduction to Winter Mountaineering which offered the troops an opportunity to test themselves against the elements in the Cairngorms and build solid and lasting teamwork skills.

In addition, Sgt Taylor has provided AT instructional services outside of the Battalion, deploying to Spain as a climbing instructor and deploying to N. Wales to instruct Mountain Biking. Sgt Taylor also instructed Ex NORTHERN ASCENT, which saw members of the LAD and the Battalion Rock Climbing in Croatia on a self-built AT package.

In Sport, Sgt Taylor, Cfn Coutts and Cfn Buadromo have represented Army in Scotland at Rugby, travelling throughout Scotland and competing against other units to bolster the REME Excellence in sport. Cpl Rai and Cfn Buadromo have competed in badminton, basketball, and rugby at the REME Festival of Sport in Lyneham. Cpl Rai is currently a member of the REME Corps Badminton team, winning the Veteran and open double Competition at Grantham. Sgt Daly has on numerous occasions competed at as an individual in Mountain Bike Gravity Enduro.

More recently, with a large portion of the LAD workforce assigned to operations, Cpl McMahon (IC Production) and the remainder of the LAD at Fort George has been working tirelessly to keep equipment in the hands of the user.

The LAD looks forward to the battalion's new role, and the exciting opportunities that it will bring.



Cpl Rai (centre) is presented with Veteran Trophy at REME Badminton



Cpl Bird (Left) and LCpl Crawford not posing



Cpl McMahon replaces a Land rover engine



Cpl Rae reconnecting a FOXHOUND powerpack



Cpl Rae captures the mood on IWM in Aviemore

WELFARE

Unit Welfare Officer:	Captain R Grisdale RVM
Assistant Unit Welfare	Colour Sergeant A Irvine
Officers:	Colour Sergeant B Smith
	Corporal J Taroga

As the country moved out of lockdown, the welfare team continued its steady work; there was no lockdown for this hard-working team.

No sooner were the starting pistols fired after COVID than the preparation started for Christmas. On a frosty Tuesday evening, Santa Claus kindly agreed for his reindeer to attend the 3 SCOTS Welfare Christmas Market. Although Santa's reindeer stole the show, we were fortunate to have our ladies selling arts and crafts and local produce. We also had The Military Wives' Choir singing for our young persons, and our very own Father Christmas was in attendance with an outrageous amount of chocolate.

The young persons within our community were also treated to a second evening of festive fun. Claire and Ali, our veteran volunteers at the Wednesday and Thursday youth club, organised an old-school Christmas party. This Christmas party consisted of 'pass-the-parcel', musical chairs, and musical statues. The team is still undecided whether the three retro games were for the children or the guilty pleasure of Claire and Ali. With enough chocolate and sweets to keep Tate and Lyle in business for the next decade, the only loser was the UWO (Scouse), who could not stand still during musical statues. Or at least the inability to stand still whilst being pushed over by a 7-year-old.

Post-Christmas leave, the team continued to deliver the Wednesday and Thursday evenings youth club. Of course, the team would not have been able to continue to provide this fun evening without the continued support of Claire and Ali, and now a third volunteer Emma Hayton has joined the ranks.

The young people who joined us on Wednesday and Thursday evenings have baked cakes, made chocolate rice crispy cakes, and made a general mess of the community centre. But I suppose if everyone is having fun, that is fine.

In March, the team bid a sad and fond farewell to CSgt Irvin (Alec). Alec was a pillar of our community with a source of knowledge second to none. Helpful and engaging, Alec always had the answer to any questions. He still does to this day when the team phone him for advice. Alec left us to return to Northern Ireland to serve his last period in the British Army. Alec will be sadly missed, and I (Scouse) would like to thank him for his help and support personally.

But the revolving door turned again for this team. We welcomed the newly appointed Assistant Welfare Officer, CSgt Smith (Barry). I'm sure the community will agree Barry has been a fantastic addition to the team.

Following an Easter Sunday tradition, our community gathered around the Wimberley Way complex for an Easter Egg hunt. Our community was asked to negotiate a treasure hunt around the patch, identifying the clues for the location and collecting numbered eggs. With delicious chocolate eggs up for grabs, the cast of thousands received their first clue at midday Easter Sunday. Once all our young people had collected eight individually numbered eggs, the first person or family back to the community centre would be declared the winners. Kirsty Wile was not to be outdone and ran her family around the course in what can only be described as Dale Winton's supermarket sweep dash. We also held an Easter Bonnet Parade with some fantastic bonnets centred around the Ecosystem.

As we continue celebrating Her Majesty's 70 years on the throne, the community celebrated in style during the June bank holiday weekend. The welfare team hosted a Jubilee Street party with a twist. It was a car park party. Marking a moment in our nation's history, we were blessed with amazing weather and fantastic company. Our community enjoyed a very British afternoon tea. Unfortunately, we are still working our way through the 300 Mr Freezes that did not freeze in time for the day's activities. Still, they have come in handy in recent months. After our community showed exceptional skills in the crown-making competition, Austin Kirk Hillan was crowned king of the day with his excellent crown depicting afternoon tea.

Later in the afternoon, the Unit Welfare Officer (Scouse) found himself fighting for his life as he tried to distribute 250 bags of Haribo without being lynched by the children. A special thank you must go out to Sam (Joe's Wife) for the fantastic barbecue she provided for the community, signalling the end of the disco and what was a tremendous celebration and Family Day at the Wimberley Way complex.

We were also thankful to “team Fiji” who returned from a 7s tournament in Inverness. The significant number of left-over burgers was their payment for helping to put away the bouncy castles.

The newly formed wives committee held a porch/window decorating competition during the Jubilee weekend. The effort by our community was nothing short of amazing, with some budding artists showing their skills. Keeping up with the Joneses was undoubtedly a thing. Mrs Pamela Smith (wife of CSgt Smith Welfare Team) was unfortunately disqualified from the competition after trying to bribe the judges with wine at the window.

In mid-June, some of our ladies were treated to a very exclusive visit to Balmoral Castle. After a very hair-raising drive over the Cairngorms, we arrived at the estate for coffee and cake before walking around the castle and gardens. After the visit, we had the opportunity to visit the local village of Ballater, where we took the opportunity for a bar lunch.

On a very sunny evening in mid-June, we were treated to 35 Porsche supercars visiting our community. The Porsche owners club Scotland kindly agreed to attend our community and exhibit a mixture of modern supercars and vintage Porsches. Young persons were allowed to sit in these cars and, in a couple of instances, managed to “rev the engine”. The Welfare Officer is happy to report no Porsche cars were

damaged during this visit; however, some of our mums and dads are upset with the Welfare Team as their children now wish to have a Porsche on the driveway.

Our community has participated in various activities during the summer holidays. These activities have ranged from breakfast and lunch club, trampolining and soft play alongside arts and crafts afternoons in the community centre. We also visited Blair Drummond Safari Park. None of these activities are possible without the continued support of our families. Your welfare team is grateful for the help.

As I write these notes, and by the time the publication happens, this team will have unfortunately said goodbye to one of the team members. It is worth reminding ourselves that although Joe was extremely ill when he contracted COVID, he continued as one of the team to work during COVID, ensuring our community was looked after. Joe has worked in this team and served this community for three years. Joe has been at the forefront of every activity, putting himself out to help and support this community. Joe has continuously given up his time as one of the founder members of the youth group on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. This team and this community will miss Joe, his smile and helpful nature.

I am sure the community will join the team, wishing him all the best for his future employment back in Fort George.



Joe with his new wheels



Kelly, Jemma and Fii taking an unauthorised break from the sandwich-making duties



The UWO Scouse and Adam in matching waistcoats

Adjutant General Corps (SPS)

Exercise Opportunities – Pte Beth Harvey (A Coy MPA)

Being attached to an Infantry Battalion as a member of the AGC (SPS) is a very rewarding and exciting job especially when supporting a busy deployable company.

I have been very fortunate to deploy on several exercises with Alpha (Grenadier) Company. Most recently (and perhaps most enjoyably!) we deployed to Corsham Mines to enhance the company's urban skills and operating in the dark. Corsham Mines were built with the intent of providing a potential safe space for government relocation in the time of crises.

There is an understanding of the Soldier First syllabus across all cap badges in 3 SCOTS and this attitude extends to everything that we do. I was fully integrated into the exercise, providing G1 support around broader soldiering skills with the Coy.

Day 1 of the mines saw us getting issued with TES and completing various command tasks to get used to the new environment.

Day 2 involved completing dry rehearsals of section attacks and live pairs attacks.

Day 3 saw us conducting platoon attacks and receiving feedback to see what went well and what needed to be improved upon.

Day 4 culminated with a final platoon attack through a congested pump room. This was a very difficult space to operate in. After successfully attacking the enemy, we returned to Knook camp for a BBQ.

I really enjoyed the exercise and have now experienced something that few AGC (SPS) have had the opportunity to experience.

Military Aid to Civil Authorities – Cpl Alex Martin (C Coy MPA)

In January 2022, after only having been at the unit for a few weeks and brand new to the SPS, I was deployed with Charlie (Fire Support) Company to provide Military Aid to Civilian Authorities (MACA).

Not entirely accustomed to such a rapid deployment after just being assigned, it's fair to say I was a little unsure of what to expect. Leaving in a small packet and arriving at our accommodation in Chesterfield, we were taken to the Chesterfield Royal Hospital and greeted by a Senior clinical nurse and Housekeeper.

After a half-day walk around and some training, we were each shown to the ward which we would be assisting. My ward was called "Murphy" and it was a Covid ward for patients over 50. I expected frantic scenes given the news headlines, but quickly realised how professional the staff were. My main area of responsibility was ensuring all the Clinical staff had enough clean equipment and stocked medical cupboards. I also assisted the ward housekeeper in meal preparation with some feeding, bedding changes and talking to patients to make sure their needs were being met. Hours were sometimes long but rest periods were frequent, and the staff were as accommodating as possible.



CSgt Lavery and WO2 Roadnight enjoying a break on board



Cpl Koro making light of the Captain



Cpl Martin channelling his inner Gordon Ramsay

Overall, I believe it was worthwhile and it was certainly an eye-opener as to what NHS workers deal with daily. I would absolutely jump at the opportunity again if such help was needed by our NHS.

Adventure Training – Cpl Valentine Mumba (A Coy MPA)

Anytime spent away from work is great for an individual's mental health.

Exercise TIGER CANYON PERERRO (Ex TCP), was an overseas two-week package that started off in the Grand Canyon on 6 June and ended in the city of Las Vegas on 17 June 2022.

This breath-taking view of the Grand Canyon is an example of our planet at its most powerful.

The South Kaibab Trail to Cedar Ridge

This is an arduous 7.1-mile trail, with little or no drinking water and one should never underestimate the heat of the Canyon. Starting off at 1500hrs was the worst idea ever (due to the heat) and, arriving at the bottom at 2100hrs, this 6-hour downhill journey was tough on the knees and ankles. We were carrying kit and equipment equivalent to that carried on the Role Fitness Test (RFT). It is safe to say some members of our group did struggle with the heat. Having reached the bottom, all we could think about was having some dinner to refuel ready for the hike up the next day.

North Bright Angel Trail

Ascending this 8-mile strenuous course was a real challenge. There were spectacular views all the way and having set off at 0500hrs, the route had multiple water points allowing the team to dip their entire clothing in this water simply to cool down!

As the sun rose, it became clear that some members of the public started to struggle, we helped some individuals by allowing them to tag along with us as we hiked up (strength in numbers). We completed the hike at 1100hrs much to everyone's relief.



North Bright Angel Trail

Hoover Dam

Day five was the group visit to Hoover Dam; a magnificent piece of architecture which cost a number of lives during its construction. A quick walk across the bridge from Nevada and you are in a different mountain time zone (Arizona).

As Week One came to an end, the team met up on Friday for some team cohesion over a BBQ, stories and the shared experiences of each group seemed overwhelming. It soon became apparent that both groups found this package challenging.

Ex TCP was both a breath of fresh air and a challenge. It was by far the best experience in my Army career so far and a reminder that

many other chances exist across the Army - so get involved – is my advice!

SPS Det Community Engagement at Nairn - Pte Lauren Evans (HQ Coy MPA)

In March 2022, the SPS Detachment eagerly volunteered to assist the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) with some conservation work at Culbin Forrest in Nairn.

The conservation area spans around 14km of coastline, however, during the last two decades an invasive scrub has spread throughout the site causing damage and affecting the different species that call the coastline their home.

Upon arrival at the site, we were issued with two tasks to complete. The first was to gather all the chopped-down trees which had been left around the site and place them all into one area (to be burned later) – a task that was incredibly arduous and lasted all morning! Post Lunch, we were tasked with digging out the roots of an invasive weed that was taking over the sand dunes using a unique tool called a tree ‘popper’. Unsure why we expected anything other than hard work, this task too was very difficult.

Although there was some dispute with the RAO who suggested “how much ‘fun’ a day like this would be”, he wasn’t wrong. Despite the hard work, it was nice to be together as a team and be outdoors, doing something positive for the local habitat.

Soldier First - Sgt Jamie Paterson

Always employing that Soldier First syllabus, the SPS Detachment had been tasked with running an HQ Company ACMT package in February 2022, utilising the range-qualified staff within the Detachment. So as to not waste the day, the troops were on the range at 0800hrs, focussing on coaching in all firing positions at 100 metres. Prior to the shoot commencing, a reminder and revision of Skill at Arms lessons were delivered on firing from 200m.

Because of the small target audience and ability to coach in between shoots, the range was a positive success which culminated in a little friendly rivalry between members of the Detachment. Everyone took some coaching points away from the day and saw a positive increase in their scores, particularly those who are less able to shoot on ranges regularly because of their busy roles in high-tempo companies.



Cpl Mumba demonstrates his location finding abilities

HMS MONTROSE - PORT

By Commander Paul Irving

It is with great pride that I write to you for the final time in Command of this brilliant Ship, HMS MONTROSE. Port Crew returned to HMS MONTROSE in early April, ready for our next rotation on deployment in the Middle East. In addition to welcoming 56 new people to my Ship's Company, we deployed with a new uniform called Rig 22, which is designed to be cooler than our previous Personal Clothing System (PCS) in the heat of the Gulf. Port Crew is the first crew of a frigate to receive the new uniform, and we will be providing feedback to the rest of the Fleet. This

patrol initially saw us travel across the breadth of our operating area to escort RFA LYME BAY through the Strait of Hormuz and then carry out Maritime Security operations off the coast of Yemen in the Gulf of Aden.

Royal Marines of K Company 42 Commando, who embarked with HMS MONTROSE Port Crew in early April, have been carrying out boarding operations in the KIPION JOA in conjunction with Combined Task Force (CTF)-150 and 153 throughout our time away. The Ship has conducted six successful boardings with one leading to a multi-million pound heroin bust.



HMS MONTROSE escorting RFA LYME BAY through the Strait of Hormuz



Ship's Company with drugs bust



Gun salute fired for HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

We've also been able to enjoy a more 'normal' deployment. COVID restrictions have been significantly reduced which made international travel to join the ship much simpler, and we've also been able to enjoy a 'proper' port visit to Dubai for the first time in over two years. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to explore this exciting city, with highlights including trips to the waterparks; desert safaris; and the impressive display of water fountains set to a music and light show at the foot of the Burj Khalifa – the world's tallest building.

Port Crew has completed every task that has been asked of us to a high standard. During an intensive period of maintenance alongside the UK Naval Support Facility (Bahrain) we took part in a variety of events celebrating Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, including being one of only 2 Royal Navy Ships to perform the commemorative 41 Gun Salute.

Once back at sea, we undertook a series of trials designed to test and optimise our radars and other sensors, before continuing operations in Direct Support to CTF 150. We escorted two UK vessels safely through the Strait of Hormuz and continued to conduct boardings of suspicious vessels in the Gulf of Oman, demonstrating coalition commitment to deterring smuggling at sea and reassuring our allies that the UK remains fully committed to contributing to Maritime Security in this important region of the world.

Port Crew hands over MONTROSE to Starboard Crew for the final time at the end of July 2022, at which point we will take some well-earned leave before preparing to return to the Gulf later this year, this time as LANCASTER Port Crew. Thank you to for the brilliant support while we have been serving in MONTROSE.



Ship's Company with Platinum Jubilee medals

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



BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Commanding Officer:	Lieutenant Colonel DDJ Mackinnon/Lieutenant Colonel DID Watson
Second in Command:	Major I Bunce
XO:	Major H Wilson
Adjutant:	Captain E Shepherd
Regimental Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 1 I Carlisle/Warrant Officer Class 1 J Knox/Warrant Officer Class 1 B Warwick
Quartermaster:	Major B Cooper/Major S Shaw
Regimental Administration Officer:	Major PJ Ward
Regimental Administration Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer Class 2 J Shrigley
Finance and Systems Administrator:	Ms A-M McNutt
Regimental Operations Support Officer:	Captain AG McEwen MBE
Regimental Career Management Officer:	Captain BS Baxter
Intelligence Officer:	Captain K Rehman
Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant:	Warrant Officer Class 2 (RQMS) S Lawrence
Training Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer Class 2 J Copeland/Warrant Officer Class 2 R Parker
Motor Transport Officer:	Captain M Dunnigan
Motor Transport Warrant Officer:	Warrant Officer Class 2 D Swash
BHQ Administration Assistants:	Ms C Hutchison Ms J Fenwick

COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

The last few submissions to the Red Hackle have focused on the challenge of operating in the world of COVID and restriction. Thankfully, now we are in a new space. Physical training is very much back and the 7 SCOTS team has been itching to get back to what we do best. In April 22 we said goodbye to the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Duncan Mackinnon, both from 7 SCOTS and the Army. We all wish him our best in his new endeavours in the NHS. We are delighted to welcome Lieutenant Colonel Doug Watson, the first reservist to command the Battalion in a number of years. Col Doug spent the first portion of his career in the regular Army serving in the Highlanders and 2 SCOTS and now works as a senior consultant in Inverroy Crisis Management.

Realistic, challenging and progressive training remains the lifeblood of an Army Reserve infantry battalion, but the past 12 months has seen a growth of expectation of the Army Reserve to be able to do more alongside the Regular component of the Field Army. As a result, we have focused our whole training year on being better trained, better prepared and ready to deploy. The result has been a strengthened Battalion which has deployed personnel across the UK on operations in support of the pandemic; to Kenya in support of 3 SCOTS; to Saudi Arabia to help train and develop the national guard and, as I type, we are poised to deploy several members of the Battalion to Oman with 3 SCOTS and later in the year to France on exercise with 4 SCOTS. Our work alongside the Regular Battalions of the Regiment has been excellent and their support has been first rate. Our bonds with the Regular Battalions have always been strong but will need to become stronger in the coming years as the Regular component of the Army reduces in number. We have started that work already and were happy to welcome a platoon from 4 SCOTS to join us in Imber Village during our Annual Deployed Exercise.



7 SCOTS and 4 SCOTS Troops listening to a brief on ADE in Imber Village with Employers on a visit in the background



The CO and his "Crown Club" at our Command and Leadership Development Weekend in Dunkeld



Handover of command at Queen's Barracks: Lieutenant Colonel Mackinnon to Lieutenant Colonel Watson



Exercising troops receiving a safety brief in the “Redoubt” on Hythe & Lydd ranges during ADE

Much of our support to the Field Army can only happen because of the hard work of the Executive Officer, Major Shug Wilson, and the Regimental Administrative Officer, Major Phil Ward AGC(SPS), who work tirelessly to wade through the bureaucracy and paperwork which still persists! The Adjutant, Captain Ed Shepherd, arrived last year and is already well immersed in the exotic nature of G1 in the Army Reserve. He is ably supported by Captain Spats Baxter, Regimental Career Management Officer, who fights to educate the Battalion on the ever-changing career management policy and processes. Captain Alan McEwen MBE, the Regimental Operations Support Officer, and his team of recruiters have sustained the lifeblood of the Battalion by attracting, recruiting and nurturing people to join 7 SCOTS. Despite all the obvious challenges and issues, Captain McEwen and his team have delivered a stellar performance with our recruiting numbers consistently high. All this work is only possible with the wonderful support and hard work that our civil servants do in the background. Too modest by far, they are stalwarts of the Battalion and deserve an enormous thank you.

Our successes have continued outwith Battalion training too. Corporals Laing, Ross, Gordon and McGurk completed the Army Reserve Section Commander Battle Course at Brecon along with 2nd Lieutenant Angus Lapslie completing the Platoon Commander Battle Course. We entered a team in the Cambrian Patrol competition, and whilst they were ultimately unsuccessful, the training conducted was brilliantly designed and delivered by Captains Pete Marshall and Keith Greene and WO2 Robson. Our team for the 1st Division Bismarck Challenge also put in a cracking performance with Private Walton finishing inside the top 20.

The Highland Band go from strength to strength in numbers and in quality. The arrival of Warrant Officer Class 1 (Band Master) Brill has added leadership and a wealth of experience from his time in the Bands of the Household Division. Colour Sergeant Eddie Duff MBE (Permanent Staff Instructor) continues to inject his boundless energy and dedication in support the Highland Band. Captain Martin Macdonald has taken the helm as Pipe President as well as Platoon Commander of our fledgling platoon in Caithness. He has built on the excellent work done by Warrant Officer Class 2 (Pipe Major) Scott Methven, who left the Battalion recently to support his family and pursue a career outside the Army. He rose from boy piper in the Argylls to HM The Queen’s Piper and we were lucky to have him albeit for a short time. We wish him all the best for the future. Their hard work in recruiting, training and retaining Pipers and Drummers is paying off as was evident from a recent success at Inchdrewer House (home of the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming) where Lance Corporal Keith Christie came top of the Pipe Majors’ course, ahead of three Regular Army pipers.

We were lucky last year that the waxing and waning of pandemic restrictions didn’t get in the way of our El Alamein Dinner Night held at Murrayshall Hotel, Scone on 23 October 2021. The dinner was an opportunity to say thank you to so many who had left the Battalion since early 2020 and to dine in our Honorary Colonel, Mr James Cosmo MBE, who attended the dinner with his wife, Annie, and son Findlay (who we hope will join the Regiment soon!). The real star of the evening was Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Charlie Cameron MC TD, who is the last surviving officer from the Battle of El Alamein

where he was a company commander with 5th Battalion, Queen’s Own Cameron Highlanders. We were privileged that he could attend – at 101 he had the perfect excuse for avoiding a Regimental Dinner and my speech! His recollection of that battle 79 years ago was vivid and engrossing to hear. In return the Pipers, Pipe Corporal Kellett and Lance Corporal Christie, played all his favourite Cameron tunes which he thoroughly enjoyed.



LCpl Keith Christie “Piping-in the guests” at Murrayshall Hotel, Scone for our El Alamein Dinner Night



The Highland Band entertaining the guests at the El Alamein Dinner Night



‘Hands in’ not ‘hands on’ experience. Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Charlie Cameron MC TD during a visit to Queens Barracks.

There has, of course, been the usual 'churn' in key Battalion posts. We bade farewell to two Regimental Sergeant Majors: Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Ian Carlisle headed back to Fort George and left the weekly A9 commute behind and WO1 John Knox headed to the civilian world. We have however, welcomed WO1 Bradley Warwick who has served in the Bn in the past as the Training WO. Major Alec Rose, Second in Command, left the Army after decades of service as a Regular, Territorial and Reservist and Captain Keith Greene, Training Officer, left us on promotion to join the Aberdeen & Tayforth Officer Training Regiment. Major Brian Cooper, Quartermaster, left the Regular Army after 39 years' service for a day, and then joined the Army Reserve as Officer Commanding Headquarter Company (Perth). We welcomed Padre Ken Jeffrey and Major Andy Gilmour RAMC as our Regimental Medical Officer. Also making a reappearance, Major Harry Hood, who has taken over as Officer Command A Company (Dundee and Aberdeen) and Major Malcolm Dalziel-Job as Officer Commanding C Company (Stornoway, Inverness and Elgin). We also offer our congratulations to Lieutenant Colonel Neil Brown on his promotion and selection to command the Army Training Unit (Scotland) where he has been joined by Major Andy Wallace, formerly Officer Commanding D Company (Stirling and Dumbarton), selected to be the Second in Command. Major Scott Shaw has taken over as the Quartermaster and Major Ian Bunce has become the new Second in Command.



Lieutenant Colonel Mackinnon marks the commissioning of RSM (Now Captain) Ian Carlisle

2022 has proved to be another year full of change, challenge and opportunity. As part of 'Future Soldier' we, alongside 6 SCOTS, have moved to the re-formed 19 Brigade who will command the core of the Army Reserve Light Infantry units. As we move to 19 Brigade, both 6 and 7 SCOTS have adopted the wearing of the new Regimental black hackle; this will allow the Reservists in the Regiment to be part of a strong Regimental identity. We will also swap our pairing relationship from 3 SCOTS to 4 SCOTS, as 3 SCOTS move to their new Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) role.

ALPHA COMPANY

Officer Commanding:	Major D Hood
Company Sergeant Major:	Warrant Officer Class 2 L Penrice
Permanent Staff Administration Officer (PSAO):	Captain L Stewart
Regimental Mentoring Support Officer (ReMSO):	Sergeant H Robertson
Aberdeen Platoon Commander:	Sergeant A Naughton
Dundee Platoon Commander:	Colour Sergeant I McNiven
Kirkcaldy Platoon Commander:	Colour Sergeant G McKenzie
Senior Permanent Staff Instructor (SPSI):	Colour Sergeant L Jones
Permanent Staff Instructor (PSI) Aberdeen:	Colour Sergeant S Watt
Company Quarter Master Sergeant (CQMS):	Colour Sergeant T Brady
Company Quarter Master Sergeant (Reserve):	Colour Sergeant S McGregor
	Colour Sergeant B Knowles

It is with great pride that I am able to write on an extremely professional, competent and diligent Company that embodies the ethos of being 'gallus' SCOTS soldiers.

The welcome return of physical training has highlighted increased attendance at training nights and weekend events, particularly in Aberdeen where there is a very strong cohort of regular attenders. In addition to Battle Craft Syllabus and MATTs there was an opportunity for battalion-level Adventure Training (AT) which was headed by CSgt McNiven at Aviemore. Utilising his extensive experience and qualifications, he was able to run a demanding and enjoyable weeklong package which enabled a number of AT qualifications to be gained. Hopefully, a similar week will be run in 2022 to advertise the opportunities available within the Reserves.



On a break during adventure training, but how did the other three get there?!

The Battalion Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE) was a great success and the Live Firing package at Hythe Ranges was well received by all. It was extremely pleasing to see the rise in the Jocks' confidence as the days passed and the shoots became more progressive and demanding. The second phase of the exercise, conducted at Imber Village on Salisbury Plain Training Area, tested the mental and physical resilience of every rank and highlighted the demands and frictions of operating in an urban environment. ADE also proved to be a useful learning experience for the Company G4 team as CSgt McKenzie returned to his CQMS roots for the exercise phase and CSgt Knowles assumed the role of 'Real Life' Support CQMS to great effect.



Live firing at Hythe & Lydd

The Integrated Service Review (ISR) has placed the emphasis on Reserves being PREPARED to support the Regular Army and, in line with the Commanding Officer's intent, the Company has seen Privates Alexander, Law and Swan mobilise to support 3 SCOTS with their Op TORAL deployment and Private Gordon who is currently assisting the Ambulance Service with his driving expertise.

The previous notes highlighted the backlog of training courses and vacancies for recruit training with a big effort required to maintain the recruit pipeline. The ReMSO, Sgt Robertson, has worked tirelessly to ensure that recruits have travelled the length and breadth of the country to attend training courses and has kept them motivated and involved at every stage of this elongated and at times frustrating process. Special mention and thanks must be given to all members of the Company that have assisted Sgt Robertson over the past year with

driving duties to ensure that the recruits have arrived on time and well prepared for the challenges ahead.



*Comms during a lull,
within Imber Village*

Congratulations are in order for CSgt McNiven, Cpls Gough, McGregor and LCpl Mitchelson on their well-deserved promotion and to Sgt Naughton for being the first 7 SCOTS SNCO to complete the Army Leadership Development Programme (ADLP) Military Education (ME). Into the fold we welcome CSgt Watt on completion of his tour as CQMS British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK). He will replace CSgt Jones as the SPSI who sadly leaves the Regular Army after 24 years of service to pursue a career in Police Scotland.

It is only fitting to bid farewell to Major John Valentine who has been a stalwart in A Company, not only for his three years as Officer Commanding but throughout his long and dedicated Reserve service which saw him rise through the ranks from Private to Major. We wish him all the best for his next post at Dundee University Officer Training Corps.



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The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada

We are in the midst of the summer of 2022, a time when our soldiers are dispersed: our newest recruits undergoing full-time individual training on various military bases and our newly minted officers being put through their paces at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Gagetown. As we emerge from the pandemic, our Pipes and Drums have resumed public appearances and have been busy throughout the summer months. The officers and NCOs who remain are busy planning the training year ahead, but for the most part things are relatively quiet at the Bleury Street armoury during the summer months – a time suitable for reflection.

This past year the Watch once again distinguished itself, going above and beyond in our support of operations. In all, we sent 10 officers and non-commissioned members abroad on various missions, ranging from Latvia and the Democratic Republic of Congo to Ukraine (pre-Russian invasion), Jordan and the broader Gulf region. Namely, Major Baldock, Major Hinkson, Major Unger, Lieutenant Simeon, Sgt Parent, Sgt Postans, MCpl Tabet, Cpl Abberfield-Smith, Cpl Fuller, and Cpl Schwartzman. These members brought credit to the Regiment through their professionalism and hard work. Moreover, we should never overlook the fact that they voluntarily put their full-time occupations on hold to serve their country. Closer to home, several dozen soldiers spent their winter holidays in various vaccination centres during OP VECTOR as once again their support was needed.

Overall, the 2021-22 training year was a hectic one. It was a constant juggling act as we maintained COVID-19 protection measures, while returning to a “normal” training tempo – and there was very little idle time. We performed well on individual and collective training, including running a cold weather operations course. As expected, there was also the myriad of administrative requirements that the “powers that be” see fit to saddle us with. Soldiers everywhere have always complained that the military generates too much paperwork. That being said, the military does indeed generate too much paperwork, but we checked all the boxes and carried on.

For the past two years, the Pipes and Drums training had been reduced to band practice via Zoom. It was with enthusiasm that they at last returned to in-person rehearsals and public performances this past spring.

As per tradition, we closed out the training year with our annual Church Parade on 1st May and afterwards it was welcome sight to see friends of the Regiment and old acquaintances in the now re-opened messes.

Unfortunately, HRH's visit to Canada in mid-May did not include a stopover in Montreal but we were able to send one of our own to Ottawa, MCpl Kulczycki-Roma, to lay a wreath in the company of Prince Charles on 18 May and send two other deserving young members, 2Lt Manning and Cpl Kerr, to a reception attended by HRH.

On the last weekend in May a delegation of six from The Black Watch flew to Halifax, Nova Scotia for the highly anticipated Kilted Regiments' Society annual conference. Kilted Regiments' Society is an informal association of all Highland, Scottish and Irish regiments in the Canadian Army and this conference had been cancelled for the previous two years (for obvious reasons). This was done with generous support of The Black Watch Foundation.

During much of the COVID-19 pandemic the recruiting process slowed down to a crawl. The scandals that have rocked the top echelons of the Canadian military in the past year did not help our recruiting efforts either. In order to position ourselves for future success we have no choice but to grow. To grow we have no alternative but to attract, recruit, and retain enough keen, dedicated people. During this coming year our main effort will therefore be recruiting.

It will come as no surprise to anyone who has stepped into the armoury of late that our beloved armoury has started to show its age and is in need of repair. Some work is already underway and nearing completion. We are looking forward to the re-opening of the regimental museum sometime in the coming year, but during 2022-23 we will once again see our armoury turned into an intermittent construction site. We will adapt and make do as we have always done, knowing it is all for the better.

On behalf of the Regiment and Regimental family, we look forward to welcoming you to the armoury and wish you success in all your endeavours.

Nemo Me Impune Lacessit



International Lions Convention Montreal June 2022. Massed bands of Black Watch; Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa; Stormont and Dundas & Glengarry Highlanders of Cornwall



Kilted Regiments Society mess dinner. Left to right: Sgt Best, RQMS; Sgt Vanden Abeele, Drum Major; CWO Mamen, RSM; LCol Roy, CO; Maj Unger, back from Ukraine; MWO Fu

ARTEFACTS FROM THE BLACK WATCH OF CANADA COLLECTION 'Sacred to the memory...' – VIMY MEMORIAL CROSS, 1917

By Earl John Chapman

The battle of Vimy Ridge commenced at dawn on Easter Monday, 9 April 1917, with all four infantry divisions of the Canadian Corps in action. It was also a historic day for the Royal Highlanders of Canada, today's Black Watch of Canada, as all three of its active service battalions (the 13th, 42nd and 73rd Battalions) saw action together for the only time during World War One. With the entire ridge wholly under Allied control by 12 April, the operation was judged a spectacular success, the single most successful Allied advance on the Western Front to that date. It did not come without cost as 3,598 Canadians were killed and 7,004 wounded. Low in comparison to most World War One battles, one Canadian in ten was killed or wounded in the four-day battle for the ridge. In July 1917, a large wooden cross, about 9 feet (290 cm) in height, was built at the Transport Lines of the 13th Battalion and erected near the Nine Elms Military Cemetery in Thelus, located about 6.5 km north of Arras. The inscription on the cross reads: '13th Canadian Battalion, The Royal Highlanders of Canada – sacred to the memory of the officers, NCOs and men who were killed in action, Vimy Ridge, April 1917, and are buried near this spot.' The cross also carries the names, on metal plates, of the officers and men of the 13th who lost their lives in the battle. The cross was returned to Canada after the war and stood for many years on the grounds of the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario. By the early 1930s it had started to deteriorate and plans were formulated to move it to a less exposed location. It was eventually transferred to the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa where it was put on permanent display in the Museum's old building on Sussex Drive. It is now in storage at the Museum's new facility at 1 Vimy Place, just west of Parliament Hill.



*13th Battalion's Vimy Memorial Cross
(Courtesy, Canadian War Museum)*



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The Black Watch Battalion Army Cadet Force

CADET FORCE ADULT VOLUNTEERS

Honorary Colonel:	The Reverend Professor Norman Drummond CBE FRSE
Interim Commandant:	Lieutenant Colonel A A R Halford-MacLeod
Battalion Training Officer:	Major K Douglas
Officer Commanding	Major R Sangster
Alma Company:	
Officer Commanding	Lieutenant K Stark
Burma Company:	
Officer Commanding	Sergeant Major Instructor S Skene
Korea Company:	Major M McCluskey
Officer Commanding	
Ticonderoga Company:	Lieutenant F Campbell
Officer Commanding	
Ypres Company:	
Public Relations Officer:	Major N Murdoch
Regimental Sergeant Major	Regimental Sergeant Major S Smith
Instructor:	
Professional Support Staff:	
Cadet Executive Officer:	Major A C M Potter
Quartermaster:	Captain A Williams

This is the first time that I have written these notes for the Army Cadets in Perthshire and Fife as Commandant of the Black Watch Battalion ACF. I have taken over command during a period of intense training as the Battalion has worked hard to re-energise the 'Cadet Habit' amongst our cadets and the Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs).

The focus of the Battalion has always been to deliver the 'Cadet Experience' to the young people who turn up many times a month to take part in Cadet activities - this will remain our main effort for the foreseeable future. As I have told the Cadets and CFAVs alike, "the only oxygen we breathe is the 'Cadet Experience'!"

The Black Watch Battalion ACF is committed to running activities which are fun to ensure that our cadets want to turn up and are 'inspired to achieve'. It is equally important that our hard-working CFAVs also enjoy the activities and feel inspired by having organised them well.

The main event has been the Battalion Annual Camp '22 which took place in early July at Garelochhead Training Camp - 211 cadets attended supported by 48 CFAVs. Week 1 focussed on the 2 to 4 Star cadets and Week 2 focussed on 1 Star training with lots of fieldcraft, shooting, signals and Adventure Training in and around the Garelochhead area. The weather was kind to us throughout and the midges were also compassionate which was lucky because the cadets and their CFAVs spent most of the time running around the West of Scotland woods and hills.



The Black Watch Cadets with TV Personality Stephen Mulhern

Despite the huge quantity of rations consumed, the cadets became a very keen fighting force that even the most challenging of enemies would find frightening perhaps partly due to the amount of cam cream they applied! The CQM also worked hard to supply large quantities of blank ammunition which generated broad smiles after every noisy contact - smiles which even remained in place during weapon cleaning phase!



The Commandant Lt Col Alasdair Halford-MacLeod briefs 'his' troops



The Red Hackle on the Range!

The Battalion hosted a small contingent of Polish cadets who were thrown into our activities straight away. They taught the 1 Star cadets fieldcraft in their Polish style and also compared the differences in drill and commands with our senior cadets. The disco/Polish style 'mosh pit' indicated that our guests had a great time! When they left to go on to Barry Buddon, they were marched out of camp by the whole Battalion and each cadet was given a Red Hackle as a reminder of the Regiment's post-war connection with Poland. We look forward to engaging with them for more collaborative training in the future.

Other visitors included the Deputy Commander (Cadets) Brigadier NR Holmes MBE and Lt Col Lackey. The Deputy Commander was presented



Cadet RSM Luke Appleyard with his opposite number from the Polish Cadet Contingent.



Cadets enjoying the “Cadet Experience”



with a pipe tune named ‘The Cadet Experience’ specially written for the occasion of his visit by Cadet Pipe Major Rowan Laws.



Cadet Pipe Major Rowan Laws discusses his composition ‘The Cadet Experience’ with Brigadier Neville Holmes MBE

Cadets also found time to visit the Commonwealth Cemetery at Faslane, where many submariners are buried and the Pipes and Drums provided an excellent evening’s entertainment for the residents of the Erskine Hospital Veterans Village.



The Pipes and Drums and Cadets of the Battalion at Erskine Hospital with Capt (Retd) Peter Mulvey a veteran wounded in WW2 whilst serving with 6BW”

Away from camp too, the tempo of activities has been predictably high. Cadet RSM Luke Appleyard was selected as the Lord Lieutenant’s Cadet for Perthshire: an honour which has brought him many opportunities. He represented the ACF in Scotland at the Service of Thanksgiving for the life of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh who had been ACF Colonel in Chief for 69 years when he died. RSM Appleyard was also selected to be part of the UK Cadet Delegation to the Indian Army Cadets - both were unique occasions.

In June the Battalion was represented at the Platinum Jubilee Youth Spectacular in Kelty by both bands and a Cadet Guard of Honour followed in August by the Military band Beating Retreat at The Royal Hospital, Chelsea.



The Military Band of The Black Watch Battalion ACF with TV Personality Stephen Mulhern at the Platinum Jubilee Youth Spectacular 2022

During the future period, the Battalion will be focussing on the ‘Cadet Experience’ by recruiting and training the next generation of cadets. Annual camp will comprise two parts: one week in Barry Buddon in Easter and one week in Garelochhead during the summer of 2023. In the meantime, cadets will continue to fulfil the requirements of the replacement for APC, the Army Cadets Syllabus ‘21 (ACS 21). Other activities are to include taking part in the 51X Military Skills Competition; going on a battlefield tour to France and Belgium in October whilst 4 star and staff cadets will take part in a busy programme for a senior cadet training weekend and a dinner night as well as Remembrance Day.



The Black Watch and Polish Cadets at Faslane Commonwealth War Graves and on field exercise at Garelochhead



The Military Band perform at Chelsea Hospital under the direction of Cadet Drum Major Morgan Black

Association News

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Vice Presidents

Association Committee

Chairman

Member

Member

Member

Member

Member

Member

Member

Member

Regimental Secretary

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Lord-Lieutenant of Fife
Mr Stephen Leckie, Lord-Lieutenant of
Perth and Kinross
Councillor Bill Campbell, Lord-Lieutenant
of the City of Dundee
Mrs Pat Sawers, Lord-Lieutenant of Angus

Major (Retd) A A L Watson LVO
Lieutenant Colonel J R McElhinney
Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) J Menzies
Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) M Smith MBE
Major (Retd) C Gray
Major (Retd) R J W Proctor MBE
Mr Gordon Kennedy
Mr R Scott
Mr P Tindall
Major (Retd) T J O Carmichael
Major (Retd) R J W Proctor MBE, Chairman
Major (Retd) C Gray, Deputy Chairman
Major (Retd) B Dickson
Captain A McEwen MBE
Captain (Retd) T Graham
Mr W Barr
Mr J Devlin
Mrs M O'Brien
Mr R M Scott JP
Mr W D Whytock

The Regimental Reunion 2022

The Annual Reunion took place at Balhousie Castle on the 18th of June 2022 the second one after the Covid Lockdown of 2020 and was attended by some one hundred and fifty members and their families. Some of the initiatives which were introduced in 2021 continued this year such as the ongoing slide-show which this year focused on the Regiment's association with Her Majesty The Queen from her Coronation until the present time. On Zoom, Hugh Beattie an Ex Black Watch soldier was able to talk to his daughter in Australia. The Marchers formed up and set off from Rose Terrace marching to Balhousie Castle led by the Perth and District Pipe Band under the direction of Pipe Major Alistair Duthie and Drum Major Kenny Forbes, Pipe Major Alistair MacIntosh and other former members of the Regiment are part of this band and this is noticeable by the smartness and deportment when on parade.

A new feature was the attendance of Mrs Robina Addison who brought members of her Gordon School of Dancing all the way from Montrose to entertain those at the Reunion and those who watched on Zoom. The dancers aged from 5 to 16+ gave a most entertaining and enjoyable display throughout the afternoon and this was appreciated by all virtual and actual attendees. Kevin Murphy, again, single handedly organised the Reunion Raffle and managed to obtain a great number of prizes which were wide and varied. Through Kevin's hard work the Association gained nearly £1000 in raffle receipts. We were fortunate enough to again acquire the services and beautiful singing voice of Coleen Nicoll who also added variety to the afternoon. The Pipes and Drums of the Perth and District Pipe Band gave an excellent musical repertoire which was again enjoyed by all.

The Reunion achieved its aim in that veterans, their families and friends enjoyed catching up and reliving the good old days and not forgetting those who are no longer with us.

Major John Monteith stepped in as the Reunion MC at short notice, as the organiser of the Reunion for the past 23 years tested positive for covid on the day. Major Monteith, complete with beard, exceeded all expectations and this proved to be his grand finale as Regimental Secretary.



Perth and District Pipe Band, led by Kenny Forbes, leads marchers from the North Inch to Balhousie Castle



Standard Bearers and marchers follow on



Robina Addison MBE DL introduces her Gordon School of Dancing pupils.



John Monteith - pro tem MC



The Gordon dancers line up to perform



The Gordon dancers in action



Hugh Beattie waves to his daughter in Australia, on zoom



*John Glen,
Angus
Branch
and Kevin
Murphy,
Perth
Branch
and raffle
organiser*



Left to right: Eddie Ireland, Brian Herd, Davey Stacey and Gus Angus

ANGUS BRANCH

President	Major Peter Burnet
Vice President	Colonel D M Sheldrick
Chairman	Major Ronnie Proctor MBE
Vice Chairman/Secretary	Mr Peter Tindal
Treasurer	Mr Gordon Millar
Membership	Mr Billy Whytock

Much water has flowed under the bridge since the last edition of the notes were published and the branch has continued to flourish and meet using a mixture of Zoom and Hybrid meetings to warrant the Covid situation at the time.

The Hybrid meetings have proved very popular with the majority of members attending the Legion Clubrooms in Forfar on the first Monday of each month but with our regular attendees from Werl, Northern Ireland, Burnham on Sea and other places further than Forfar regularly attending.

Acting on the adage in that "discretion is the better part of valour" we reluctantly decided to cancel the annual Burns Supper due to the Covid restrictions which were in place at the time.

We did however hold a very successful dinner to commemorate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. Kenny Beats and his team of caterers and waiting staff prepared and served the fare which had a Royal Connection, Roland Proctor designed the souvenir programme and menu which members kept as a memento of the occasion.



Mrs Valerie Laing presents a cheque for £200 to the Branch Chairman



Arbroath Team enjoying the dinner, left to right: Willie Ford, Brian Douglas and Alex Johnstone



Bruce Tyrie sorts out the raffle



Singing The National Anthem "God Save the King"



Jim McEwan and The Rev Alex Forsyth

Brian Douglas, Frank Proctor, Peter Tindal and Ronnie Proctor all gave a short talk on events which had taken place during their service, all during Her Majesty's reign and it was interesting to hear of the varied and numerous events which had taken place.

The Annual Regimental reunion took place on 18th June and was well supported by our branch however the compiler of these notes and the Reunion Organiser over the past 23 years tested positive for Covid on the day of the Reunion and missed the first Reunion in over 30 years. Mrs Robina Addison from Montrose and a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Angus was invited to bring her troupe of Highland Dancers to entertain those attending the Reunion. The young girls gave an outstanding display which was appreciated by all.

The Annual Branch Standard Rededication service took place on 18th September in Cortachy Church, which is situated at the bottom of the Angus Glens and next to the ancient Cortachy Castle, home of the Earl of Airlie.

Tom & Anne McCluskey have researched the names on the Cortachy War Memorial, and they are both to be thanked for the information that they have provided on those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The Reverend Alex Forsyth, who was our first Branch Chaplain and who dedicated the Branch Standard when he was the Minister at Edzell 22 years ago, conducted this year's service and was welcomed by our Branch Chairman who, together with Bruce Tyrie and Billy Whytock read lessons. A two-minute silence was observed in memory of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth. It was strange singing "God Save The King" as the National Anthem since the majority of the those present had only lived during Queen Elizabeth's reign and only a few Association members and members of the Congregation had sung God Save the King when they were children. Branch members and regular members of Cortachy church appreciated and enjoyed the service. A wreath was then laid at Cortachy War Memorial by Lyndsey Strachan with Pipe Major Alistair Duthie who played at the church playing the Regimental Lament.

Lunch followed at the Royal British Legion Club Rooms, Forfar. It was great seeing many old friends and our thanks go to Gordon Millar who worked tirelessly in the background and Gus Proctor for designing the excellent souvenir orders of service, all in all it was a memorable and enjoyable day.



Lin Strachan with the wreath



The Blessing at the end

The El Alamein dinner took place at the Royal British Legion, Forfar on Saturday 22nd October 2022. The work and planning put in by the Chairman, Messrs Gordon Millar, Bruce Tyrie and George Eaton paid off and the dinner was a great success and enjoyed by all who attended. This year's dinner marked the 80th anniversary of the battle and it's hard to appreciate that when we formed the Branch there were some twelve members who had taken part in the battle. Sadly, there are now none of them left however we are still fortunate to have a member, Jim Gordon, who served in the Second World War. A special thank you must be given to Dr Derek Patrick whose excellent presentation focused on individual soldiers from the local area who took part in the battle, showing slides, the latter of the late Major Peter Watson visiting El Alamein War Cemetery. Pipe Major Alistair Duthie produced a most evocative repertoire which included the Battle of El Alamein, Queen Elizabeth II's Salute, the company marches and other well-known tunes.



From Left to right - Pipe Major Alistair Duthie, Major Torquil MacLeod, Mr Willie Barr and Major David McMicking



Guest Ian McLaren, Branch Member Willie Ford and Brian Douglas



Dr Derek Patrick with picture of the late Major Peter Watson at El Alamein

Ex RSM Ken Prescott is also another war time soldier who served as a young soldier during war time. The Branch Chairman visited Ken earlier in the year at Ardersier. Ken is the sole survivor of the Regimental Colour Party who took part in the Coronation Parade in 1952. It was hoped that Ken would have been able to attend our Platinum Jubilee Dinner, however at 96 years old Ken felt that Ardersier to Forfar was a bit too far. Despite this, his anecdotes on the Coronation Parade were put across by the Branch Chairman during his short talk.

On a more poignant note, we have had to accept the resignation of our Branch Secretary, Steve Reid, due to ill health. Steve is one of the few members of the regiment who worked his way from being a Junior Regimental Clerk to become a WO1 Superintendent Clerk during his full career. Steve is small in stature but large in ability, character, and caring for others. His advice and technical skills are greatly missed. We have, however, to thank our Branch Vice Chairman Peter Tindal for taking on the Secretary's role as well as being the Branch's representative at the Association Committee meeting at Balhousie Castle where he ensures that our voice is heard.

Sadly, we have lost another of our Founder members, Bob Inglis who died aged 88 after a short illness. He was a regular attendee at Branch meetings and functions until illness prevented him from doing so, Bob along with other late Branch members Bob Mitchell, Rab Simson and Bill Tindal volunteered their expertise and skill when the museum was first modernised some twenty years ago.

On a happier note, we are looking forward to our Christmas buffet meeting in December and the Burns Supper in January along with distributing Christmas parcels to our senior members and widows.



Major Proctor presents a set of medal to the Forfar British Legion

DUNDEE BRANCH

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

The restrictions of Covid-19 were still very much affecting the activities of the Branch and its members however, that said, we were able to attend numerous services and functions since last year's edition of the Red Hackle.



Caird Park Service 11th November 2021.

Branch members attended the City of Dundee Laying of Crosses service at the City Churches on Saturday 6th November and the Remembrance service at the City Square on Thursday 11th November.

On the afternoon of 11th November, the Branch held a Remembrance Service at Caird Park for the memory of the men of Mains Parish who died in the First World War 1914-1918. The Dundee members - Willie

Barr, Joe Devlin, Colin Gray, Larry Hutchison, Jimmy Killorn, and Mike Lindsay were joined by two of the Angus Branch, Tam McCluskey, and George Eaton. The service was led by Nathan McConnell the lead minister for Downfield Mains Church and also in attendance were the Lord Provost Ian Northwick and the Deputy Provost (now Lord Provost) Bill Campbell.

The Branch was very well represented at the Balhousie Castle Remembrance service on 12th November.

The main Remembrance Service for the Dundee Branch is always the one at Powrie Brae and on Sunday 14th November, the members turned out in force. As always, we were joined by members from the Angus Branch and families of Black Watch soldiers as well as various other ex-service personnel.

On Sunday 6th March at the request of the family of the late Lieutenant Colonel Roland and Mrs Maureen Rose, we held a service in the grounds of Balhousie Castle and scattered their ashes. The family plaque to commemorate that day is placed just to the right before entering through the Earl Wavell Gate.

The re-scheduled Branch Red Hackle Dinner (Willie Barr's Steak Peh Night) was held in the Black Watch Club, Dundee on Friday 11th March and was extremely successful and well attended albeit owing to Covid, we never had the pleasure of our Honorary Members from Liverpool. Hopefully Mick Molyneux and the lads can make it in 2023. A vote of thanks to Arthur Keith and Red Hackle Security for his generous sponsorship of the Port for the Toasts during the Dinner.



Davy Young and Jimmy Killorn at the Dundee Branch Dinner



Jim Crawford and Arthur Douthwaite at the Dundee Branch Dinner



Willie Barr and Arthur Keith at the Dundee Branch Dinner

The following night, Willie Barr, John J Smith MBE, Billy Whytock and Colin Gray represented the Branch at the Perth Branch Queen's Platinum Dinner Night.

The Edinburgh & Lothians' Branch held their Al Basrah Lunch on 30th April and Willie Barr, John J Smith MBE and Colin Gray accompanied by our good Ladies were treated to a fine afternoon of good food, good Piping and even better company.



Angus Branch Queen's Platinum Dinner

The Branch were also very well represented at the Angus Branch Platinum Jubilee Dinner Night on 21st May. In attendance were, Willie Barr, Joe Barton, Joe Devlin, Jimmy Killorn and Colin Gray. Another fantastic night in great company.



Colin Gray and Willie Barr in Berlin with Dietmar Fahrenwald

Although, not related directly to the Dundee Branch, but worthy of an entry, is on 27th May during a visit to Berlin, Willie Barr, Joe Devlin, Chris Thomas, and Colin Gray met up with a local Berliner, Dietmar Fahrenwald who is also a Friend of the Black Watch Museum. A small world indeed.

The month of June 2022, for the Branch, as well as the wider Black Watch community was extremely sad as we were notified about the deaths of two of our members. On 13th June, Jim Heron passed away and on 18th June, Paul (Pepe) Wojnarowicz died peacefully. Two very popular lads, who served together in the 1st Battalion.



Micky Flynn, Gus Angus, Frankie Clark, Chris Thomas, Alfie Docherty and Stefan Wojnarowicz at Pepe's Funeral

On 25th June numerous Branch members attended an Armed Forces Day church service in Congregational Church, Dundee.

The Inter Branch Games Day was held in the Black Watch Club, Dundee on Saturday 6th August 2022. The afternoon was organised by Ray Lawson and was yet again a great success albeit only the Dundee, Highland and Perth Branches participated. The games of Pool, Darts and Dominoes were extremely competitive, but definitely friendly and full of harmonious banter. Willie Barr's Curry and Stovies went down a treat with many of the Perth Branch having second helpings. The eventual winners by a very close margin were the Perth Branch and Roy Brown (41) proudly received the winner's trophy stating that his Branch very much look forward to hosting next year's event in the Ex-Services's Club in Perth where it is hoped that the Angus, Edinburgh & Lothians and Fife Branches will also enter teams.



*Winning Team Captain receiving the Trophy.
Roy Brown Colin Gray Pete Pendlebury and Gus Angus*

We as a Branch continue to attend the Veterans Breakfast which is held at 1100hrs every 2nd Saturday in a calendar month in the Market Bar, Dundee. £5.00 for a full Scottish, a brew and a guid blether, priceless. Come along and join us, just turn up, no need to book.

EDINBURGH, LOTHIAN'S AND BORDERS' BRANCH

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

After many months of Covid 19 related restrictions and cancellations, Branch meetings and gatherings are slowly returning to pre pandemic level of events. This first opportunity to hold a function, was when Branch members and guests gathered in the Scots Guards Club Haymarket on 19 March 2022, to hold a belated Red Hackle Day celebration. The evening commenced with a very fine display by the Boroughmuir High School Mini Pipe Band. The band is tutored by former Black Watch soldiers Drum Major Brian Alexander and Piper Robert Lindsay. Guests were also entertained with excellent solo performances by Pipe Major Alastair Duthie and Piping Instructor Ross McNaughton, both of whom are now pipers in the Atholl Highlanders.

The Apex Hotel, Waterloo Place, was the venue for the Al Basrah Lunch held on 30 April 2022. Following a fine lunch in the Forth Suite, guests retired to the Waterloo Lounge to enjoy a sociable afternoon. Support from other Branches for this event was a welcome bonus and attendance by Major Colin and Mrs Maureen Gray, Mr Willie and Mrs Christine Barr and Mr David and Mrs Maureen Stacey was very much appreciated. It was also a pleasure to have Brigadier Ben and Mrs Elisabeth Wrench in attendance.



*Left to right;
Mr Rab Lindsay, Mr Brian Alexander
and Miss Alexandra Dickson*



*Left to right; Mrs Sonia Beveridge, Mr Ian Beveridge and
Mr Drew McKay*



Mr Jim Dalrymple and Mrs Liz Dalrymple



*Left to right; Mr David Stacey, Mr John Smith, Ms Janine Stewart and
Mrs Maureen Stacey*

Events currently planned for 2023 are as follows:

Red Hackle Night 14 January 2023 and Al Basrah Lunch 29 April 2023.

Anyone wishing to join the Branch (Serving or Retired) is more than welcome to do so and should make contact through a Branch member or by posting a request to join on the Branch Social Media web page. Officers and Soldiers of The Black Watch 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland who are currently serving in the local area, are particularly welcome to join.

FIFE BRANCH

Another quiet period for the Branch, this was mainly down to restrictions due to Covid and the closing of meeting places. Our year started with the Red Hackle Day Breakfast held in the White Heather Pub Kirkcaldy (Popeye's Pub) with a thirty plus turn out.



Branch members at Red Hackle Day Breakfast

Unfortunately along with our festivities, we had our fair share of Regimental Family to send home to their maker but they were sent off with a good Black Watch cheerio. Our next meeting was prior to our Rhine Crossing Dinner with attendance in the high thirties, as was said this was prior to dinner at the Victoria Hotel Kirkcaldy. Our Guest of Honour this year was Pipey Peter Snaddon, who had announced earlier his retirement from being the Branch Piper. The dinner was its usual high standard and we were introduced to our incoming Branch Pipey Kevin Haughey, Kevin is an excellent Piper and we look forward to hearing more of him.



Guests enjoy the Rhine Crossing Dinner: from left to right: Alan McEwen, Rob Scott, John Smith and Peter Snaddon



Branch Members at the dinner

Next on the Agenda was the Regimental Reunion in Perth, again well attended by the Branch not forgetting the Muster at Aberfeldy which was also well attended. On a sadder note in between the good days, we had more bad days where we had to lay to rest some Branch Stalwarts.



Ladies enjoy the Alma Lunch



Forty Twa Café Opening

In September 2021 the last event was the Ladies Alma Lunch which was again well attended.

Branch members went along to Cowdenbeath in July to support Gary Spence in his new venture opening the Forty Twa Café.

Lastly, may I thank the Branch again for the support in all we do, without you there would be nothing. Thank you.

LONDON BRANCH

President:	Major General AL Watson CB (died 12 July 2022)
Vice President:	Brigadier E N de Broë-Ferguson MBE
Chairman:	Major AAL Watson LVO/Lieutenant Colonel DEJ Kemmis Betty MBE DL (from May)
Vice Chairman:	Lieutenant Colonel TA Coles MBE/ Lieutenant Colonel RC Cole- Mackintosh(from May)
Secretary:	Lieutenant Colonel M Smith MBE

With the rest of the Regimental family, the London Branch were particularly saddened by the death of Major General Andy Watson in July who has been our much-loved Branch President for 39 years. General Andy left the Army into the post of Lieutenant Governor of the Royal Hospital Chelsea and later retired to South West London, so we were lucky to have him always on hand for Branch events. He will be remembered by all who knew him for his sparkling sense of humour and fun plus the keen interest he showed in the progress and welfare of every Branch member from the oldest veteran to the youngest new subaltern straight out of Sandhurst.



Gen Andy Watson inspecting the pipe programme, watched by Maj Garry Garforth-Bles and Bridget Ker

Despite ongoing concerns over Covid-19, the Branch held another successful dinner for 60 members and guests at the Victory Services Club in November 2021 with some fine piping from Chic Mackie the Branch Piper. Special thanks must go to Ian Howarth our long-standing Dinner Secretary for making everything run smoothly behind the scenes and to Peter Scott Graham for again most generously donating whisky to accompany the haggis. The dinner is attracting a growing cohort of younger officers (serving and retired) who have served in The Black Watch Battalion (either as 1 BW or 3 SCOTS) and is a great opportunity to bring together friends who have served on various operational tours in Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan and more recently in Eastern Europe, thus enhancing *camaraderie*. We would love to see the dinner expand further into a reunion for all those based in the South who have worn the Red Hackle (of all ranks). In 2022 we moved the date to 22 September (just before publication).

In May we again held our AGM in the boardroom at the National Army Museum with drinks and a sandwich lunch to follow, plus the chance to explore the excellent Museum. Sadly the outgoing Chairman, Alastair Watson did not make it due to Covid but we offered him a

huge vote of thanks for his time as Chairman as he moves on to take up his post with the new Regimental Trust. Likewise, many thanks to Tim Coles who stepped down after many years as our splendid Vice Chairman. Mike Smith dutifully 'stags on' as Branch Secretary with David Kemmis-Betty and Richard Cole-Mackintosh now in the chair in place of Alastair and Tim. We look forward to welcoming all those down south (or those just visiting) to future events

PERTH BRANCH

President:	Major (Retd) Tim Carmichael
Chairman:	Captain Alan McEwen MBE
Secretary:	Mr Pat McLinden
Treasurer:	Mrs Frances Sandilands
Accounts Auditor:	Major (Retd) Colin Wilson

Perth Branch has continued to meet on a regular basis throughout the year. Our use of the Ex-Servicemen's Club in Perth as a venue provides a very useful base for our monthly meetings taking place every third Tuesday of the month. Covid obviously had an impact on us which has meant that at times we used purely zoom meetings supported by Association Headquarters and other times we have used hybrid meetings in person and on zoom link. The latter has meant that we have had people who are readily able to get to Perth city centre and also those who are much further afield who have still been able to join in - when the technical aspects work, with our branch meetings' discussions and moving forward.

To celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee we held a dinner at the Mercure Hotel in Perth, well attended by personal and Branch guests, including Provost Dennis Melloy, a constant supporter of the Branch. Our entertainment was superbly provided through the auspices of Ally Alcorn, in the form of an excellent swing band and singers as well as the expert piping of Alistair Duthie.

Later in the year, the Croix de Guerre dinner was held, as usual, at the Salutation Hotel, Perth in September 2022 slightly earlier than usual because of Perth hosting the Royal Gaelic Mòd in October.

The dinner was again well attended and provided another excellent social opportunity for people to meet again outwith the constraints of Covid.

We've had inter-branch activities primarily hosted and organised by Dundee Branch against the other branches. As a result of winning, Perth Branch will be hosting the inter-branch games in 2023; it was a great honour to be winning that particular set of games. Well done to Alan McEwen, our Chairman, and the team.

We also that month had a branch outing to show our respects at the newly refurbished memorial in Killin which was followed by a long, a very long for some, coach journey along Loch Tay side to Aberfeldy and lunch in the Black Watch Inn. With wives and girlfriends but not both, it was a fun outing and will be repeated in sorts, but to Blairgowrie this year.



Sandy MacDuff and Jock McBride at the Killin Memorial

Future dates include our Burns' Night, which is already well advanced in its planning, at the Salutation Hotel on Saturday 11 February 2023, following the Dundee Branch dinner on the 10th.

The Black Watch Regular Warrant Officers and Sergeants(Past & Present) Dining Club

by Lt Col JA Menzies

The Black Watch Regular Warrant Officers and Sergeants (Past & Present) Dining Club was formed in the mid 1980's.

The aim is to maintain contact (comradeship) between retired and serving personnel who attained Sergeants Mess status during their service.

Membership is open to all suitably qualified past and present members of regular battalions of The Black Watch.

The current committee members are:

- President Major J McNally MBE
- Chairman Lieutenant Colonel JA Menzies
- Secretary Mr WD Whytock
- Treasurer Major RJW Proctor MBE

The club gathers biannually in the Salutation Hotel Perth. The April event is held on the same day as the Regimental Association General Meeting and the autumn event is held on the third Saturday in November. The next three gatherings are as follows: 19 November 2022, 22 April 2023 and 18 November 2023.

Anyone wishing to join, should contact the club Secretary, Mr Billy Whytock via the staff at Balhousie Castle on 01738 623214 or approach a member for details. There are currently 90 members with service ranging from the 1940s to the present date. New members (Serving or Retired) of any age group are more than welcome to join.



*Major Ronnie Proctor, Messrs David Morton,
Peter Tindal and James McIntosh*



Mr David Lewis and Mr John Caird



*Fifty years after joining IJLB Oswestry - Mr Tam Dick and
Lieutenant Colonel Jock Menzies*



Mr Bill Clark, Mr Joe Barton and Mr Brian Baxter

The 1739 Club

The 1739 Club met in the Queens Hotel Dundee, the last weekend in November 2021. The usual meet and greet happened on Saturday Lunch time where hellos were exchanged and friendships renewed. As was the custom and is still the custom, some refreshments were partaken as a warmer into the bank for our evening festivities. We assembled for our group photo before entering our venue for dinner and entertainment.

The Queens Hotel supplied a hearty meal with port and drinks served at the table. The entertainment, was supplied by Lt Col Jock Menzies, Maj Alex Stewart, Billy Whytock, Pipe Major Alistair Duthie and myself. The songs were sung, the music played and the jokes flowed like the drinks being well consumed during the evening. The Club met in the morning for Breakfast and then as is our custom, goodbyes were said safe journeys voiced and we parted promising to meet in a years' time for a continuation of the movement.



1739 Group at the Queen's Hotel, Dundee