



The Thistle

Journal of The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)

Volume 33

Summer 2018

Chairman of Trustees and President of the Regimental Association

I sincerely hope that this finds you well, enjoying the Summer and the unusual Scottish Summer weather. The "Beast from the East" has been replaced with the "Sun from the South." The passing of the seasons has certainly been more marked this year than most. This cyclical natural rhythm reminds me that our Regimental annual rhythm, as an antecedent Regiment, continues to bed in. You may say "of course it has, it's had 12 years to do so" but these things take time. It has taken a while for us to reconfigure our Office in The Club, refine our structures, our funds and the governance of a thriving national Association. We are almost there. I am hugely grateful to all of you who give time and effort to lead these activities and to everyone else who supports them.

We have very well-rehearsed formats for several annual events; including commemorations at Rosebank Cemetery, to remember those who lost their lives in The Gretna rail disaster on 22nd May 1915 and the fighting at Le Paradis in 1940. It is a great credit to David Dickson, Iain Johnstone and their team of helpers, that the new story boards are now in place in Le Paradis and this is covered later in this edition.

We even have a Standard Operating Procedure for planning participation in new events and a Standing Instruction to cover all the recurring services. It is fantastic that large and small bands of Royal Scots turn out from the Cenotaph to Inverness, via Peebles, numerous Edinburgh sites including Haymarket, The City Chambers, The Club, The Glencorse Gates and Leith and many other points in between. This year additional events include memorial services and commemorations for three of our VC winners. These events are being led by Local Authorities in Renfrewshire, Edinburgh and Wolverhampton with our support, including a dedicated Liaison Officer to help guide Local Authority planning. I am most grateful to Martin Gibson, Gordon Rae and James Finlay for fulfilling these roles. Details of these events are on the website and in the Forecast of Events. We will report on them in the next edition. 2018 of course marks the 100th anniversary of the end of the 1914 to 1918 War and we have been well represented at the services that have already been held at Contalmaison and elsewhere in France. Andy McDowall's article in this journal records some of this and many thanks to Andy for representing us.

It is clear The Association in its reconfigured structure, is thriving and before Remembrance events this year we have The Nagpore Dinner, Musselburgh Races, The Officers' Dinner and golf and a Southern Branch gathering in London to look forward to. Elsewhere, Charlie Wallace has been appointed as Chair of The Highland and Lowland Brigade Club and will look after Royal Scot interests there. This will largely involve coordinating our involvement in the sporting events (curling, golf, shooting and cricket) that are still played.

I am delighted to report that Tom Logan has been awarded The Regimental Prize for 2017 in recognition of all his work on behalf of The Association, not least in developing and implementing the new constitution.



Now to more serious matters. A few you will be aware of the Northern Ireland Legacy Enquiries that are being conducted. The Royal Scots served with distinction throughout "The Troubles" and given our professional standards and conduct, we were often deployed to the most difficult hotspots. It is not therefore surprising, that we will likely be asked about some of the events currently under investigation. We have for the last two years, however, been trying to influence and improve the system by which Royal Scots will be contacted in relation to these enquiries. The correct procedure is for initial contact to be made by a Team from The Ministry of Defence, rather than a direct approach by The Northern Ireland Coroner's Office, The Enquiry Teams or the chain of command in Northern Ireland. I would most strongly urge any Royal Scot who is called, or receives any communication, in relation to these enquiries, to seek immediate advice from The Regimental Office before responding to any request for information. The Regimental Office will ensure that you have the correct points of contact to seek legal and wider advice from The Ministry of Defence Team.

In 2019 we celebrate the centenary of The Royal Scots Club. The Regiment and Association will play a fulsome part in all the events being planned to mark this and I urge you to put the dates in your diary now.

I look forward to the next time our paths cross and seeing you at one of the many events in our annual calendar. I hope that you enjoy the rest of the Summer.

Up The Royals

Yours Aye

George Lowder

SPOTLIGHT – Heather Goodall

Heather joined us as the Assistant Regimental Administrator in March 2018.

Raised in Sandgate, Kent, Heather attended the Folkestone Grammar School for Girls before joining the Civil Service and working as PA for the Comd of the Operational Training and Advisory Group (OPTAG) based at Risborough Barracks. In 2013 Heather left the Civil Service to accompany her husband on a posting to the British Peace Support Team in Pretoria, South Africa. His next posting brought them to Edinburgh where he has spent two years as the Welfare Officer for 2 SCOTS and is due to take over as RCMO for the Battalion after the summer.

Heather and her husband live in Penicuik with their two Maltese dogs. With the Pentland Hills on the doorstep weekends are spent walking, watching rugby and exploring Edinburgh.



A Day in the Life

By Lieutenant Colonel Jim Blythe MBE

A day in the life? Actually, nine years in the life – of first an RS Regimental Secretary and then a SCOTS Area Secretary, both of which have brought challenges and equal reward.

At a time when he and his RHQ RS team were feeling taken for granted, the late Lt Col Stuart McBain, cautioned me that he didn't draw his pay for simply turning up. How right he was! Of course, one must give some impression of being a bit crusty. Leather elbow patches are not mandatory, but help to identify members of an exclusive club with no annual sub, but which pays a salary. The incumbent must make every effort to attend morning coffee in the Castle Mess where the view is magnificent, the scones are excellent and Castle gossip abounds: which visiting dignitary fell asleep in his soup, whose delivery van got stuck in the tunnel, whether the new flagpole will last any longer than the previous one, and so forth. Missing curry lunch on Thursdays is excusable only with a sick line.

To sum up the past nine years, "everything changes but nothing changes." In 1633, we started off in red pantaloons, followed by white breeches, grey breeks, briefly into Government tartan trews before adopting our famous Hunting Stuart and now into Government once again. But today's Regiment still stands at the Right of the Line and today's occupant of the OPMH ensures the continuum. It is a very significant responsibility to be engaged with, on one hand, 1 SCOTS, 2 SCOTS, Balaklava Company and 6 SCOTS in Edinburgh, Bathgate and Galashiels; and on the other hand, with the familiar communities of Edinburgh, the Lothians, Peeblesshire and the Borders on whom the new Regiment depends for moral support and recruits in exactly the same way that their predecessors did.

A challenge is that the SCOTS brand is not as strong as those of its predecessors. Here is an own goal, the saving of which retrospectively brings challenge - and much satisfaction when it succeeds. Engagement is with Lord Lieutenants, Lord Provosts, councillors who are Armed Forces and Veterans' champions, and with business and sporting personalities across south east Scotland. Winning over such personalities to exercise influence is the name of the game along with devising and coordinating

community engagement events to showcase the Regiment and to help convert the Armed Forces Covenant and the Firm Base concept into action.

A typical day in the life was the Musselburgh Racecourse Bicentenary with HM The Queen as the guest of honour, with the SCOTS Band, 1 SCOTS P&D and the Mascot. Her Majesty was delighted, the Racecourse was impressed, and The Regiment was in the eye of influential guests. At the eleventh hour the Band's coach didn't turn up, so one of the clarinettists commandeered another and got the band on its spot minutes before The Queen. Later the same year, I engineered further involvement in the Musselburgh Marches with the RS Association and SCOTS exercising the Freedoms of the Honest Toun and East Lothian respectively, with Lothian & Borders ACF and SCOTS Recruiting Team involvement and a joint RS / SCOTS / Musselburgh museum exhibition.

Future plans are in development for next year's Linlithgow Marches on the centenary of 10 RS (Linlithgowshire Volunteers) return home from North Russia with a captured gun and the Battle Honour Archangel. Again, it will be an opportunity to exercise freedom privileges; RS of Linlithgow and SCOTS of West Lothian with the colours of 1 SCOTS, 2 SCOTS and 6 SCOTS and RS Association Standards on parade along with the SCOTS Recruiting Team, Lothian & Borders ACF and the Archangel Gun.

By the end of 2018, I will have retired from an appointment that has been fulfilling in both RS and SCOTS terms. Is there an Old Royal out there hankering after leather elbow patches, keen to beat my record for extending morning coffee in the Mess into lunch – and to actively guarantee the legacy of Scotland's oldest regiment within Scotland's newest regiment? The RS Regimental Pillars of Association, Benevolence, Museum and Club do a great deal to maintain RS legacy, but even more could be achieved by the right person stepping forward, for the combined benefit of the RS name and the future of SCOTS. Otherwise there will be a gap and an opportunity lost. So, how about it?

Any Old Royal interested in following in Jim Blythe's footsteps in the Castle, should contact wjblythe@hotmail.com

Up The Royals!

REGIMENTAL OFFICE

By Captain Jimmy Springthorpe

In the last edition of The Thistle, I finished those notes by saying "I now have the unenviable task of trying to find a replacement", this was referring to a replacement for Liz Kyle in the regimental Office. It was decided to upgrade the post to Assistant Regimental Administrator and I began by advertising through the weekly jobs bulletin published by RHQ SCOTS. This proved to be successful and John Dent and I interviewed five applicants. All of them were strong contenders but one interviewee stood out, therefore we offered the job to Heather Goodall, who took up the post in early March. A short pen picture of Heather appears elsewhere.

We were very sad to hear of the death of Colonel SFM (Steve) Telfer MBE, who passed away suddenly in Nigeria where he had been working. Steve commanded 1RS from 2000-2002 in Ballykelly, Northern Ireland. An obituary will be published in the winter edition of The Thistle. A number of his colleagues including The Chairman and Vice Chairman attended a Memorial Service in Colchester on 13th July 2018

On 26th July, Colonel John Purves MBE, a former Gurkha Officer presented a Kukri to the Regimental Office. The Kukri is set on a plinth which also incorporates the cap badge of an 8RS Officer alongside Colonel Purves's own cap badge. A brass plate on the plinth reads "Rifleman's Kukri, 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles The Cap Badges are those of Captain Walter Ballantyne 8th Royal Scots and Colonel John Purves MBE 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles. (Both of Walkerburn, Peeblesshire)"

Earlier this year Colonel Purves very kindly presented a 10 GR Pipe Banner to The Royal Scots Club. The Pipe Banner now has pride of place in the members lounge.

Another new addition to the office is the replica colours "Sewn and presented by the Ladies of the Regiment to the London Old Soldiers Gathering of The Royal Scots, 17th June 1905". Used by the London Section of the Association until 1995, they have been held at RHQ and now the Regimental Office and used at Regimental Dinners. The Colours had

gotten very frail over the years and before they finally fell apart, we stopped using them at the dinners. I investigated restoration work but since that was not a viable option, it was decided to have them framed which has since been completed.

We are always happy to see visitors in the office, so please pop in if you are in the vicinity; you might even get a cuppa.



Colonel John Purves presents a Kukri to Captain Jimmy Springthorpe whilst Lieutenant Colonel Jim Blythe looks on
Photo courtesy of Heather Goodall



Banners within The Royal Scots Club
Photo courtesy of Adrian Hayes

REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

By Chairman Jimmy Springthorpe

To date, 2018 has been a very busy year for The Regimental Association and it looks set to continue in the same vein. I will summarise some of what has taken place in the first half of the year and other reports will give the detail of events held. On the 19th January, we held the AGM in the Royal Scots Club and there was a very encouraging turnout of 68 members and 21 apologies. With the inclusion of proxy voting this shows that the membership is very much engaged with what is going on. Central branch held their Burns Supper on the 27th of January then East of Scotland Branch held their Burns supper on 3rd of February. In March a very successful Regimental Day dinner was held in the club and best wishes for Regimental Day were sent to our Patron, The Princess Royal who as always responded wishing the Association all the very best. In April the Association Committee meeting took place and a very successful Regimental reunion took place the following evening.

In May, the Fallen Comrades Golf Meeting took place at

Deer Park. The Annual Gretna Commemoration Parade and Service took place at Rosebank Cemetery. Again, those events are covered elsewhere.

June saw us once again take part, together with the wider Regimental Family, in the annual Armed Forces Day parade in Edinburgh. On what was a beautiful summers day, 50 former Royal Scots turned out to show their pride in their Regiment. Brigadier George Lowder, Chairman of The Regimental Trustees led the Royal Scots contingent on a route which ran from Charlotte Square to St Andrews Square. The Right Honourable Frank Ross, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, took the Salute as the parade passed Castle St. On arrival in St Andrews Square, The Lord Provost expressed his and the city's appreciation of service men and women past and present. Sir Alastair Irwin President of Legion Scotland, spoke of his pride in Scottish veterans and thanked all those who had turned out on this occasion. A beer tent was on site to provide sustenance and veterans were given tickets to redeem for beer. After a long march in high temperatures the cold beer was very welcome. I was about to moan about feeling my age at the end of the parade but came up short when I

remembered that I had marched shoulder to shoulder with 86 years old Stevie Simson. (That's supporting your Regiment.)



Members of the Regimental Family participated in Armed Forces Day

Photo courtesy of Mr Charlie MacVicar

As we supported Armed Forces Day other members of the Association were with McCrae's Battalion Trust on their annual pilgrimage to Contalmaison.

All this activity requires a lot of time and effort to be put in by individuals and it is very fitting that The Association Secretary Tam Logan has been awarded The Regimental Prize for 2017. Tam is a very worthy recipient and he will be presented with the prize by the Regimental Trustees at the Officers' Dinner on Friday, 26th October.

As we prepare to go to print on this Edition of the Thistle planning is underway to commemorate three recipients of The Victoria Cross. The Association, together with the wider Regimental Family, will play an important role in all of them.

Details of these commendations can be found on the Regimental website.

ROYAL SCOTS REUNION

The Regimental Reunion was held in Teviot House, part of the University of Edinburgh. A total of 169 people attended from ex Royals to spouses and other members of the wider Regimental Family. The organisers took the whole building which had several rooms available, so people could sit in the dance rooms or find a quieter room to have a chat and a more subdued drink. The entertainment included a disco followed by a buffet and raffle. The event was a great success and will be repeated in coming years.

HERITAGE & MUSEUM

By Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Rae

Since the last Thistle notes you will not have seen any obvious change in the Museum but if you look closely you will see several changes that were not obvious at first glance.

Following a surprise visit by Visit Scotland to the Museum to see how the Museum is as a visitor attraction; the museum retained its 4 Star status. Whilst it seems as if nothing has

changed, a lot of work and effort has gone into the museum to address the comments raised on the report to sustain this grading. This high standard needs to be maintained daily as no one ever knows when the next unannounced visit will take place. At the same time the Web Site is put under the same stringent scrutiny. For those regular visitors to the Web Site you will have noticed many changes to it to make it easier to navigate through. This revamp is thanks to Col Watson and Jim Anderson in the Regimental Office.

Following a theft last year from a museum in Edinburgh, the security of the museum was reviewed, and the security of the VCs in the Rotunda was enhanced. To look at it you will not notice any change but to the trained eye you will see its security has been substantially upgraded.

Digitisation of the Thistle has now been completed. The next stage is to have it uploaded onto the web site for all to see and search. This covers all the Thistles from the first one up until the amalgamation in 2006. This project has been achieved thanks to the hard work of Dr Keith Spence.

Whilst the uniform project is complete, we have added an extra phase to it where we are now selecting some 10-12 significant uniforms for the National Association for Decorative and Fine Arts Society (NADFAS) ladies to bring up to museum standard for future displays.

For the future, there are several projects now in their infancy which will be delivered some in the very near future:

Museum Store Room - It is intended to completely rebuild the store room at the museum with a bespoke modern monotrack storage system. This will entail emptying out the entire store room, dismantling the old wooden shelving, reinforcing the floor and then installing the new system which will increase the storage capacity of the store room by some 25% and deliver tailored storage solutions for specific items such as uniforms, pictures, paper records with shelving tailored to fit artefacts large and small.

Several projects are being developed with St Andrew's University:

Roll of Honour - An on line copy of the Roll of Honour of those Royal Scots killed in the First World War, courtesy of the Scottish National War Memorial which is being enhanced by drop down Regimental information including gallantry awards and photographs where family and friends will be able to leave messages, testaments, photographs and stories about individuals to coincide with the culmination of WW100 in November this year (available mid-August).

APP - A visitor experience enhancing APP for downloading giving a spoken guided tour of the Museum.

It is hoped that with modern technology this will also cover several foreign languages (available early September).

Virtual Heritage and Museum - In the longer term, a major project is being developed to create a virtual museum. This is in the very early stage as the concept of it is being developed but its purpose is intended to secure our Regimental heritage into the future.



**Crivvens! Jings! Help ma boab!
There's a muckle stone
brontosaurus pokin' its neb
intae the Auld Provost
Marshal's Hoose!**

OPENING OF THE MUSEUM 1961

By The Editorial Team

The Ceremonial Guard for the Princess Royal at the opening of the Royal Scots Museum on 11th April 1961. William Gilchrist is pictured 6th from the right, the Sgt featured in the photo is Bill Canon who passed away last year.



Photo courtesy of Mr William Gilchrist

THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

By Lieutenant Colonel Kieron Potts

In late 2016, 1 SCOTS received orders, as part of A2020 Refine, that the Battalion was to be transformed into a Specialist Infantry Battalion. This was to be a role that saw them being capable of operating at reach, in small teams, in a high threat environment. It was to be done primarily through the establishment of twelve-man teams and demanded a dramatic change in the configuration of their establishment – moving from an established strength of 566 to 267, all of whom were to be specially selected and assessed volunteers. The first challenge was to design and execute an Assessment Cadre to assess volunteers for their suitability to work alongside a foreign army. The second challenge was to design an Overseas Training Exercise (OTX). This was to train teams to operate in a high threat environment with a partner force. The Battalion's soldiers excelled themselves on the exercise and more often than not, exceeded expectations. Before the exercise was completed the first soldiers were deployed on operations in Somalia to train the Somali National Army. Such was the success of the process that the Battalion hit its operational capability two months early. As at Dec 17, elements have been supporting partner forces in Senegal, Cameroon, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya and Somalia. 2018 will

be a year of refinement as they consolidate their tasks with focus on Nigeria and Somalia.

In Apr 17, 2 SCOTS returned from Ex ASKARI STORM in Kenya and assumed the UK Standby Battalion (UKSB) task until the end of Jul 17. This saw the Battalion stood by to assist the forces of Law and Order in the event of a major terrorist attack somewhere in the UK. Meanwhile the Battalion carried on with its life undaunted. Jun 17 saw a highly successful Rowallan Targe Patrol Competition in the Pentlands, which was visited by HRH the Duke of York. The companies assisted in several UK resilience exercises and also provided small-scale specific police support in response to a number of incidents. During the period the CO, RSM and Adjt all handed over to their successors leaving the new team to carry on the good work. Following leave the Battalion commenced pre-deployment training, ran adventurous training and completed a successful battlefield study to Monte Cassino. However, Assaye Day was still celebrated as it has always been, but this time on 22nd Sep, as 23rd Sep was a Saturday. On this occasion the Assaye Colour was paraded by the QM (Maj Al Cuthbertson). Bn HQ, B and C Companies and elements of HQ Company deployed to Iraq on Op SHADER in Dec. the Training mission makes up an important part of the British Government's commitment to defeating Da'esh and saw Bn HQ and B Company deploy to Erbil in the Kurdish region of Iraq training peshmerga forces. C Company and a composite Engineer Squadron deployed to Taji and Besmaya, near Baghdad training Iraqi Army units. A Company deployed at the same time on Op TRENTON – a UN operation in South Sudan, as the force protection element for 21 Engineer Regiment who are constructing humanitarian camps and assisting with the construction of operating basis for UN troops. To add to the Battalions diaspora, 40 soldiers deployed on Op TOSCA in Cyprus, patrolling the green line with the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards.

Currently, half of 3 SCOTS are deployed on Op SHADER 6. The task it is fulfilling is very different to the last time the Battalion had elements deployed in Iraq. This time it is training Iraqi soldiers north of Baghdad for their battle against Da'esh, operating out of a joint coalition base governed by a US 1* formation. Significantly, it has also been entrusted with the protection of the camp and with 4500 soldiers in it; it is not a task to be taken lightly.

In early 2017, B and C (FSp) Companies headed off to Kenya to act as the enemy for 2 SCOTS on Ex ASKARI STORM and to run their live ranges. Maj Lee Curson's Company, supported by members of C(FSp) Company, stepped up to act as the enemy and enjoyed a good tussle with 2 SCOTS. Although heavily outnumbered it was a fabulous chance for young LCpls and Cpls to experiment with different tactics and test themselves and their teams. Meanwhile, D (ISR) Company set off for Jordan to conduct training of their own. It was a valuable four weeks, not only providing soldiers with the opportunity to practise basic drills but also to qualify team medics and to work alongside the Jordanian armed forces.

After the Battalion's adventures on the savannahs of Kenya and in the arid mountains of Jordan earlier in the year, on the 1st August 3 SCOTS became the UKSB for the north. The Battalion was utilised in the role with elements responding quickly to head north to relieve armed policeman to head south to the scene of a terrorist attack.

In 2016, 4 SCOTS trained for operations and in 2017 the Battalion deployed on operations. It has been an exceptional 24 months for the Battalion and whilst a few of the 4 SCOTS soldiers would prefer to be engrossed in the battles that

featured during the previous Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns, the jocks, once again, have acquitted themselves where ever they have been deployed or working and they were grateful for opportunities offered to them. Such were the successes of 2017; it was with immense pride the Battalion could reflect on the New Year's Honours list containing seven officers and soldiers who received commendations for their efforts. In Iraq, 250 members of 4 SCOTS from A and B Companies, with support from Sp and HQ Companies, were tasked with ensuring the security of a 3000-man coalition base in one of the country's most dangerous provinces, Al Anbar Province. There, they also trained the Iraqi Security Forces to such an extent that they finished 2017 in a position where they were able to declare Iraq: 'free from Da'esh'. Meanwhile, in Ukraine, D Company endured the Eastern European winter whilst delivering many courses to different elements of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. D Company handed over to Sp Company in August and made their return via the European battlefields in a fleet of less-than-battleworthy Lada cars!

Balaklava Company 5 SCOTS has had an excellent year, the highlight of the last year was furnishing Her Majesty The Queen's Guard at Balmoral. The experience improved Company cohesion, improved retention and raised the profile (for the better) of 5 SCOTS. In February this year the Company deployed to Oman, where they worked alongside and partnered a company of the Sultan of Oman's Parachute Regiment. This four-week exercise took place on and around the Jebel Akhdar; an environment that tested the jocks and provided excellent opportunities for platoon and company live firing. Soon after arriving back in Scotland public duties dominated; both in Scotland and in London District. In the Spring the Company moved to London for three weeks to conduct public duties at Buckingham Palace and The Tower of London. The OC worked hard to try and have the Company included in the VVIP event scheduled to take place at Windsor during their time down South, sadly without success!

For 6 SCOTS 2017 was an incredibly busy year with its main focus on maintaining manning, whilst looking at ways to develop the 'offer' and demonstrate the true capability of the battalion and the individual reservist. Throughout the year the Battalion put itself through its paces and delivered on all tasks asked. It saw the Battalion deploying into the field in Kirkcudbright, Kenya and Lochgilphead to revise, retrain and relearn its soldier-first skills. Command and control in the field, from the CO to the newest jock; was put to the test during the annual training exercise to Italy on Ex ROMAN STAR, where the Battalion achieved CT1 and developed its CT2 node, creating the bedrock to develop its capability moving forward into 2018. Whilst these key events were going on the Battalion also completed a conceptual development trip to Walcheren Island following the actions of the 52 Lowland Division during WWII's Op INFATUATE. In 2018 the Battalion will continue with its conceptual development with a tour of the UK's iconic military and governmental establishments in March and a visit to Ypres in July for the centenary year of the end of the First World War.

Whilst recruiting (and retention) remains a vital part of daily activity across 7 SCOTS, the last few months has seen the Battalion become central to the Defence Engagement initiative of its parent brigade. With 51st Infantry Brigade being given the engagement lead within certain parts of the Middle East, the absence of the three Regular Brigade units, due to operational commitments, has allowed 7 SCOTS to pick up many high-profile training and liaison tasks, which will continue throughout 2018 and beyond. Currently, the delivery of these tasks has fallen to the Regular and FTRS

personnel in Battalion HQ, but 2018 will see several reservists getting involved in training delivery and wider engagement too. At home it has been reassuring to see the overall capability of the Battalion developing. The Battalion continues to offer plenty of variety in the forecast of events, from military training to sport and adventurous training, music from the Highland Band and the Pipes and Drums, as well as a constant flow of bespoke opportunities for our people to participate in.



Seven Hackles of the Royal Regiment of Scotland
Photo courtesy of Mark Owens, Crown Copyright/MOD 2010

THE ROYAL SCOTS ASSOCIATION PIPE BAND

By Pipe President Major Torquil Corkerton

At the start of 2018, Edinburgh had snow that hung around and disrupted travel for days, and we were only just recovering from that at the time of the band's first performance of this year's playing season, a wedding at Melville Castle on Sunday 25th March. This was an unusual day for a wedding, but a lovely venue at any time and one the band has not been asked to play at for a number of years.

April saw The Royal Scots' annual reunion, this time held at Teviot House, Edinburgh University's main Students' Union in the centre of town. The band acquitted themselves well and enjoyed the evening. The band's next engagement was another Regimental event, the annual service of remembrance for the fallen of the 7th Battalion in the Quintinshill rail disaster, held once again in Rosebank Cemetery.

In June, as well as the band's annual parade for the Indian Christian Festival at The Inch, we were asked to provide pipers to play for the annual Waterloo Dinner at the Naval and Military Club in St James's Square, London (known informally as The In & Out). Five hand-picked members of our pipe corps travelled down to London on the day and played for an outstanding dinner, at which the principal guest was General Mark Carleton-Smith CBE, who had succeeded General Sir Nick Carter as Chief of the General Staff three days before. The pipers were well looked after and wanted for nothing, and who knows if this might lead to anything else?

Unfortunately, the band was unable to parade with the Regimental Contingent for Edinburgh's Armed Forces Day parade on Saturday 30th June. This is the first time since its formation the band has been unable to parade in some form for a Regimental event but, due to numerous other commitments, only a handful of pipers were able to commit and not a single drummer. It is an oft-repeated plea of mine at the end of band reports, but if anybody in the Regimental family is a piper or

drummer (or knows of one) who isn't already a member of bands on the competition circuit, we would love to hear from them.

Our pipers and drummers are still meeting at The Royal Scots Club a couple of Sundays a month, but since the weather has improved, they've also continued to meet for chanter and pad practices on Wednesday evenings at the space kindly lent to us in Redford Barracks. There's little time off to enjoy the prolonged heatwave we've been experiencing, however, as the band is booked to play for a wedding at Loretto School in Musselburgh in July, followed by The Royal Scots Club's garden party on the afternoon of Saturday 28th July and a job at Balbirnie House Hotel in Glenrothes on Saturday 18th August.

Still to come later this year are a couple of events for the Regimental Association, including an event marking the centenary of Hugh McIver VC MM winning his Victoria Cross, being held in the town of his birth, Linwood in Renfrewshire, Remembrance events for the Association and for Heart of Midlothian and the annual day out at Musselburgh Races on Sunday 30th September. The highlight of our remaining calendar of events is the band's participation in this year's Braemar Highland Gathering on Saturday 1st September.

Although Stewart Baillie has been able to find the time to stay on as the band's secretary and act as Pipe Major this year, I know he would be delighted to hand over the reins to somebody with the time and drive to take on the role of Pipe Major and drive the band on in new and interesting directions. As I've said before, the band needs to boost its current membership and our door is open to anybody who is interested. Remember, we are your Association Pipes and Drums and we need your help to recruit!

THE ROYAL SCOTS CLUB

By Miss Lauren Clyne

Beating Retreat and Waterloo Dinner

On Friday 15th June, The Royal Scots Club held a dinner to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo (18th June 1815). The Battle of Waterloo was a significant event in the distinguished history of the Royal Scots. Our guest speaker, Major General RB (Bob) Bruce CBE DSO described the strategic significance of the battle and the part played by both the Royal Scots and the other Scottish regiments. The evening had commenced with a drinks reception in the library and this was followed by 1 SCOTS Pipes and Drums beating retreat outside the Club on Abercromby Place. The Lord Provost of Edinburgh, The Right Honourable Frank Ross took the Salute along with one of our longest reining members, Lt Col Jock Wilson Smith OBE.

Seventy-four club members and guests sat down to dinner including Maggie Paterson, Mark and Sue Strudwick, Charles and Araminta Ritchie, Ian Johnstone, Jimmy Springthorpe and Tom Mann. The band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland played during dinner and Cpl's Euan Jardine and Alan Thomson played two pipe sets.

Looking ahead

Our next black-tie dinner will commemorate the Battle of Trafalgar on Saturday 19th October when our guest speaker will be Rear Admiral Michael Gregory OBE.

Plans for The Royal Scots Club Centenary Celebrations are well under way with the following dates for the diary:

Sun 10th March RSC 100 Church Service,
Canongate Kirk

Mon 11th March RSC 100 Book Launch (TBC), RS Club

Thu 28th March The Founders Dinner, RS Club

Also planned are the RSC 100 Cocktail Party/Beating Retreat and a St Andrew's Night Dinner, with dates to be confirmed.

For more information, please contact Lauren in the membership office on 0131 556 4270 or membership@royalscotsclub.com



The Right Hon Frank Ross
Photo courtesy of Ms Loren Clyne



1 SCOTS Pipes and Drums
Photo courtesy of Ms Loren Clyne

GREтна COMMEMORATIONS 2018

By The Editorial Team

Gretna Crash Commemorations, Rosebank Cemetery 2018

Saturday 19th May 2018 was a very busy day for many people, a Royal wedding, Cup Finals in Scotland and England but more importantly the commemoration at Rosebank Cemetery by the Royal Scots Regimental Family of the loss of 216 members of the 7th Battalion on 22nd May 1915.

Once again, we met in Rosebank Cemetery, Leith as a Regimental family to hold our annual service. The parade was led by Brigadier George Lowder and the Service was led by our Association Padre Rev Iain May. On parade were the Association Pipe Band, The Association Standard party, which this year included the new Standards from West Lothian, former members of the Regiment, members of the Royal British Legion Scotland, members of the Sea Cadet Corps from Leith and Musselburgh and finally of course, people from the Leith Community including their MP Ms Deirdre Brock. The day was brilliant sunshine and those that turned out were in great form. It is also amazing how word gets out about these commemorations as on Saturday 19th the descendants of one of the casualties, Mrs Pat Gander now living in West Sussex, travelled up for the Service. She was researching her family when she came across this tragic event and in turn discovered the commemorations that the Regiment hold so decided to travel up to join us. She was made very welcome and we agreed to send her copies of the DVD and booklet from the event in 2015.

BENCH AT ROSEBANK

By Colonel RSB Watson OBE

Bench at the 7th Bn memorial

The area of the 7th Battalion Gretna Memorial and mass grave at Rosebank Cemetery has recently been greatly enhanced by the gift of a bench from the Keppie family. The bench originally stood outside the home of Jim Keppie in memory of his wife June. When he recently moved to a new house there was no room for the bench at his new home, so he asked his cousin, Patricia Keppie, Public Engagement Coordinator for The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) in Scotland if she had any ideas. She contacted our old friend, and great supporter within CWGC, Iain Anderson, who suggested the bench might be placed at Rosebank. The family agreed to this and the bench, beautifully refurbished by CWGC, has been placed to look across the Memorial and towards the Cross from the East. A plaque has been placed on the Bench with the words 'Rest and remember all who lie here' and acknowledging the generosity of the Keppie family. The bench was dedicated by the Reverend Iain May at the end of the annual Commemoration on 19th May 2018.

Two other links are that June Keppie's birthday was on 19th May, three days before the anniversary of the crash and Jim Keppie's father was a Royal Scot having enlisted in the 9th Battalion in 1916 and was then commissioned into 2nd/9th in 1918.



Left to right: Colonel Robert Watson, Mrs Jane McIntyre, daughter of Jim Keppie, Mr Jim Keppie, Patricia Keppie and The Rev Iain May.
Photo courtesy of Mr Andy Kay

SERVICES HELD FOR WW1 SOLDIERS

By Colonel Andy McDowall

Tuesday, 27th – Wednesday, 28th March 2018

One hundred years have passed since the end of World War 1, but every year there are still dozens of funerals held in the many Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) cemeteries scattered across the north of France. Farming and construction work on new roads, houses and business premises regularly turn up human remains dating from that most bloody of conflicts. The event, while hardly banal, is sufficiently frequent that local people know how to contact the CWGC and be confident that they can expect a swift response that will see the remains secured and removed, pending burial, to the local mortuary in Arras.

Efforts will then go into identification of the remains. Regimental badges, buttons or collar dogs seem to be the most common way of identifying his regiment and he would be buried as an Unknown Soldier of XX Regiment. Failing that, the deceased will be buried as an Unknown

Soldier. From time to time new details emerge that would lead to either the Regiment being identified or sometimes even the name that would allow for a reburial and associated details to be recorded on the gravestone.

On 27th and 28th March 2018, I had the honour to represent the Royal Scots at two funerals, one just north of Arras and the other next to Lens. I joined the Reverend Paul van Sitter CF, Chaplain, The Highlanders (4 SCOTS) who conducted the services; Lieutenant Colonel Kieron Potts, Regimental Secretary, Royal Regiment of Scotland who gave the Scripture Reading; Colonel Christopher Borneman, Military Attaché British Embassy Paris who gave the Gospel Reading; Major Timothy Cummings, 1 SCOTS who recited the Collect of the Royal Scots; Exhortation; a piper and bugler who played The Last Post, Reveille and the Kohima Epitaph; and Captain Zach Smyth and Sergeant Fraser Pairman from Balaklava Company 5 SCOTS. The local mayors attended the funerals as did staff from the CWGC office in Ieper (Ypres).

The first, on 27th March, was a funeral service in Bailleul Road East Cemetery, St Laurent Blagny, for an Unknown Soldier of the Royal Scots, whose remains were found by a team of workmen near to Athies. Given the location of where they were found it is a possibility that this soldier was killed during the Battle of Arras in April 1917. Shoulder titles found with the remains indicate that this was a soldier of the Royal Scots.



Colonel Andy McDowall at the burial services

Photo courtesy of Danielle Roubroeks

The second, on 28th March, Regimental Day, was a funeral service in St Mary's A.D.S. Cemetery, Haisnes, for two Unknown Soldiers of the Royal Scots, whose remains were found by a farmer nearby. Given the location of where the remains were found it is a possibility that these soldiers were killed during the Battle of Loos in September 1915. As with the other soldier, shoulder titles found with the remains indicate that these soldiers were of the Royal Scots. The weather, especially on the 29th, was fittingly bleak, windy and wet. That had no effect on the ceremonies, but it was not difficult to imagine the appalling conditions in which those men had to fight and, ultimately, meet their deaths.

The services were well attended, as mentioned earlier, and the magnificent work of the CWGC should be warmly applauded. Anyone who has visited a CWGC cemetery is always struck by how well-maintained they are. Equally, we should be grateful to the local French communities who are frequently steadfast in their participation in such events and in their work to perpetuate the memory of those from across the

Commonwealth who lost their lives during the First and Second World Wars.

On the cards to the wreaths that I laid, I wrote that their Regimental Family, the Royal Scots, remembered them with respect and pride.

It is rare that I fail to find the tombstone of a Royal Scot when I visit a CWGC cemetery in the north of France. Rather than participate in a large ceremony on 11th November each year, I try to search out a small, isolated cemetery, find such a tombstone and then pause there to pay my respects to him and to his brothers in arms lying elsewhere.

<https://www.cwgc.org/learn/news-and-events/news/2018/03/28/13/57/four-first-world-war-soldiers-honoured>

PTE GEORGE CHALMERS, 2RS

by Mr Davey McKendrick

Monday, 14th May 2018

Pte George Chalmers was buried in Grangegorman Military Cemetery in Dublin, following a short service at which the Regiment was represented by Mr David McKendrick from the NI Branch.

Also reburied was a soldier whose body was found in a peat bog after disappearing in Ireland in 1921. Pte George Chalmers was a member of the 2nd Battalion stationed in Ireland when he was abducted and murdered on 10th June 1921. George just missed WW1, joining The Royal Scots in 1918 aged 16 and was sent to the 2nd Battalion in County Clare, Ireland. He was soon in action against the IRA and was wounded at the ambush by the IRA at Monreal in December 1920. George was a young man and had met a local girl and went to pay her a visit on 10th June 1921, but he was spotted by members of the local company of the IRA who abducted him and interrogated him. George had no information of value, so he was shot and buried in a remote peat bog near Milton Malbay. He was just 18 years old. The irony was that a truce was being discussed and signed just one month later.



Left to Right – Mr Davey McKendrick of RS Association, Mr Peter Chalmers and Ms Beth Chalmers – family members of Pte Chalmers, Capt Martin Gallagher of 1 SCOTS and Mr Andrew Stillman of CWGC

Photo courtesy of Mr Davey McKendrick

ERIC “PUSS” MILROY, DANDY NINTH

At the outbreak of WW1 many people rushed to join the Colours and amongst them was Eric Milroy, the last Captain of the Scottish Rugby Team prior to outbreak of War. Eric “Puss” Milroy enlisted in the 9th Battalion, The Royal Scots (The Dandy Ninth), our only kilted battalion. From there he was commissioned into the Black Watch. Eric was killed in action at Delville Wood on 18th July 1918 whilst serving with the BW – his body was never found, and he is commemorated on the Thiepval memorial



Eric Milroy, Pre War

RAISING AF FLAG, EAST LoTHIAN

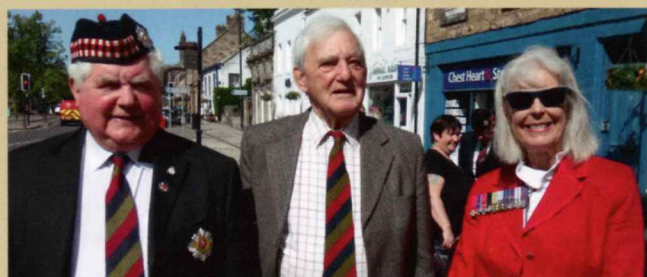
By The Editorial Team

Monday, 25th June 2018, Haddington

Each year, East Lothian Council raise the AF Day flag as part of their support for veterans in East Lothian. The ceremony on 25 June 2018 was led by the Lord Lieutenant of East Lothian, Major(Retd) Michael Williams MBE late Royal Tank Regiment and the Provost of East Lothian John McMillan. The flag was raised by the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet Mathew Sinclair. Many veterans from all Services attended but The Royal Scots again had the largest contingent on parade and we were joined by Lady Candy Richardson, so the Regimental Family was well represented.



Photo courtesy of Andy Kay



Lady Candy with Major Stephen Bunyan MBE and Mr Tam Johnstone

Photo courtesy of Andy Kay

VISIT TO LE PARADIS

By Major Ian Johnstone and Major David Dickson

Saturday, 26th May 2018

We had a very successful visit to Le Paradis at the end of May. The Commune of Lestrem had once again invited us to their Commemoration events in the village of Le Paradis just an hour from Dunkirk. A party of seventeen Royal Scot supporters went there to remember the sacrifice made by Royal Scots, Royal Norfolks and others during the battle of Bassee Canal at the end of May 1940.

We met up at our hotel on Friday evening outside Bethune and had a jolly supper with Royal Norfolk supporters. This year it was heartening to have a new generation joining us Euan Traynor, Sarah Laird, Andrew Johnstone and Charlotte Dickson. They were to be here to learn about their Grandfathers' roles in the battle.

On the Saturday morning we drove to the Creton Farm near to the village. This was the site of the massacre of 97 Royal Norfolks by the SS. After a short Service Col Robert Watson laid The Royal Scot wreath. Approximately 150 of us then marched from there to the village led by the municipal band. A Service was held outside the Church with addresses being given by the Mayor, and Lt Col Tony Slater of the Royal Norfolk Regimental Association. Tony spoke on behalf of all the British. Col Edward Cowan then laid a wreath. The final Service was at the British Military Cemetery to the rear of the Church. The band played "Pentland Hills" by the late Maj Jimmy Howe MBE, and Brig Iain Johnstone laid the RS wreath.



Colonel Robert Watson OBE at Museum opening

Photo courtesy of David Dickson, Valerie McDowall, and Peter Traynor

We all then congregated at the front of the Church and witnessed the official opening of the "Bataille de Paradis" room. This room gives a pictorial account of the battle and the commemorative events since the war. It is hoped that the villagers, their children, visiting British families and others can benefit from this account.

Formalities now over and after refreshments we all proceeded to the nearby town of Lestrem. There, in the large space of a school and civic hall, we were treated to a civic luncheon. We were to be in no rush. Wine flowed, course followed course, French was practised, and speeches were made. Matt Hoggan our loyal RS Association piper drank from the historic RS quaich and we even had a local French band of local pipers to serenade us.

The rest of the weekend was full of entertainment and good eating in the local area. On Sunday the Watsons and Johnstones went off to the WW1 Cemeteries in Flanders and were at The Menin Gate for the evening Service. Meanwhile the remainder of us were taken on tour of the Battalion

positions around Le Paradis. Ian Johnstone was our guide and it was especially poignant that his son Andrew listened to the account of his Grandfather's exploits at A Company's position.

Amongst our number were Peter and his son Euan Traynor. They had come from Australia. Peter's father had fought with RS at Le Paradis. He served later in the Australian Army in the Vietnam War. During a supper conversation an intriguing coincidence emerged linking Janet Cowan and Andrew Johnstone. On a trooping flight, evacuating RS families from Cyprus in 1974, Janet had called upon her nursing training to help a sick baby – the baby was Andrew.

Doubtless we will be invited to Le Paradis in May 2019. Royal Scots and their families will always be made welcome. Further enquiries to: David Dickson
davidpmdickson@gmail.com

FAR, FAR FROM YPRES TOUR

Sunday 11th November at Usher Hall, Edinburgh

Scottish performer Barbara Dickson will embark on a commemorative tour of Scotland to mark the centenary of World War One, as a key part of Scotland's Armistice centenary programme.

Barbara Dickson performs in memory of her Uncle David Dickson, who enlisted into the Dandy Ninth, whilst being underage and was killed in the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

The Far, Far from Ypres tour will visit various venues across Scotland to bring the songs of the trenches to current audiences, to share the story of the Scottish war effort.

The closing performance will take place at the Usher Hall in Edinburgh on Armistice Day.



Barbara Dickson with a photo of her Uncle David Dickson

Photo courtesy of WW100 Scotland

ROYAL SCOTS BENEVOLENCE

Each year, the Royal Scots Benevolent Fund deals with approx. 80 -100 requests for assistance. We work in partnership with other service charities to provide financial assistance for a range of needs including mobility aids, household goods, respite care, essential clothing and priority debt.

Anyone requiring assistance should first contact their nearest branch of SSAFA who will send a case worker to visit. The case worker's task is to ascertain what is required and then supply a report to the Regimental Benevolence Secretary. On average the whole process takes about 10 days.

OPERATION MAZURKA

By Major Robert Wallace (formally 1RS)
October 2017 – May 2018

INTRODUCTION

I joined the Infantry Junior Leaders Battalion (IJLB) in September 1976 and was posted to the Regiment of my choice [RS] in 1977. I remained a 'Loyal Royal' until January 2006 [ed: Once a Royal always a Royal?] when I joined the Royal Australian Infantry (RAINF). Although I currently live in Brisbane, I am posted to Holsworthy Barracks, Sydney and recently deployed on OPERATION MAZURKA in October 2017 as the Plans Officer (S5) for the Northern (Colombian) Battalion, Forward Operating Base-North (FOB-N), El Gorah, Northern Sinai, Egypt. I also felt this very short article may interest those unaware of the Australian Army's commitment in this region in particular.

BACKGROUND

Israel invaded and occupied Sinai during the Suez Crisis of 1956, and during the Six Day War of 1967. In October 1973, Egypt launched the Yom Kippur War to retake Sinai, which was the site of fierce fighting between Egyptian and Israeli forces. By 1982, as a result of the Israel/Egypt Peace Treaty of 1979, Israel withdrew from all of Sinai except the contentious territory of Taba (Eastern Sinai). This was returned after a ruling by the commission of arbitration in 1989.

The origins of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) lie in the 1979 Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel. Treaty Party Nations requested the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) provide a Force and Observers to supervise implementation of that treaty. In 1979, a United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was temporarily established while a permanent solution was developed. The UNSC was unsuccessful at extending the mandate for UNEF due to a threat of veto by a UNSC party. The MFO therefore was established on 25 April 1982.

OPERATION MAZURKA is the Australian Defence Force contribution to the MFO in Sinai. The MFO remains a non-UN organisation overseeing the Treaty of Peace agreements from the Camp David Accords, and the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty. Currently, the Australian Contingent (AUSCON) supports the MFO by providing personnel to fill positions as Staff Officers across the Force and maintaining a National Support Element. A small number of Australian personnel are based in FOB-N, and the remaining personnel of various ranks are based in South Camp, Sharm El-Sheikh, Southern Sinai.



FOB-N AUSCON personnel with the NZCON PTI, and ANZAC dog 'Roo'

Although the main areas of activity and influence is in El-Arish, Sheikh Zuweid and Rafah (places Royal Scots served/fought during WW1), all on the Northern coast line, much of the militant and Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) activity is currently in the immediate vicinity of FOB-N. As such, the EAF occupy key 'battle positions' surrounding, and protecting, FOB-N. There remains significant value to Australia being a participating nation in the MFO. Beyond the two treaty partner nations, the MFO provides Australia with military and diplomatic interaction with the twelve Troop Contributing Nations, and the additional seven Funds Contributing Nations, all providing legitimacy to the overall mission. The contribution of Australian personnel is highly regarded throughout the Force. It is underpinned by the key positions filled by AUSCON personnel, and enhanced by the professionalism, performance and behaviour of those selected to fill those positions.



Northern (Colombian) Battalion Principle Staff Officers, S3 (OPS), S5 (Plans), C0 & X0

Ed: It is worth noting that this is not the first time Royal Scots have been involved in the peacekeeping observation role in the Middle East. Lt Col Gordon Rae was an Observer in the Sinai 1989/90 and his medal for this period is on display in the Museum. Taking over from Gordon Rae was Colonel Peter Fraser-Hopewell. Brigadier George Lowder spent over a year in Ramallah, in The Occupied Palestinian Territories in 2009/10, so The Royals have been well represented here.

OLD ROYALS ARE EVERYWHERE

By The Editorial Team

The Royal Scots' diaspora stretches to nearly every corner of the world. We would like to hear from Old Royals from their part of the world telling us a little bit about themselves and if they know of any other Old Royals in their area. Many of us can attend Branch meetings but those over the pond are not so able so it would be nice to hear from Old Royals. Please send your bit to admin@theroyalscots.co.uk attaching any relevant photograph. Let us know when you served and where.

SILKSTONE GOLF CLUB ANNIVERSARY MATCH

By Captain Jimmy Springthorpe

Wednesday, 6th June 2018

In 1893 a newly created Golf Club then known as Barnsley GC held their inaugural match against a team of officers from The Carabiniers and The Royal Scots. The result was a resounding victory for the Army team and the club now known as Silkstone Golf Club decided in this their 125th Anniversary year to seek revenge. The club's anniversary organising committee selected long time club member and former Club Captain Keith Geal to organise a re-match. Keith got in touch with Jimmy Springthorpe in the Regimental Office who agreed to raise a team comprising Scots DG (antecedent of The Carabiniers) and RS. The date for the re-match was set for 6th June and a team of sixteen were selected. In the run up to this date a few players from "Team Army" had to drop out for various reasons and a lot of telephone calls were made to recruit replacements. The Royal Scots' half of the team had a man drop out at the last minute and we had to recruit a former Gunner from the club to make up the numbers.

Most of Team Army arrived on the Tuesday and booked into local hotels before heading out to the golf club where we had been given access to the course for a practice round. Silkstone Golf Club is a lovely building and the course itself is a stunning 6,536 yards of testing golf. Most of us only played the front nine on the Tuesday opting to save our best for the match the following day.

We arrived at the club at 1030 on Wednesday morning where we were treated to a delicious breakfast prior to being briefed on the format to be played which was better ball Stableford with the total points from each pair to count for team competition.

Silkstone obviously had the advantage of local knowledge, but their team sportingly warned their opponents of likely hazards and pointed out the best line to take on each hole.

It was agreed that the scores and results would be kept secret until the evening prize giving and Keith Geal and Jimmy Springthorpe gathered in their respective team's cards prior to checking them.

The club laid on an outstanding dinner and this was followed by the opening of the envelope containing the results. The result pretty much matched the 1893 version except that it was in Silkstone's favour this time.

There was a nearest the pin prize at the 9th for both Silkstone and Team Army and the latter was won by Tam Jeffrey Scots DG. However bragging rights were to go to John Sands who had his first hole in one at the 15th and was featured in the local paper who happened to have a reporter in attendance to produce an article on the history behind this match.



John Sands prepares to celebrate his hole-in-one

Photo courtesy of Silkstone Golf Course

The club presented two framed copies of the original newspaper article from 1893, one for both regiments. They also presented all players with shoe bags which have the club badge together with a Scots DG badge and our own Crown and One. In return we presented a Regimental plaque and the three volumes of "Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard." Scots DG also presented a plaque and a copy of their book "Those Terrible Grey Horses."

It was a memorable occasion and I cannot underestimate the hospitality provided by everyone involved with Silkstone Golf Club.



The army team with RS players Tam Watters, John Sands, Andy Stewart, Dave Beveridge, Eric Taylor, Jimmy Springthorpe, Brian de la Haye and former Gunner Paul Hoyes

Photo courtesy of Silkstone Golf Course

Other Golfing Events

The Silver Poppy is an annual event held by Legion Scotland and this year a Royal Scot team took part for the first time. The competition took place on The New Course at St Andrews and the following were played for.

Silver Poppy: Stableford 3-man team event with full individual handicap

The Silver Claw: Individual scratch stroke-play

The Beaches Trophy: Individual handicap stroke-play

The Half Section Trophy: Individual Stableford

The Veterans Quaich: Best Stableford score for competitors aged 55 & over

The Royal Scot Team comprised Dave Beveridge, Brian McGeachie and Brian de la Haye.

Thirty-six teams of three took part on the day, and as was expected competition was fierce.

Perfect weather conditions prevailed throughout the day and no other excuses could be found. A study of previous winning scores had us believe that a combined score of 109 should ensure success. In the event the winning team scored 105 and we fell slightly short.

It was a great event and Legion Scotland deserve credit for the way everything was organised.

Any group of three serving/ex serving members of HM Forces can take part and it is to be recommended.

Fallen Comrades. This year the Fallen Comrades competition took place on Sunday 13 May at Deer Park and was extremely well organised by Davie Milne and Brian McGeachie. As usual Liz Kyle was on hand to organise, dish out refreshments and where necessary adjudicate. Deer Park is a real test of Stamina as well as skill and to win there, good course management is a must. Twenty-three players took part and the golf was extremely competitive.

The 2018 winner of "The Fallen Comrades Competition" was Eric Taylor who plays off a handicap of 8. In Second place came Mick Minister and Eric Yule was a close third.

The longest Drive was produced by Paul McAllister and the prize for "Best Visitor" went to Lawrence Taylor. Surprisingly Tam Logan was not this year's winner of "Most Golf Played." In a closely fought contest that title went to Stevie Jeans.

MUSSELBURGH RACES

By Lieutenant Colonel Jim Blythe MBE

Sunday, 30th September 2018

Once again, The Royal Scots Association, The Royal Scots Club and The Royal Regiment of Scotland will be to the fore at the Support Your Services Day at Musselburgh Racecourse on Sunday, 30th September.

Taking part will be the following:

- The Lowland Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, formerly the Royal Scots Territorial Band, with some former 1 RS members still playing in it!
- The Royal Scots Association Pipe Band.
- 1 SCOTS Pipes & Drums.
- The Royal Regiment of Scotland Regimental Support Team with weapons, vehicles and equipment on display and command task challenges in a virtual reality module.
- Lothian & Borders ACF with obstacle course and climbing wall activities for the kids, so it's a grand day out for all the family.

Once again, tickets are at generously discounted prices: £19.50 - For families and individuals and including a drink (beer, wine, soft) and a burger which is outstanding value. This ticket offer will become available for on-line purchasing shortly – details will be posted on www.theroyalscots.co.uk

£25.00 - For RS Club members and mess outings. Add £5 for breakfast at the RS Club and transport from there to the Racecourse. Apply to the Manager, The Royal Scots Club.



Royal Scots Association Pipe Band and The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Photo courtesy of Ann-Marie Corkerton

ASSOCIATION VISIT TO ROTHIEMURCHUS LODGE

In April of this year, 21 members of the Association went for a weekend of "Adventure" Training at Rothiemurchus Lodge, which is in the heart of the Cairngorm Mountains. Those attending were hosted at the Lodge by Mr M G Gaff, a much-respected former Royal Scot SNCO, who looked after them very well.

Events offered by the Lodge included zip wire, sailing, gorge walking, clay pigeon shooting, quad bikes and many other events. Most took part in one or more activity.

Everyone enjoyed their weekend with some being more active than others, a few beers were taken, and a great time was had by all. It is hoped that we can do this again and maybe persuade more Members of the Association to join in.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE HQ MEMORIAL PLAQUE

By The Editorial Team

The Australian Imperial Force (AIF) comprising Infantry and Light Horse units was formed in August 1914 following the declaration of war against Germany by Britain who was supported by her Empire. Initially the AIF was deployed to and fought magnificently in Gallipoli then after this in the Middle East campaigns. The 4th, 5th and 7th Battalions of The Royal Scots also fought in Gallipoli.

After Gallipoli, many of the AIF units, mostly infantry, were transferred to the Western Front and came under British command. Although operationally placed at the disposal of the British, the AIF was administered as a separate national force, with the Australian government reserving the responsibility for the promotion, pay, clothing, equipment and feeding of its personnel. The AIF was administered separately from the home-based army in Australia, and a parallel system was set up to deal with non-operational matters including record-keeping, finance, ordnance, personnel, quartermaster and other issue. The AIF also had separate conditions of service, rules regarding promotion and seniority, and graduation list for officers. This responsibility initially fell to General Bridges, in addition to his duties as its commander; however, an Administrative Headquarters was later set up in Cairo in Egypt. Following the redeployment of the Australian infantry divisions to the Western Front it was relocated to London. To carry out this administrative function the AIF set up their HQ in 95 Horseferry Road, London, now the Drill Hall for RHQ The London Scottish Regiment. To commemorate the links with the AIF a memorial plaque was erected in the Drill Hall and the Regiment were asked to attend the unveiling; the Regiment were represented by Colonel Peter Fraser-Hopewell CMG, MBE.



Colonel Peter Fraser-Hopewell

Photo courtesy of London Scottish Regiment

General Andrew Graham and Colonel Peter Fraser-Hopewell

Photo courtesy of London Scottish Regiment



EARL OF DUMBARTON

9th March 1674 - current

On May 19th this year, on his Marriage, Her Majesty the Queen bestowed the title of Earl of Dumbarton on Prince Harry and henceforth he will be known by this title when in Scotland. This is the second time this title has been created, the title become extinct in 1749 upon the death of the second Earl, since he did not have any children to pass the title on to.

On February 6th, 1685, Charles II died, and the succession to the throne of a Catholic King in James VII/II brought to a head both the discontents at home and the plots of exiles abroad. The militia was called out; a force of regulars was assembled under the Earl of Dumbarton, the new Scottish Commander-in-Chief — that Lord George Douglas who had commanded and given his name to the Royal Scots, and who is commemorated in their regimental march of "Dumbarton's Drums." This March is still used when Royal Scots are on parade, last heard as recently as May this year at Rosebank Cemetery during the Service to commemorate the train crash at Quintinshill in 1915.

Fun Fact - George Douglas kept a pack of terriers from Scotland that was so tough he called them the "Diehard Pack". He later went on to name his favourite regiment, The Royal Scots, "Dumbarton's Diehards" after his dogs.



Major-General George Douglas, 1st Earl of Dumbarton



Current Earl of Dumbarton

PIPES IN THE ARMY

By Royal Scots Museum

The introduction of the bagpipes into the British Army dates from the raising of The Royal Scots Regiment. Register House in Edinburgh holds the original of a warrant, dated 24th April 1633, which "gives and grants full power and commission to Sir Johne Hepburne, knight, or to anie other whome he sall appoint, to levey and take up in the kingdome ane regiment of twelffe hundreth men out of all suche persons ... as he sall find willing to go with him ... to nominate captans and all other officers and members of the said regiment of twelffe hundreth men, and to caus towcke (beat) drummes, displye cullours."

These men had previous continental service and were the predecessors of The Royal Scots of today. The bagpipe came into the British Army from the date of the origin of our standing Army, 25th April 1633.

We know that Hepburn's Regiment of Scots used the bagpipe because, less than two years later in January 1635, we read of them at Landau, Germany: "As the relieving force approached, deafening shouts were raised, the Scottish march was played, and the sole surviving piper, last of the thirty-six who had gone to Gustavus with Mackay's Highlanders, skirled a welcome on the great war-pipes of the North". It is evident that the pipe had gone to the Continent from Scotland with Sir Donald Mackay's Regiment in 1626.

In 1660, Colonel Walton in his History of the British Standing Army states: "At the Restoration there was only one Regiment that boasted a piper (The First Royals), "as" ... a peculiarity of the Regiment. "The piper was listed under 'Staff Officers' from 1679 until the Malplaquet Bounty Roll of 1709 when there was no longer a piper on the staff.

Drawn from an extract from J M MacLennan, The London Scottish Regimental Gazette reprinted in The Regimental Journal, The Thistle of 1928, a quote from the warrant of 1633 and an article by H M McCance from The Thistle of 1910.



BEQUEST TO THE REGIMENTAL TRUST

Fundraising is always a necessary part of running a charity to ensure it has sufficient funds to carry out its role. In our case, to ensure that funds are always available to cover the benevolence needs of our Regimental Family.

Have you considered leaving a gift – bequest – in your will?

There are three types of legacy: Residuary, Pecuniary and Specific.

A lawyer will help you with your choice and wording.

All bequests should be left to The Royal Scots Regimental Trust and must use our Registered Charity Number (SC008001) and our address: The Royal Scots Regimental Trust, The Royal Scots Regimental Office, 29-31 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6QE.

Please, if you are considering a fund-raising event consider donating to Royal Scots Benevolence.

IN MEMORIAM

McNicol

Cpl John Daniel McNicol MM – 20th December 2017, 1 RS

Euman

Mr Robert Euman – 20th January 2018,
Pipe Major 8 RS

Exton

Mr Frederick Exton – 18th February 2018, 7/9 RS

Stott

Mr Tom Stott – 19th February 2018, 1 RS

Leslie

Mr Alexander Leslie – 21st February 2018, 2 RS

Brennan

Mr Joe Douglas Brennan – 26th March 2018, 1 RS

Scott

Mr Eric Scott – 8th May 2018, 1 RS/RAOC

Telfer

Colonel SFM (Steve) Telfer MBE – 2nd June 2018, CO 1 RS
from 2000 – 2002

Smith

Mr Richard Atkinson Smith – 26th June 2018, age 80 of
Vancouver BC, formerly 1 RS

Dignan

Captain John (Jack) Dignan – 23rd July 2018, 1 RS

Smiles

Major Edward (Eddie) Smiles – 29th July 2018, 7/9 RS

Cpl John Daniel McNicol MM – 1 RS 1958-1974

Corporal John McNicol won his Military Medal during operations with 1RS in the Radfan and the citation is reproduced below.

"From 29th May until 2nd June 1964, Cpl McNicol was in command of five soldiers who manned Picquet "B" part of the defence of the Thumair area. During the night 29th/30th May this picquet effectively engaged with small arms fire several of the enemy killing one and wounding two. This was the first occasion that any of the soldiers concerned had been in action against the enemy. Throughout the action, which lasted for about two hours, Corporal McNicol showed a very high sense of discipline, leadership and command.

During the night of 31st May/1st June, Picquet "B" was attacked by five tribesmen. This attack was repulsed and later 15-20 of the enemy, mainly in small groups, attempted to approach the picquet position. Due to the resolute way Corporal McNicol handled the situation, all attempts to attack or infiltrate into his position were repulsed. The action lasted for over two hours and during this time Corporal McNicol effectively directed supporting fire from Saladin armoured cars and the Company's 3-inch mortar detachment which so harassed the enemy that they eventually retreated in disorder. He displayed a complete disregard for his own personal safety by directing the mortar fire to within 150 yards of his own position in an attempt to kill the enemy. Throughout the night he acted in a cool, calm and calculating manner and displayed the highest qualities of courage.

Even when he thought that he was running short of ammunition, he showed no fear whatsoever but was determined to hold his picquet position whatever the cost and if necessary he was prepared to fight to the last. Corporal McNicol's position was the key one of three and if it had been overrun the other two would have become untenable."

John died peacefully in hospital on 20th December 2017. His wife Veronica predeceased him, and he is survived by his children Ian, Denise and Daniel.

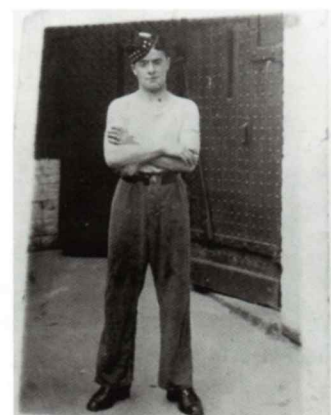


Mr Alexander Leslie – 2 RS 1933 – 1946

Alec Leslie died just a few weeks short of his 102nd birthday. Alec was born on the 11th March 1916 to Margaret and Alexander and was the second eldest of their six children. At this time WW1 was raging, the average house price was £195 and most homes were still lit with gas.

On leaving school, Alec had gone to work in a foundry as a brass moulder then in 1933 he enlisted into 2RS. He was stationed in Lahore in India during the second world war, captured by the Japanese he was held prisoner in Hong Kong then Japan where he was forced to do engineering work which he and his fellow prisoners would sabotage at every opportunity. Alec was liberated by US troops in September 1945 and he returned home via Canada. After he was demobbed Alec retrained as a bricklayer and finally retired aged sixty-two. On 2nd August 1946, Alec married his sweetheart Norma, who he had met in 1940. They had two children Gordon and Maureen. Alec was a man's man who enjoyed a few drinks with his pals but his real passion was his children, grand-children, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Sadly, Norma passed away on 24th March, barely three weeks after Alec.



Young Alexander joined the Regiment in 1933 at the age of 17

Photo courtesy of Gordon Leslie

The Editor relies on friends and relatives to provide timely and meaningful contributions to record the life and achievements of former members of the regiment.

From the Editor:

When I was first approached to take over editing The Thistle from Lieutenant Colonel Bob Paterson in 2015, I was still at a loose end, having recently been allowed to start looking for work for the first time since settling here in Edinburgh and getting married. Even after I became a useful, tax-paying member of the workforce, working for Veterans First Point Scotland, I still had the time on my hands to devote to The Thistle over the last couple of years of centenaries and celebrations.

Unfortunately, my current job within the NHS means that I have struggled this year to find the time to do the role justice and, with reluctance, I have decided that the time is right to step down as editor. I would like to thank Colonel Martin Gibson and Colonel Robert Watson for offering me the opportunity and the experience; my predecessor, Bob for his assistance when I started, and Lieutenant Colonel Jim Blyth, Captain Jimmy Springthorpe, Mrs Liz Kyle and Mr Andy Kay for their sage advice over the last couple of years. Finally, I'd like to thank you all very much for providing the words and pictures that went into making each of the editions I have edited very special.

Of course, I will continue in role until a worthy successor has been found, so this is probably not the last time I will ask you to keep submitting material, and I do hope that my association with The Regiment will not end here – because of Torquil, I couldn't get away from it even if I tried!



FORECAST OF EVENTS 2018

SEPTEMBER

Sat 1st – Fri 7th	NI Branch visit to Somme Battlefields	France
Sun 2nd	Gladdy Murray Golf Outing	Haddington Golf Course
Mon 24th	Exec & Autumn Finance Sub Committee Meetings	RS Club – Lyell Room

OCTOBER

Mon 15th	Elcock VC Commemoration	Wolverhampton
Mon 22nd	Lt McGregor VC Commemoration	Edinburgh
Wed 24th	Southern Branch Gathering	London
Fri 26th	Regimental Trustees Meeting	RS Club – Ellsmere Room
Fri 26th	Officers' Regimental Dinner	RS Club- Hepburn Suite
Sat 27th	Edinburgh Branch Halloween Party	TBC
Mon 29th	Garden of Remembrance Edinburgh Opening Ceremony	Princes St Gardens
Tues 30th	RBL Opening of Garden of Remembrance Glasgow	George Square

NOVEMBER

Thu 8th	TRBL opening of Field of Remembrance	Westminster
Sat 10th	RS Memorial Gates Ceremony	Glencorse Barracks
Sat 10th	SNWM Armistice Service	
Sat 10th	Commemorations by Leith including a restored railway carriage Similar to that which carried the 7th Bn at Gretna.	
Sun 11th	Remembrance Service	Edinburgh City Chambers
Sun 11th	Remembrance Parade/Service	Cenotaph, London
Sun 11th	Heart of Midlothian FC Parade/Service	Haymarket Memorial, Edinburgh
Sat 24th	East of Scotland Br, St Andrew's Night Dinner	TBC
Sat 24th	St Andrew's Night Dinner	RS Club

DECEMBER

Sat 1st	Deadline for Articles for the Winter Edition of The Thistle	
Sat 8th	Edinburgh Branch Christmas Party (TBC)	TBC
Tues 18th	Volunteers Christmas Lunch	RS Club
TBC	Regimental Office closes	RS Club
TBC	Museum & OPMH Close	Castle

JANUARY 2019

Sat 26th	Branch Burns Night	TBC
Sat 26th	RS Club Burns Night (TBC)	TBC

FEBRUARY 2019

MARCH 2019

Sun 10th	RSC 100 Church Service	Canongate
Mon 11th	RSC100 Book Launch	RS Club
Thu 28th	Regimental Day, The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)	

All dates are subject to change. Please check the Royal Scots website for final details.

LOOKING FORWARD:

Please forward submissions or newsletters from all Royal Scots Branches and photos including the names of person within as well as the name of the photographer, to admin@theroyalscots.co.uk by Saturday, 1st December for the Winter 2018 edition.

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
weeweegie1@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

Meets at RBL Prestonpans,
Contact Peter Blackie -
peterblackie@yahoo.co.uk

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: Tam McFadden,
tamrosie@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 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh EH3 6QE

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