Chairman of Trustees Foreword

At the trustees' meeting held in The Royal Scots Club on 23 October Robert Watson stood down as a trustee and Gordon Rae and Norman Soutar became trustees. Robert has handed over the chairmanship of the Museum and Heritage Committee to Gordon. Under Robert's outstanding leadership a huge amount has been achieved ranging from a major refurbishment of the Museum to Royals memorable participation in World War 1 (WW1) commemorative events and this summer's high profile display of the Waterloo Colours in the Castle's Great Hall. The other Regimental trustees with their lead responsibilities are: Robbie Scott-Bowden, John Sands (Regimental Association), David Nisbet (Communication), George Lowder (Benevolence) and Jeremy Richardson (Investment and Finance).

It was reported that income from The Royal Scots Regimental Trust (the combination of The Regimental Trust and the Benevolence Society) was between £60K and £70K annually. The overall strategy is to meet our Regimental requirements from investment income, thus ensuring our long term sustainability.

The Regimental Office, under Jimmy Springthorpe - our Regimental Administrator - who is admirably supported by a noble band of volunteers (anyone from our Regimental Family who is interested in becoming involved as a volunteer please step forward) is now well established within The Royal Scots Club. There continues to be a very healthy relationship with the Club, which is preparing for its centenary commemoration of its foundation, enabled by the extremely generous contribution of the people of Edinburgh to establish a war memorial in memory of all Royal Scots who were killed in WW1.

Strengthening links with the wider Regimental Family remains a core objective of the trustees; effective communication will be essential. To this end David Nisbet conducted a review of our current communication, which included another valuable consultation survey. Work is now in hand to take his recommendations forward, to achieve an effective 'all informed net' against the backdrop of a strengthened brand, ie our Regiment: The Royal Scots, with wider public recognition of our unique history and our place in contemporary Scotland and much further afield. There is a very strong desire to promote and encourage more inclusive associating.

The Regimental Association continues to organise participation in external events, including Remembrance parades and services across UK and branch activities, benefitting the membership of 250, which includes Family members. The Association Pipe Band remains an important part of our Association. Looking ahead, consultation is well under way towards moving to a truly 'national Association', which would see all branches continuing to operate as at present but by being coordinated and led by the Association HQ based in the Regimental Office, as opposed to the present arrangement which has the Scottish Branches Intermediate structure. There is an aspiration to create a worldwide/virtual branch to allow those Royals living overseas to associate more easily.
In February there will be two Op Granby events; there is a formal national commemoration service at the National Memorial Arboretum on 28 February and a dinner for Op Granby veterans in the Club on 26 February. More detail is on the website.

The Regiment features in the Army in Scotland's painting montage that was presented to the Scottish Parliament in early October. The plan is for the painting, which illustrates the Army in Scotland over the last 100 years, with The Royal Scots depicted in an Op Granby scene, to tour the major cities of Scotland starting in February. When known the tour details will be posted on the website.

Linkage with The Royal Regiment of Scotland (SCOTS), formed ten years ago on our Regimental Day in 2006, continues to be healthy. Whilst Royals are now serving throughout the SCOTS battalions the Association's links with 1 SCOTS, whose home is Palace Barracks in Northern Ireland, remain particularly strong. I would encourage everyone to take every opportunity to spread the word that joining The Royal Regiment of Scotland, Scotland's infantry of today, is a very worthwhile career.

On the evening of the Trustees meeting Tam Douglas and Andy Kay, who were judged to have contributed most to the well-being of the Regiment over the last 12 months, were presented with their Regimental Prizes at the Officer Dinner in the Club. Many congratulations!

Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to our Thistle editor, Bob Paterson, who is standing down after producing nine excellent editions of our Regimental journal. His deep interest in all aspects of our Regimental Family has ensured that we have enjoyed a real quality publication.

Up the Royals!

Nemo Me Impune Lacessit

Colonel Martin Gibson OBE DL

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**Centenary Woodland Project**

After leaving Hepburn House at the end of the Gretna centenary commemoration events in May, HRH The Princess Royal, in her capacity as Patron of the Woodland Trust, undertook another engagement with a Royal Scot connection. She officially opened Scotland's First World War Centenary Wood in the Pentland Hills above Dreghorn Barracks, overlooking Edinburgh and, appropriately, Leith.

When completed Dreghorn Wood will consist of 50,000 trees. As part of the project pupils from Leith Academy have planted 215 mixed trees in 'The Quintinshill Grove'. HRH planted the 216th tree, a rowan, making one tree for each of the 216 members of 7 RS killed in the Gretna crash. The rowan was chosen because in folklore it was known as the traveller's tree and is therefore symbolic of those who never returned from the long journey from Scotland to the front lines.

*‘HRH at Dreghorn Wood’*

*‘The Tree Planters’*

The project is on-going and volunteers to help with the planting, or donations, are always welcome. For more details visit: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/centenarywoods/
Throughout the fighting at Loos there had been many remarkable acts of bravery including Private Robert Dunsire of 13 RS being awarded the Regiment's third Victoria Cross of the war.

On 26 September, to commemorate Dunsire's outstanding bravery, a VC paving stone was unveiled at Toll Park, Buckhaven, Fife, his birthplace, following a service at Buckhaven Parish Church. Robert Watson led a party of Old Royals at the ceremony.

"18274 Private Robert Dunsire, 13th Battalion, The Royal Scots (Lothian Regiment).
For the most conspicuous bravery on Hill 70 on 26 September, 1915. Private Dunsire went out under very heavy fire and rescued a wounded man from between the firing lines. Later, when another man considerably nearer the German lines was heard shouting for help, he crawled out again with utter disregard to the enemy's fire and carried him in also."

Loos was the main British offensive of 1915 and was fought over the flat coal-mining district south of La Bassée Canal in Flanders. There were considerable initial gains and the 15 (Scottish) Division, which included 13 RS, carried Loos itself. Initial gains, however, were lost due to determined German counter attacks. 11 RS and 12 RS, both serving in 9 (Scottish) Division, also took part in the battle which, for all three battalions, was their first experience of a major offensive. The casualties in all three battalions were very heavy.

Unlike the Gretna commemoration earlier in the year, which was almost exclusively a Royal Scots commemoration, Loos was a truly national battle. Eighty British regiments were awarded the battle honour and that figure included all ten of the Scottish regiments that served in WW1.
Dunsire was a miner and when writing to his mother about his actions he simply stated: “You know mother, a miner never thinks of danger”. Sadly, Dunsire's luck did not hold. He was mortally wounded in a trench mortar attack in the Loos sector on 31 January 1916, aged 24.

The 3rd Battalion Waterloo colours were displayed in the Great Hall of Edinburgh Castle from early May until 9 September. They attracted very considerable interest and it is estimated that they were seen by around 500,000 people. The possibility of displaying them in the Museum for the foreseeable future is now being studied.

On 3 October Andy McDowall presented a Regimental pipe banner to the mayor of the village of Le Paradis, to hang in the church, to mark our association with the village over 75 years of war and peace.

Work is now on-going to try to secure a permanent site for the carriage at the National Rail Museum's planned satellite museum at the Leicester end of a restored Great Central Railway.

As mentioned in the last Thistle a DVD has been produced of the 21-23 May Gretna Commemoration events and is available from the Regimental Office. The cost is £5.00 or £6.00 when sent by post.

The major commemorations in 2016 will be the 25th anniversary of Op Granby in late February and the Somme centenary commemorations, beginning on 1 July, during which the focus for us will be Contalmaison and the actions there of 15 RS and 16 RS.

Progress with the digitisation of the Museum Contents Record, although slow due to unforeseen technical problems, continues to be made both in checking the existing accession cards against items within the Museum, and with the process of transferring the database to the new system.

Work on reviewing the Library contents to reduce them from a broad-based military library to a smaller Royal Scots focussed one has made considerable progress. The present holding has been greatly reduced and a large number of volumes of no direct relevance will be offered to other museums or for sale to individuals.

Thanks to a grant of £2,000 from the Army Museums Ogilby Trust, and Sir Tom Farmer generously agreeing to declare his donation to the Gretna commemoration events as gift aid, we have been able to accept a quote to re-label all the items on display in the Museum to a common standard and pattern. It is hoped to complete that task in the next few months.
The reserve collection of uniforms has been moved to temporary storage at Craigiehall. There they will be sorted into those items we wish to retain and those, mostly duplicates, that can be offered to other museums or sold for Museum funds. Those being retained will be cleaned and, where required, repaired, before being hung on padded hangers within standard museum covers. On completion of the project the retained uniforms will be returned to the Museum storage area and hung on rails under protective covers.

If you thought dressing up was something confined to small girls think again? On the other hand we have to acknowledge that our senior Quartermasters have excellent dress taste!

**Visit to 1 SCOTS**

Given their operational commitments and pace of life, 1 SCOTS seldom have the opportunity to be together as a battalion. However, such an opportunity presented itself over the weekend of 8/9 August. It took the form of a sports day on the Saturday with a social event in the evening and a church service on the Sunday, to all of which the antecedent Associations were invited.

Afterwards the 1 SCOTS Regimental Band arrived to provide entertainment for the evening’s activities. The chefs slaved over hot stoves producing outstanding haggis and neeps and when the Guinness ran out it was replaced with Harp lager. The evening ended around midnight with Association members being amongst the last to leave.

On Sunday morning there was a service in the Garrison Church. The congregation then moved to the Memorial Garden where Association members had the opportunity to explain to the serving soldiers the background of those commemorated there. For both the church service and the visit to the Memorial Garden we were joined by members of the RHF Association. Those who have visited the Memorial Garden will be heartened to know that our old friend Albert Owens, formerly of The Parachute Regiment, continues to keep the garden in splendid order.

By then it was time to retire to the messes for lunch. Both messes are very well appointed and have a good balance of antecedent silver, pictures and other property on display. It goes without saying that the hospitality was of the highest order.

RSM Stevie Boyle, who has been most supportive of the antecedent Associations, provided continuity as the Commanding Officers handed over almost immediately after the weekend. Lt Col Matt Munro has moved to a new job with exciting global challenges and has been replaced by Lt Col Nick Wight-Boycott. We wish them both well in their new appointments.

We think we are in touch with all the Old Royals living in the Province but, if there are any out there we do not know about, the NI Branch of the Association would be very pleased to see them. Contact details are on the back page.
Golf

The Edinburgh Branch of the Association won this year’s Gladdy Murry Trophy with a score of 109 points, but the competition was close with the Central and East of Scotland Branches taking joint second place with scores of 104. The winner of the Broughton Putter was Walter Hutchison of the East of Scotland Branch. The competition was held at Silverknowes Golf Course on 30 August. The weather was warm and sunny and the golfers were grateful to Andy Fitzpatrick for organising the event, Liz Kyle for refreshments at the 11th hole and the staff at Silverknowes for their hospitality.

‘At Silverknowes’

Fundraising – Rome2Home

Martin Burnett and William Malloy are getting back in the saddle. In 2014 they cycled from Land’s End to John O’Groats to raise funds for Erskine. This time they will leave Rome on 1 August and arrive back in Edinburgh on 20 August. A gruelling challenge and we wish them every success. If you wish to donate to this worthy cause visit: www.justgiving.com/Rome2Home2016/. You can follow their progress on Twitter – Rome2Home2016.

The Royal Scots Club

In November the Club hosted a charity event in aid of Alzheimer’s Scotland. Jimmy Sinclair was host for the evening while head chef Bremner McDonald gave a cookery demonstration of delicious winter warmer supper dishes. Bremner was well supported by Richard Meadows from Great Grog who chose the wines.

Speaker’s lunches and dinners continue to be popular. During the autumn members have listened with much interest to a variety of speakers. Captain Simon Pettit RN told members about his role in preparing HMS Queen Elizabeth for going to sea. She is the biggest and most powerful aircraft carrier ever constructed for the Royal Navy and his talk was full of amazing statistics including a hugely impressive aircraft sortie rate.

Perhaps more in keeping with the Club’s military connections was a talk given by Alex Manning about the role in the Great War of the Royal Navy’s infantry – the Royal Naval Division. The Division fought its first action at Antwerp in 1914 and fought at Gallipoli, the Somme, Arras and Ypres before helping to stem the German spring offensive of 1918. Although the Division accounted for just five per cent of the Navy’s manpower it incurred over forty per cent of its casualties.

St Andrews Night is probably the highlight of the Club’s social programme and is always well attended. This year the guest speaker was Professor Norman Drummond CBE FRSE who has been described as “one of the most inspiring and talented Scots of his generation”. It was an evening to remember.

‘Richard, Bremner and Jimmy’

‘Norman Drummond, middle’
The National Memorial Arboretum

The 25th anniversary of the first Gulf War will be marked in February. A dinner will be held in the RS Club for Op Granby veterans on Friday 26 February. On Sunday 28 February a national commemoration ceremony will be held at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. Details about attendance can be obtained from the website or by contacting the Regimental Office.

The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire was officially opened by HRH The Duchess of Kent on 16 May 2001. The design is carefully conceived to provide a 150 acre space for peaceful contemplation and a living and growing environment for an assortment of trees and wildlife. It contains over 40,000 maturing trees, many of which are dedicated, and over 300 significant memorials. The Scottish regiments are represented by a line of Scots Pines. It is a spiritually uplifting site which honours the fallen and recognises service and sacrifice.

While the Armed Forces Memorial is the centrepiece of the site, and there are a great many individual military memorials, it is more than a Forces memorial. For example, there are memorials to Post Office workers killed during wars, the 48,000 Bevan Boys who were conscripted to serve in the mines during the Second World War and a police memorial avenue, aptly named 'The Beat'. The latter contains a chestnut tree for every police force in the UK. Chestnuts were chosen because the first policemen, known as 'peelers' or 'bobbies', carried chestnut truncheons.

The Armed Forces Memorial is a stunning piece of architecture. It consists of a 43 metre diameter stone structure comprising two curved walls and two straight walls faced with over 1,000 tons of Portland stone. At the centre of the Memorial are two bronze sculptures which bear silent witness to the cost of armed conflict. A gap has been left in the two southern walls to allow a shaft of sunlight to penetrate the heart of the Memorial onto the central bronze wreath on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the year.

The walls bear the names of over 16,000 members of the British Armed Forces who have been killed whilst on duty, died in an operational theatre or been targeted by terrorists since the end of the Second World War.
Regimental News

Maj Gen Bob Bruce completed his year as Deputy Commander Coalition Joint Task Forces at the end of last year. He is now serving at Andover as Director Capability.

Brig Charlie Coull has been appointed Honorary Colonel of 6 SCOTS. He is a Borderer and a former Commanding Officer of 6 SCOTS.

As reported in the Foreword a large montage-style painting was handed over to the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament on 7 October. The painting vividly documents the Scottish contribution to soldiering and marks the relationship which has existed between the Army and Scottish society over the last 100 years. The painting depicts 22 scenes and shows our Regiment participating in the first Gulf War. The illustration is of soldiers dismounting from a Warrior during an assault to take an enemy position. The Commanding Officer’s Warrior, flying a pennant and Saltire, is in the background.

‘The Painting’

John Myles, one of the older members of the Southern Branch of the Association and a veteran of WW2, was delighted to attend the VJ parade in London on 15 August accompanied by his son Andrew. Alec Crawford, also a 1 RS Burma veteran, represented us at the VJ Day service in the Canongate Kirk in Edinburgh. Sadly, Alec has since died. We salute their loyalty and tenacity.

George Higgins, who works tirelessly to keep us all associating, has hit a new high. His informal ‘Gathering’ in Edinburgh on 31 October was his most successful venture to date and attracted 76 participants. Well done George. George’s next ‘Gathering’ will be on 7 May. George says this is an opportunity “to celebrate/commemorate our great Regiment’s last battle honour”. Let’s set a new record.

The Regimental Office is thriving in the RS Club and some minor recent structural improvements should bring benefits. The Club continues to host an ever increasing range of Regimental functions. It was the venue for the Association Autumn dinner on 26 September, the Royal Scots TA Officers’ Association AGM and lunch on 3 October, the Officers’ dinner on 23 October, the Band Reunion on 24 October and the Association AGM on 30 October.

The Musselburgh Races on 27 September were well attended and much enjoyed, not least due to the presence of the Association Pipe Band.

‘Happy Race Goers’

The formal alliance of The Canadian Scottish (Princess Mary’s) with The Royal Regiment of Scotland was reported in the last edition of The Thistle. To mark that alliance, and to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the battle of Kitchener’s Wood in 1915, the Canadian Scottish has presented a pipe banner and plaque to the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

‘Pipe Banner’
Members of the Regiment were on parade all over the country to mark Remembrance Sunday and what is reported here is just the tip of the iceberg.

The Regiment was well represented at the opening of the RBLS Garden of Remembrance in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, on Monday 2 November. Jimmy Springthorpe laid the wreath on behalf of the Regiment.

The ceremony at the Glencorse Gates on Saturday 7 November was well attended despite the rain. The wreath was laid by Lady Candy Richardson and the piper and bugler were from 2 SCOTS. After the ceremony those attending enjoyed an excellent lunch in the WOs & Sgts Mess courtesy of 2 SCOTS.

On Sunday 8 November the Association was represented at ceremonies at Edinburgh City Chambers, at Haymarket, in Peebles and in Whitburn. Some members of the Regiment were present at the Canongate Kirk as were representative bodies from HMS Queen Elizabeth, currently being fitted out at Rosyth, and 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron RAuxAF. After the service there was a short wreath laying ceremony at the Parish War Memorial at the Canongate Tollbooth where Charles Ritchie laid a wreath.

The Southern Branch was represented at the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh on 5 November. Two days later they held their customary regimental cross planting ceremony at the same location which was followed by a brief service. On Remembrance Sunday 19 members took part in the march past the Cenotaph followed by lunch in the East India Club.
Prior to lunch in the Royal Scots Club Mark Strudwick laid a wreath at the Memorial Panels in the Club hallway. In the afternoon a Service of Remembrance was held at Hepburn House, led by 6 SCOTS and attended by Royals with TA connections.

The furthest flung remembrance event that we are aware of took place in Mesa, Arizona, USA where Jimmy Carlisle was on parade carrying the Union Flag. Also in the USA Rab Johnstone laid flowers on the grave of Sgt Malcolm Macfarlane of 9 RS at the Naval plot in Mount Moriah cemetery in Philadelphia. Macfarlane died of influenza while serving on recruiting duties. Rab tells us that Jimmy Carlisle had told him about Macfarlane’s grave. Rab then worked with the Friends of Mount Moriah cemetery to locate the grave. We are grateful to them both for remembering Royals ‘across the pond’.
IN MEMORIAM

CANNAN
On 21 October, in Edinburgh, Maj
1 RS in Korea from The King’s
Regiment

CRAWFORD
On 11 November, in Edinburgh,
Alexander (Alec) Crawford, 1 RS
WW2, a 19 year old piper at
Kohima in 1944

CUTHBERTSON
In September, in Wiltshire, Maj
David Cuthbertson, RS and then
SASC but remained in contact with
RHQ

GOVAN
On 14 November, Alexander (Sandy)
Govan, 1 RS Pipes and Drums

MASTERTON
On 21 July, at Ashford, Kent, Sgt

NESS
On 8 August in Edinburgh,
Brian Ness

NICHOL
In November, in Hawick, Toby
(Jake) Nichol, 1 RS Berlin 1952
and Korea 1953, aged 82

ROBERTSON
On 2 August, in Edinburgh, Bruce
(Feet) Robertson, brother of WO1
Jimmy Robertson

STEWART
On 20 August, Sgt Jimmy Stewart,
1 RS 1952-1976, aged 80. Sp Coy
MT Sgt in Cuprus 1974-75

VIDLER
On 1 August, in Croydon, Frank
Vidler, 1RS WW2, aged 96

From the Editor

Editor would like to thank all those who have contributed articles and pictures. The deadline for contributions to the summer edition is Monday 3 July and these should be sent to my successor as editor, Ann-Marie Corkepton, at ann-marie@corkepton.com Please let Ann-Marie have contributions, including pictures, when they become available rather than waiting for the deadline.

With best wishes.

Bob Paterson
## FORECAST OF EVENTS

### JANUARY
- **Friday 22nd** RS Club Burns Supper
- **Saturday 23rd** Highland Branch Burns Night
- **Tuesday 26th** Club Burns Lunch
- **Saturday 30th** Central Branch Burns Night

### FEBRUARY
- **Saturday 6th** Edinburgh Branch Burns Night
- **Friday 26th** Op GRANBY Dinner in RS Club
- **Sunday 28th** Op GRANBY commemoration at the National Memorial Arboretum

### MARCH
- **Sunday 6th** Club Mother’s Day Lunch
- **25th-27th** 40th Anniversary of NI Incident
- **Sunday 27th** Club Easter Lunch
- **Monday 28th** Regimental Day
- Club Regimental Day Lunch

### APRIL
- **Saturday 2nd** Association Regimental Day Dinner RS Club
- **Friday 8th** Museum & Heritage Committee meeting the Castle
- **Sunday 10th** Fallen Comrades Golf Alloa
- **Monday 11th** Club Evening Lecture – Lt Col Bob Paterson
- **Friday 29th** Association AGM RS Club
- **Saturday 30th** RS Association reunion BMC Club

### MAY
- **Saturday 21st** Gretna 101st commemoration Rosebank cemetery
- **28th-29th** Le Paradis pilgrimage
- **Friday 27th** Regimental Trust Meeting (tbc)
- **Tuesday 31st** Battle of Jutland commemoration

### JUNE
- **Saturday 25th** Armed Forces Day
- **30 Jun/1 Jul** Vigil at Scottish National War Memorial

### JULY
- **Jul- Nov** Last Post sounded at the Scottish National War Memorial
- **Saturday 16th** 16 RS Contalmaison centenary commemoration

### SEPTEMBER
- **Saturday 24th** Club pre RRS Day Racing Lunch with speakers
- **Sunday 25th** Royal Regiment of Scotland Race Day, Musselburgh

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### Association Meetings

#### EDINBURGH
- Last Friday of each month at 8.00 pm at Leith ex-Servicemen's Club, 7 Smith's Place, Edinburgh
- Contact: Mags Allen
  wee wee gie1@virginmedia.com

#### CENTRAL SCOTLAND
- First Sunday of each month at 2.00 pm at Hillcroft Hotel, Whitburn, West Lothian
- Contact: David Milne
  David.milne3343@live.co.uk

#### EAST OF SCOTLAND
- Last Saturday of each month at 7.30 pm at RBL Prestonpans, East Lothian
- Contact: Ross Swinton
  Ross.swinton.24@gmail.com

#### NORTHERN IRELAND
- First Tuesday of each month at RBL Ards
- Contact: Davy McKendrick, Secretary
  davidsmck1@sky.com

#### HIGHLAND
- On the first Thursday of the month at 7.30 pm at Raigmore Recreation Rooms, Inverness
- Contact: william.jeans@btinternet.com

#### SOUTHERN
- Contact: Tam Millar
  Weetam0571@sky.com

### PIPE BAND
- Contact: Torquil Corkerton
  Torquil@ednet.co.uk
- For further information contact The Regimental Office, The Royal Scots Club, 29-31 Aberdromby Place, Edinburgh
  EH3 6OE
- Tel: 0131 557 0405
  Email: admin@theroyalscots.co.uk

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[www.theroyalscots.co.uk](http://www.theroyalscots.co.uk)