

## *Regimental Obituary*

### LIEUTENANT GENERAL SIR ROBERT RICHARDSON KCB CVO CBE



Lieutenant General Sir Robert Richardson ( 85 ) died on 21 November 2014. General Bob, as he was universally known, was born in Leith, was commissioned into The Royal Scots in 1949, commanded the 1st Battalion in Osnabruck and Belfast between 1969 and 1972 and, after his tour as GOC Northern Ireland, retired from the Army in 1985.

When it was announced that 1 SCOTS was moving to Belfast in 2014 the General delighted in telling how he did his basic training at Palace Barracks, where he passed out top, then before going to Sandhurst he went to Dreghorn where he was met by the RSM, Steenie Morrison, who told him to get his hair cut. After commissioning he returned to Edinburgh where he was greeted by the RSM who once again told him to get his hair cut, but ended it with a Sir.

Our Regimental History tells of how in the Canal Zone in 1954 when charged with ensuring the 1st Battalion Colours were safely transferred ashore he witnessed them being dropped overboard from an overloaded small boat manned by locals into the dirty water of Port Said harbour. Shortly after they were ceremonially escorted into Copenhagen Camp; General Bob was carrying the Regimental Colour.

On the eve of St Andrew's Day 1969 he commanded the 1st Battalion parade when the Regimental cap badge was reissued after 10 years of wearing the Lowland Brigade badge. A much admired and respected leader, described in The Times as a firm-jawed Lowland Scot, who displayed a sure touch with all ranks, he led from the front on the 1970 Northern Ireland tour at a time of very significant street disorder in Belfast and when the split between the Official and Provisional IRA was taking place.



*Lieutenant Colonel Richardson presenting their Royal Scots cap badges to Privates Murray and Gilmour.*

Whilst at HQ BAOR he led on organising HM The Queen's highly successful Silver Jubilee Review at Sennelager on 7.7.77 when the 1st Battalion, based in Munster, had responsibility for the tents and whose Colour Party, Pipes and Drums and Regimental Band were on parade.

Between 1980 and 1990 General Bob was an outstanding Colonel of The Regiment. Contributing so much he was utterly loyal, exceptionally knowledgeable and nothing was too much trouble to the head of The Royal Scots.

A former RSM has described him during Battalion visits as an insightful and charismatic man who had great presence. He had a great ability to put the most nervous of soldiers at ease, having regaled them with one of his many amusing and descriptive stories,



which allowed them to speak freely to him and say what they really felt leaving them with the impression they had really been listened to; they invariably held him in the highest regard.

In 1983 displaying exemplary foresight, drive, attention to detail, enthusiasm and sheer professionalism he masterminded the highly successful RS 350 events in London and Edinburgh centred on the Royal Review of all elements of the Regiment by Her Majesty within Holyrood Park, when the then HRH Princess Anne was appointed Colonel-in-Chief.

At Remembrance 2014 General Bob laid a wreath at the Memorial Gates at Glencorse Barracks, and was in great form at the RS Club Sunday lunch . There have been so many tributes to his leadership qualities, his wise counsel, his friendship, his compassion, his wonderful sense of humour and his unstinting service to The Royal Scots. He will be sorely missed.

General Bob married first in 1956, Maureen , who predeceased him, and then in 1988, Candy, who survives him with his daughter, three sons, two of whom served in the Regiment, and two stepsons from his second marriage.